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a *Grace Notes* course

## History of the Christian Church

By Philip Schaff

### **VOLUME 1. First Period – Apostolic Christianity**<sup>1</sup>

General Introduction

Chapter 1: Preparation for Christianity in the History of the Jewish and Heathen World

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<sup>1</sup> Editor: Warren Doud

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# History of the Christian Church

## VOLUME 1. First Period – Apostolic Christianity

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## Preface

As I appear before the public with a new edition of my Church History, I feel more than ever the difficulty and responsibility of a task which is well worthy to occupy the whole time and strength of a long life, and which carries in it its own rich reward. The true historian of Christianity is yet to come. But short as I have fallen of my own ideal, I have done my best, and shall rejoice if my efforts stimulate others to better and more enduring work.

History should be written from the original sources of friend and foe, in the spirit of truth and love, "sine ira et studio," "with malice towards none, and charity for all," in clear, fresh, vigorous style, under the guidance of the twin parables of the mustard seed and leaven, as a book of life for instruction, correction, encouragement, as the best exposition and vindication of Christianity. The great and good Neander, "the father of Church History"—first an Israelite without guile hoping for the Messiah, then a Platonist longing for the realization of his ideal of righteousness, last a Christian in head and heart—made such a history his life-work, but before reaching the Reformation he was interrupted by sickness, and said to his faithful sister: "Hannchen, I am weary; let us go home; good night!" And thus he fell gently asleep, like a child, to awake in the land where all problems of history are solved.

When, after a long interruption caused by a change of professional duties and literary labors, I returned to the favorite studies of my youth, I felt the necessity, before continuing the History to more recent times, of subjecting the first volume to a thorough revision, in order to bring it up to the present state of investigation. We live in a restless and stirring age of discovery, criticism, and reconstruction. During the thirty years which have elapsed since the publication of my separate "History of the Apostolic Church," there has been an incessant activity in this field, not only in Germany, the great

workshop of critical research, but in all other Protestant countries. Almost every inch of ground has been disputed and defended with a degree of learning, acumen, and skill such as were never spent before on the solution of historical problems.

In this process of reconstruction the first volume has been more than doubled in size and grown into two volumes. The first embraces Apostolic, the second post-Apostolic or ante-Nicene Christianity. The first volume is larger than my separate History of the Apostolic Church, but differs from it in that it is chiefly devoted to the theology and literature, the other to the mission work and spiritual life of that period. I have studiously avoided repetition and seldom looked into the older book. On two points I have changed my opinion—the second Roman captivity of Paul (which I am disposed to admit in the interest of the Pastoral Epistles), and the date of the Apocalypse (which I now assign, with the majority of modern critics, to the year 68 or 69 instead of 95, as before).

I express my deep obligation to my friend, Dr. Ezra Abbot, a scholar of rare learning and microscopic accuracy, for his kind and valuable assistance in reading the proof and suggesting improvements.

The second volume, likewise thoroughly revised and partly rewritten, is in the hands of the printer; the third requires a few changes. Two new volumes, one on the History of Mediaeval Christianity, and one on the Reformation (to the Westphalian Treaty and the Westminster Assembly, 1648), are in an advanced stage of preparation.

May the work in this remodeled shape find as kind and indulgent readers as when it first appeared. My highest ambition in this skeptical age is to strengthen the immovable historical foundations of Christianity and its victory over the world.

PHILIP SCHAFF, UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, New York, October, 1882

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## General Introduction

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- A fuller introduction, see in Schaff: *History of the Apostolic Church; with a General Introduction to Ch. H.* (N. York, 1853), pp. 1–134.

### 1.1 Nature of Church History

History has two sides, a divine and a human. On the part of God, it is his revelation in the order of time (as the creation is his revelation in the order of space), and the successive unfolding of a plan of infinite wisdom, justice, and mercy, looking to his glory and the eternal happiness of mankind. On the part of man, history is the biography of the human race, and the gradual development, both normal and abnormal, of all its physical, intellectual, and moral forces to the final consummation at the general judgment, with its eternal rewards and punishments. The idea of universal history presupposes the Christian idea of the unity of God, and the unity and common destiny of men, and was unknown to ancient Greece and Rome. A view of history which overlooks or undervalues the divine factor starts from deism and consistently runs into atheism; while the opposite view, which overlooks the free agency of man and his moral responsibility and guilt, is essentially fatalistic and pantheistic.

From the human agency we may distinguish the Satanic, which enters as a third power into the history of the race. In the temptation

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of Adam in Paradise, the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, and at every great epoch, Satan appears as the antagonist of God, endeavoring to defeat the plan of redemption and the progress of Christ's kingdom, and using weak and wicked men for his schemes, but is always defeated in the end by the superior wisdom of God.

The central current and ultimate aim of universal history is the KINGDOM OF GOD ESTABLISHED BY JESUS CHRIST. This is the grandest and most comprehensive institution in the world, as vast as humanity and as enduring as eternity. All other institutions are made subservient to it, and in its interest the whole world is governed. It is no after-thought of God, no subsequent emendation of the plan of creation, but it is the eternal forethought, the controlling idea, the beginning, the middle, and the end of all his ways and works. The first Adam is a type of the second Adam; creation looks to redemption as the solution of its problems.

Secular history, far from controlling sacred history, is controlled by it, must directly or indirectly subserve its ends, and can only be fully understood in the central light of Christian truth and the plan of salvation. The Father, who directs the history of the world, "draws to the Son," who rules the history of the church, and the Son leads back to the Father, that "God may be all in all." "All things," says St. Paul, "were created through Christ and unto Christ: and He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence." Col. 1:16-18. "The Gospel," says John von Müller, summing up the final result of his lifelong studies in history, "is the fulfillment of all hopes, the perfection of all philosophy, the interpreter of all revolutions, the key of all seeming contradictions of the physical and moral worlds; it is life—it is immortality."

The history of the church is the rise and progress of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, for the glory of God and the salvation of the world. It begins with the creation of Adam, and with that promise of the serpent-bruiser, which relieved the loss of the paradise of innocence by the hope of future redemption from the curse of sin. It comes down through the preparatory revelations under the patriarchs, Moses, and the prophets, to the immediate forerunner of the Saviour, who pointed his followers to the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. But this part of its course was only introduction.

Its proper starting-point is the incarnation of the Eternal Word, who dwelt among us and revealed his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and next to this, the miracle of the first Pentecost, when the Church took her place as a Christian institution, filled with the Spirit of the glorified Redeemer and entrusted with the conversion of all nations. Jesus Christ, the God-Man and Saviour of the world, is the author of the new creation, the soul and the head of the church, which is his body and his bride. In his person and work lies all the fullness of the Godhead and of renewed humanity, the whole plan of redemption, and the key of all history from the creation of man in the image of God to the resurrection of the body unto everlasting life.

This is the objective conception of church history.

In the subjective sense of the word, considered as theological science and art, church history is the faithful and life-like description of the origin and progress of this heavenly kingdom. It aims to reproduce in thought and to embody in language its outward and inward development down to the present time. It is a continuous commentary on the Lord's twin parables of the mustard-seed and of the leaven. It shows at once how Christianity spreads over the world, and how it penetrates, transforms, and

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sanctifies the individual and all the departments and institutions of social life. It thus embraces not only the external fortunes of Christendom, but more especially her inward experience, her religious life, her mental and moral activity, her conflicts with the ungodly world, her sorrows and sufferings, her joys and her triumphs over sin and error. It records the deeds of those heroes of faith "who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens."

From Jesus Christ, since his manifestation in the flesh, an unbroken stream of divine light and life has been and is still flowing, and will continue to flow, in ever-growing volume through the waste of our fallen race; and all that is truly great and good and holy in the annals of church history is due, ultimately, to the impulse of his spirit. He is the fly-wheel in the world's progress. But he works upon the world through sinful and fallible men, who, while as self-conscious and free agents they are accountable for all their actions, must still, willing or unwilling, serve the great purpose of God.

As Christ, in the days of his flesh, was bated, mocked, and crucified, his church likewise is assailed and persecuted by the powers of darkness. The history of Christianity includes therefore a history of Antichrist. With an unending succession of works of saving power and manifestations of divine truth and holiness, it uncovers also a fearful mass of corruption and error. The church militant must, from its very nature, be at perpetual warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil, both without and within. For as Judas sat among the apostles, so "the man of sin" sits in the temple of God; and as even a Peter denied the Lord, though he afterwards wept bitterly and regained his holy office, so do many disciples in all ages deny him in word and in deed.

But on the other hand, church history shows that God is ever stronger than Satan, and that his kingdom of light puts the kingdom of darkness to shame. The Lion of the tribe of Judah has bruised the head of the serpent. With the crucifixion of Christ his resurrection also is repeated ever anew in the history of his church on earth; and there has never yet been a day without a witness of his presence and power ordering all things according to his holy will. For he has received all power in heaven and in earth for the good of his people, and from his heavenly throne he rules even his foes. The infallible word of promise, confirmed by experience, assures us that all corruptions, heresies, and schisms must, under the guidance of divine wisdom and love, subserve the cause of truth, holiness, and peace; till, at the last judgment, Christ shall make his enemies his footstool, and rule undisputed with the scepter of righteousness and peace, and his church shall realize her idea and destiny as "the fullness of him that fills all in all."

Then will history itself, in its present form, as a struggling and changeful development, give place to perfection, and the stream of time come to rest in the ocean of eternity, but this rest will be the highest form of life and activity in God and for God.

### **1.2 Branches of Church History**

The kingdom of Christ, in its principle and aim, is as comprehensive as humanity. It is truly catholic or universal, designed and adapted for all nations and ages, for all the powers of the soul, and all classes of society. It breathes into the mind, the heart, and the will a higher, supernatural life, and consecrates the family, the state, science, literature, art, and commerce to holy ends, till finally God becomes all in all.

Even the body, and the whole visible creation, which groans for redemption from its bondage to vanity and for the glorious liberty of the children of God, shall share in this universal transformation; for we look for the resurrection of the body, and for the new

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earth, wherein dwells righteousness. But we must not identify the kingdom of God with the visible church or churches, which are only its temporary organs and agencies, more or less inadequate, while the kingdom itself is more comprehensive, and will last for ever.

Accordingly, church history has various departments, corresponding to the different branches of secular history and of natural life. The principal divisions are:

### 1.2.1 THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS

or of the spread of Christianity among unconverted nations, whether barbarous or civilized. This work must continue, till "the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in," and "Israel shall be saved." The law of the missionary progress is expressed in the two parables of the grain of mustard-seed which grows into a tree, and of the leaven which gradually pervades the whole lump. The first parable illustrates the outward expansion, the second the all-penetrating and transforming power of Christianity. It is difficult to convert a nation; it is more difficult to train it to the high standard of the gospel; it is most difficult to revive and reform a dead or apostate church.

The foreign mission work has achieved three great conquests: first, the conversion of the elect remnant of the Jews, and of civilized Greeks and Romans, in the first three centuries; then the conversion of the barbarians of Northern and Western Europe, in the middle ages; and last, the combined efforts of various churches and societies for the conversion of the savage races in America, Africa, and Australia, and the semi-civilized nations of Eastern Asia, in our own time. The whole non-Christian world is now open to missionary labor, except the Mohammedan, which will likewise become accessible at no distant day.

The domestic or home mission work embraces the revival of Christian life in corrupt or neglected portions of the church in old countries, the supply of emigrants in new countries with the means of grace, and the

labors, among the semi-heathenism populations of large cities. Here we may mention the planting of a purer Christianity among the petrified sects in Bible Lands, the labors of the Gustavus Adolphus Society, and the Inner mission of Germany, the American Home Missionary Societies for the western states and territories, the City Mission Societies in London, New York, and other fast-growing cities.

### 1.2.2 THE HISTORY OF PERSECUTION ...

by hostile powers; as by Judaism and Heathenism in the first three centuries, and by Mohammedanism in the middle age. This apparent repression of the church proves a purifying process, brings out the moral heroism of martyrdom, and thus works in the end for the spread and establishment of Christianity. "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church."<sup>2</sup> There are cases, however, where systematic and persistent persecution has crushed out the church or reduced it to a mere shadow, as in Palestine, Egypt, and North Africa, under the despotism of the Moslems.

Persecution, like missions, is both foreign and domestic. Besides being assailed from without by the followers of false religions, the church suffers also from intestine wars and violence. Witness the religious wars in France, Holland, and England, the Thirty Years' War in Germany, all of which grew out of the Protestant Reformation and the Papal Reaction; the crusade against the Albigenses and Waldenses, the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition, the massacre of the Huguenots, the dragonnades of Louis XIV., the crushing out of the Reformation in Bohemia, Belgium,

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<sup>2</sup> A well-known saying of Tertullian, who lived in the midst of persecution. A very different estimate of martyrdom is suggested by the Arabic proverb "The ink of the scholar is more precious than the blood of the martyr." The just estimate depends on the quality of the scholar and the quality of the martyr, and the cause for which the one lives and the other dies.

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and Southern Europe; but also, on the Protestant side, the persecution of Anabaptists, the burning of Servetus in Geneva the penal laws of the reign of Elizabeth against Catholic and Puritan Dissenters, the hanging of witches and Quakers in New England. More Christian blood has been shed by Christians than by heathens and Mohammedans.

The persecutions of Christians by Christians form the satanic chapters, the fiendish midnight scenes, in the history of the church. But they show also the gradual progress of the truly Christian spirit of religious toleration and freedom. Persecution exhausted ends in toleration, and toleration is a step to freedom. The blood of patriots is the price of civil, the blood of martyrs the price of religious liberty. The conquest is dear, the progress slow and often interrupted, but steady and irresistible. The principle of intolerance is now almost universally disowned in the Christian world, except by ultramontane Romanism (which indirectly reasserts it in the Papal Syllabus of 1864); but a ruling church, allied to the state, under the influence of selfish human nature, and, relying on the arm of flesh rather than the power of truth, is always tempted to impose or retain unjust restrictions on dissenting sects, however innocent and useful they may have proved to be.

In the United States all Christian denominations and sects are placed on a basis of equality before the law, and alike protected by the government in their property and right of public worship, yet self-supporting and self-governing; and, in turn, they strengthen the moral foundations of society by training loyal and virtuous citizens. Freedom of religion must be recognized as one of the inalienable rights of man, which lies in the sacred domain of conscience, beyond the restraint and control of politics, and which the government is bound to protect as much as any other fundamental right. Freedom is liable to abuse, and abuse may be punished. But Christianity is itself the parent of true

freedom from the bondage of sin and error, and is the best protector and regulator of freedom.

### 1.2.3 THE HISTORY OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE

The church is not only an invisible communion of saints, but at the same time a visible body, needing organs, laws, and forms, to regulate its activity. Into this department of history fall the various forms of church polity: the apostolic, the primitive episcopal, the patriarchal, the papal, the consistorial, the presbyterial, the congregational, etc.; and the history of the law and discipline of the church, and her relation to the state, under all these forms.

### 1.2.4 THE HISTORY OF WORSHIP

or divine service, by which the church celebrates, revives, and strengthens her fellowship with her divine head. This falls into such subdivisions as the history of preaching, of catechisms, of liturgy, of rites and ceremonies, and of religious art, particularly sacred poetry and music.

The history of church government and the history of worship are often put together under the title of Ecclesiastical Antiquities or Archaeology, and commonly confined to the patristic age, whence most of the, Catholic institutions and usages of the church date their origin. But they may as well be extended to the formative period of Protestantism.

### 1.2.5 THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

or practical morality and religion: the exhibition of the distinguishing virtues and vices of different ages, of the development of Christian philanthropy, the regeneration of domestic life, the gradual abatement and abolition of slavery and other social evils, the mitigation and diminution of the horrors of war, the reform of civil law and of government, the spread of civil and religious liberty, and the whole progress of civilization, under the influence of Christianity.



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### 1.2.6 THE HISTORY OF THEOLOGY

or of Christian learning and literature. Each branch of theology—exegetical, doctrinal, ethical, historical, and practical—has a history of its own.

The history of doctrines or dogmas is here the most important, and is therefore frequently treated by itself. Its object is to show how the mind of the church has gradually apprehended and unfolded the divine truths of revelation, how the teachings of scripture have been formulated and shaped into dogmas, and grown into creeds and confessions of faith, or systems of doctrine stamped with public authority. This growth of the church in the knowledge of the infallible word of God is a constant struggle against error, misbelief, and unbelief; and the history of heresies is an essential part of the history of doctrines.

Every important dogma now professed by the Christian church is the result of a severe conflict with error. The doctrine of the holy Trinity, for instance, was believed from the beginning, but it required, in addition to the preparatory labors of the ante-Nicene age, fifty years of controversy, in which the strongest intellects were absorbed, until it was brought to the clear expression of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed. The Christological conflict was equally long and intense, until it was brought to a settlement by the council of Chalcedon. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was a continual warfare with popery. The doctrinal symbols of the various churches, from the Apostles' Creed down to the confessions of Dort and Westminster, and more recent standards, embody the results of the theological battles of the militant church.

The various departments of church history have not a merely external and mechanical, but an organic relation to each other, and form one living whole, and this relation the historian must show. Each period also is entitled to a peculiar arrangement, according to its character. The number, order, and

extent of the different divisions must be determined by their actual importance at a given time.

### 1.3 Sources of Church History.

The sources of church history, the data on which we rely for our knowledge, are partly divine, partly human. For the history of the kingdom of God from the creation to the close of the apostolic age, we have the inspired writings of the Old and New Testaments. But after the death of the apostles we have only human authorities, which of course cannot claim to be infallible. These human sources are partly written, partly unwritten.

The written sources include:

- Official documents of ecclesiastical and civil authorities: acts of councils and synods, confessions of faith, liturgies, church laws, and the official letters of popes, patriarchs, bishops, and representative bodies.
- Private writings of personal actors in the history: the works of the church fathers, heretics, and heathen authors, for the first six centuries; of the missionaries, scholastic and mystic divines, for the middle age; and of the reformers and their opponents, for the sixteenth century. These documents are the richest mines for the historian. They give history in its birth and actual movement. But they must be carefully sifted and weighed; especially the controversial writings, where fact is generally more or less adulterated with party spirit, heretical and orthodox.
- Accounts of chroniclers and historians, whether friends or enemies, who were eye-witnesses of what they relate. The value of these depends, of course, on the capacity and credibility of the authors, to be determined by careful criticism. Subsequent historians can be counted among the direct or immediate sources only so far as they have drawn from reliable and contemporary documents, which have either been wholly or partially lost, like many of Eusebius

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authorities for the period before Constantine, or are inaccessible to historians generally, as are the papal regesta and other documents of the Vatican library.

- Inscriptions, especially those on tombs and catacombs, revealing the faith and hope of Christians in times of persecution. Among the ruins of Egypt and Babylonia whole libraries have been disentombed and deciphered, containing mythological and religious records, royal proclamations, historical, astronomical, and poetical compositions, revealing an extinct civilization and shedding light on some parts of Old Testament history.

The UNWRITTEN sources are far less numerous: church edifices, works of sculpture and painting, and other monuments, religious customs and ceremonies, very important for the history of worship and ecclesiastical art, and significant of the spirit of their age.<sup>3</sup>

The works of art are symbolical embodiments of the various types of Christianity. The plain symbols and crude sculptures of the catacombs correspond to the period of persecution; the basilicas to the Nicene age; the Byzantine churches to the genius of the Byzantine state-churchism; the Gothic cathedrals to the Romano-Germanic Catholicism of the middle ages; the renaissance style to the revival of letters.

To come down to more recent times, the spirit of Romanism can be best appreciated amidst the dead and living monuments of Rome, Italy, and Spain. Lutheranism must be studied in Wittenberg, Northern Germany, and Scandinavia; Calvinism in Geneva, France, Holland, and Scotland; Anglicanism at Oxford, Cambridge, and London; Presbyterianism in Scotland and the United States; Congregationalism in England and New England.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. F. Piper: Einleitung in die monumentale Theologie. Goths, 1867

In the mother countries of these denominations we generally find not only the largest printed and manuscript sources, but also the architectural, sculptural, sepulchral, and other monumental remains, the natural associations, oral traditions, and living representatives of the past, who, however they may have departed from the faith of their ancestors, still exhibit their national genius, social condition, habits, and customs—often in a far more instructive manner than ponderous printed volumes.

#### **1.4 Periods of Church History.**

The purely chronological or annalistic method, though pursued by the learned Baronius and his continuators, is now generally abandoned. It breaks the natural flow of events, separates things which belong together, and degrades history to a mere chronicle.

The centurial plan, which prevailed from Flacius to Mosheim, is an improvement. It allows a much better view of the progress and connection of things. But it still imposes on the history a forced and mechanical arrangement; for the salient points or epochs very seldom coincide with the limits of our centuries. The rise of Constantine, for example, together with the union of church and state, dates from the year 311; that of the absolute papacy, in Hildebrand, from 1049; the Reformation from 1517; the peace of Westphalia took place in 1648; the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England in 1620; the American emancipation in 1776; the French revolution in 1789; the revival of religious life in Germany began in 1817.

The true division must grow out of the actual course of the history itself, and present the different phases of its development or stages of its life. These we call periods or ages. The beginning of a new period is called an epoch, or a stopping and starting point.

In regard to the number and length of periods there is, indeed, no unanimity; the less, on account of the various denominational

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differences establishing different points of view, especially since the sixteenth century. The Reformation, for instance, has less importance for the Roman church than for the Protestant, and almost none for the Greek; and while the edict of Nantes forms a resting-place in the history of French Protestantism, and the treaty of Westphalia in that of German, neither of these events had as much to do with English Protestantism as the accession of Elizabeth, the rise of Cromwell, the restoration of the Stuarts, and the revolution of 1688.

But, in spite of all confusion and difficulty in regard to details, it is generally agreed to divide the history of Christianity into three principal parts—ancient, mediaeval, and modern; though there is not a like agreement as to the dividing epochs, or points of departure and points of termination.

#### 1.4.1 THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY, FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TO GREGORY THE GREAT. A.D. 1–590.

This is the age of the Graeco-Latin church, or of the Christian Fathers. Its field is the countries around the Mediterranean—Western Asia, Northern Africa, and Southern Europe—just the theatre of the old Roman empire and of classic heathendom. This age lays the foundation, in doctrine, government, and worship, for all the subsequent history. It is the common progenitor of all the various confessions.

The Life of Christ and the Apostolic Church are by far the most important sections, and require separate treatment. They form the divine-human groundwork of the church, and inspire, regulate, and correct all subsequent periods.

Then, at the beginning of the fourth century, the accession of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, marks a decisive turn; Christianity rising from a persecuted sect to the prevailing religion of the Graeco-Roman empire. In the history of doctrines, the first ecumenical council of Nicaea, falling in the

midst of Constantine’s reign, A.D. 325, has the prominence of an epoch.

Here, then, are three periods within the first or patristic era, which we may severally designate as the period of the Apostles, the period of the Martyrs, and the period of the Christian Emperors and Patriarchs.

#### 1.4.2 MEDIEVAL CHRISTIANITY, FROM GREGORY I TO THE REFORMATION. A.D. 590–1517.

The middle age is variously reckoned—from Constantine, 306 or 311; from the fall of the West Roman empire, 476; from Gregory the Great, 590; from Charlemagne, 800. But it is very generally regarded as closing at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and more precisely, at the outbreak of the Reformation in 1517. Gregory the Great seems to us to form the most proper ecclesiastical point of division. With him, the author of the Anglo-Saxon mission, the last of the church fathers, and the first of the proper popes, begins in earnest, and with decisive success, the conversion of the barbarian tribes, and, at the same time, the development of the absolute papacy, and the alienation of the eastern and western churches.

This suggests the distinctive character of the middle age: the transition of the church from Asia and Africa to Middle and Western Europe, from the Graeco-Roman nationality to that of the Germanic, Celtic, and Slavonic races, and from the culture of the ancient classic world to the modern civilization. The great work of the church then was the conversion and education of the heathen barbarians, who conquered and demolished the Roman empire, indeed, but were themselves conquered and transformed by its Christianity. This work was performed mainly by the Latin church, under a firm hierarchical constitution, culminating in the bishop of Rome. The Greek church though she made some conquests among the Slavic tribes of Eastern Europe, particularly in the Russian empire, since grown so important, was in turn sorely pressed and reduced by

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Mohammedanism in Asia and Africa, the very seat of primitive Christianity, and at last in Constantinople itself; and in doctrine, worship, and organization, she stopped at the position of the ecumenical councils and the patriarchal constitution of the fifth century.

In the middle age the development of the hierarchy occupies the foreground, so that it may be called the church of the Popes, as distinct from the ancient church of the Fathers, and the modern church of the Reformers.

In the growth and decay of the Roman hierarchy three popes stand out as representatives of as many epochs: Gregory I., or the Great (590), marks the rise of absolute papacy; Gregory VII., or Hildebrand (1049), its summit; and Boniface VIII. (1294), its decline. We thus have again three periods in mediaeval church history. We may briefly distinguish them as the Missionary, the Papal, and the pre- or ante-Reformatory<sup>4</sup> ages of Catholicism.

#### 1.4.3 MODERN CHRISTIANITY, FROM THE REFORMATION OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT TIME. A.D. 1517–1880.

Modern history moves chiefly among the nations of Europe, and from the seventeenth century finds a vast new theatre in North America. Western Christendom now splits into two hostile parts—one remaining on the old path, the other striking out a new one; while the eastern church withdraws still further from the stage of history, and presents a scene of almost undisturbed stagnation, except in modern Russia and Greece. Modern church history is the age of

<sup>4</sup> This new word is coined after the analogy of ante-Nicene, and in imitation of the German vor-reformatorisch. It is the age of the forerunners of the Reformation, or reformers before the Reformation, as Ullmann calls such men as Wicklyffe, Huss, Savonarola, Wessel, etc. The term presents only one view of the period from Boniface VIII. to Luther. But this is the case with every other single term we may choose.

Protestantism in conflict with Romanism, of religious liberty and independence in conflict with the principle of authority and tutelage, of individual and personal Christianity against an objective and traditional church system.

Here again three different periods appear, which may be denoted briefly by the terms, Reformation, Revolution, and Revival.

The sixteenth century, next to the apostolic age the most fruitful and interesting period of church history, is the century of the evangelical renovation of the Church, and the papal counter-reform. It is the cradle of all Protestant denominations and sects, and of modern Romanism.

The seventeenth century is the period of scholastic orthodoxy, polemic confessionalism, and comparative stagnation. The reformatory motion ceases on the continent, but goes on in the mighty Puritanic struggle in England, and extends even into the primitive forests of the American colonies. The seventeenth century is the most fruitful in the church history of England, and gave rise to the various nonconformist or dissenting denominations which were transplanted to North America, and have outgrown some of the older historic churches.

Then comes, in the eighteenth century, the Pietistic and Methodistic revival of practical religion in opposition to dead orthodoxy and stiff formalism. In the Roman church Jesuitism prevails but opposed by the half-evangelical Jansenism, and the quasiliberal Gallicanism.

In the second half of the eighteenth century begins the vast overturning of traditional ideas and institutions, leading to revolution in state, and infidelity in church, especially in Roman Catholic France and Protestant Germany. Deism in England, atheism in France, rationalism in Germany, represent the various degrees of the great modern apostasy from the orthodox creeds.

The nineteenth century presents, in part, the further development of these negative and destructive tendencies, but with it also the

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revival of Christian faith and church life, and the beginnings of a new creation by the everlasting gospel. The revival may be dated from the third centenary of the Reformation, in 1817.

In the same period North America, English and Protestant in its prevailing character, but presenting an asylum for all the nations, churches, and sects of the old world, with a peaceful separation of the temporal and the spiritual power, comes upon the stage like a young giant full of vigor and promise.

Thus we have, in all, nine periods of church history, as follows:

**FIRST PERIOD:** The Life of Christ, and the Apostolic church. From the Incarnation to the death of St. John. A.D. 1–100.

**SECOND PERIOD:** Christianity under persecution in the Roman empire. From the death of St. John to Constantine, the first Christian emperor. A.D. 100–311.

**THIRD PERIOD:** Christianity in union with the Graeco-Roman empire, and amidst the storms of the great migration of nations. From Constantine the Great to Pope Gregory I. A.D. 311–590.

**FOURTH PERIOD:** Christianity planted among the Teutonic, Celtic, and Slavonic nations. From Gregory I. to Hildebrand, or Gregory VII. A.D. 590–1049.

**FIFTH PERIOD:** The Church under the papal hierarchy, and the scholastic theology. From Gregory VII. to Boniface VIII. A.D. 1049–1294.

**SIXTH PERIOD:** The decay of mediaeval Catholicism, and the preparatory movements for the Reformation. From Boniface VIII. to Luther. A.D. 1294–1517.

**SEVENTH PERIOD:** The evangelical Reformation, and the Roman Catholic Reaction. From Luther to the Treaty of Westphalia. A.D. 1517–1648.

**EIGHTH PERIOD:** The age of polemic orthodoxy and exclusive confessionalism, with reactionary and progressive movements. From the Treaty of Westphalia to the French Revolution. A.D. 1648–1790.

**NINTH PERIOD:** The spread of infidelity, and the revival of Christianity in Europe and America, with missionary efforts encircling the globe. From the French Revolution to the present time. A.D. 1790–1880.

Christianity has thus passed through many stages of its earthly life, and yet has hardly reached the period of full manhood in Christ Jesus. During this long succession of centuries it has outlived the destruction of Jerusalem, the dissolution of the Roman empire, fierce persecutions from without, and heretical corruptions from within, the barbarian invasion, the confusion of the dark ages, the papal tyranny, the shock of infidelity, the ravages of revolution, the attacks of enemies and the errors of friends, the rise and fall of proud kingdoms, empires, and republics, philosophical systems, and social organizations without number.

And, behold, it still lives, and lives in greater strength and wider extent than ever; controlling the progress of civilization, and the destinies of the world; marching over the ruins of human wisdom and folly, ever forward and onward; spreading silently its heavenly blessings from generation to generation, and from country to country, to the ends of the earth.

It can never die; it will never see the decrepitude of old age; but, like its divine founder, it will live in the unfading freshness of self-renewing youth and the unbroken vigor of manhood to the end of time, and will outlive time itself.

Single denominations and sects, human forms of doctrine, government, and worship, after having served their purpose, may disappear and go the way of all flesh; but the Church Universal of Christ, in her divine life and substance, is too strong for the gates of hell. She will only exchange her earthly garments for the festal dress of the Lamb's Bride, and rise from the state of humiliation to the state of exaltation and glory. Then at the coming of Christ she will reap the final harvest of history, and as the church triumphant in

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heaven celebrate and enjoy the eternal Sabbath of holiness and peace. This will be the endless end of history, as it was foreshadowed already at the beginning of its course in the holy rest of God after the completion of his work of creation.

### 1.5 Uses of Church History

Church history is the most extensive, and, including the sacred history of the Old and New Testaments, the most important branch of theology. It is the backbone of theology or which it rests, and the storehouse from which it derives its supplies. It is the best commentary of Christianity itself, under all its aspects and in all its bearings. The fullness of the stream is the glory of the fountain from which it flows.

Church history has, in the first place, a general interest for every cultivated mind, as showing the moral and religious development of our race, and the gradual execution of the divine plan of redemption.

It has special value for the theologian and minister of the gospel, as the key to the present condition of Christendom and the guide to successful labor in her cause. The present is the fruit of the past, and the germ of the future. No work can stand unless it grow out of the real wants of the age and strike firm root in the soil of history. No one who tramples on the rights of a past generation can claim the regard of its posterity.

Church history is no mere curiosity shop. Its facts are not dry bones, but embody living realities, the general principles and laws for our own guidance and action. Who studies church history studies Christianity itself in all its phases, and human nature under the influence of Christianity as it now is, and will be to the end of time.

Finally, the history of the church has practical value for every Christian, as a storehouse of warning and encouragement, of consolation and counsel. It is the philosophy of facts, Christianity in living examples. If history in

general be, as Cicero describes it, "testis temporum, lux veritatis, et magistra vitae," or, as Diodorus calls it, "the handmaid of providence, the priestess of truth, and the mother of wisdom," the history of the kingdom of heaven is all these in the highest degree.

Next to the holy scriptures, which are themselves a history and depository of divine revelation, there is no stronger proof of the continual presence of Christ with his people, no more thorough vindication of Christianity, no richer source of spiritual wisdom and experience, no deeper incentive to virtue and piety, than the history of Christ's kingdom. Every age has a message from God to man, which it is of the greatest importance for man to understand.

The Epistle to the Hebrews describes, in stirring eloquence, the cloud of witnesses from the old dispensation for the encouragement of the Christians. Why should not the greater cloud of apostles, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, fathers, reformers, and saints of every age and tongue, since the coming of Christ, be held up for the same purpose?

They were the heroes of Christian faith and love, the living epistles of Christ, the salt of the earth, the benefactors and glory of our race; and it is impossible rightly to study their thoughts and deeds, their lives and deaths, without being elevated, edified, comforted, and encouraged to follow their holy example, that we at last, by the grace of God, be received into their fellowship, to spend with them a blessed eternity in the praise and enjoyment of the same God and Saviour.

### 1.6 Duty of the Historian

The first duty of the historian, which comprehends all others, is fidelity and justice. He must reproduce the history itself, making it live again in his representation. His highest and only aim should be, like a witness, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and, like a judge, to do full justice to

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every person and event which comes under his review.

To be thus faithful and just he needs a threefold qualification—scientific, artistic, and religious.

#### 1.6.1 HE MUST MASTER THE SOURCES.

For this purpose he must be acquainted with such auxiliary sciences as ecclesiastical philology (especially the Greek and Latin languages, in which most of the earliest documents are written), secular history, geography, and chronology. Then, in making use of the sources, he must thoroughly and impartially examine their genuineness and integrity, and the credibility and capacity of the witnesses. Thus only can he duly separate fact from fiction, truth from error.

The number of sources for general history is so large and increasing so rapidly, that it is, of course, impossible to read and digest them all in a short lifetime. Every historian rests on the shoulders of his predecessors. He must take some things on trust even after the most conscientious search, and avail himself of the invaluable aid of documentary collections and digests, ample indexes, and exhaustive monographs, where he cannot examine all the primary sources in detail. Only he should always carefully indicate his authorities and verify facts, dates, and quotations. A want of accuracy is fatal to the reputation of an historical work.

#### 1.6.2 THEN COMES THE COMPOSITION.

This is an art. It must not simply recount events, but reproduce the development of the church in living process. History is not a heap of skeletons, but an organism filled and ruled by a reasonable soul.

One of the greatest difficulties here lies in arranging the material. The best method is to combine judiciously the chronological and topical principles of division; presenting at once the succession of events and the several parallel (and, indeed, interwoven) departments of the history in due proportion.

Accordingly, we first divide the whole history into periods, not arbitrary, but determined by the actual course of events; and then we present each of these periods in as many parallel sections or chapters as the material itself requires. As to the number of the periods and chapters, and as to the arrangement of the chapters, there are indeed conflicting opinions, and in the application of our principle, as in our whole representation, we can only make approaches to perfection. But the principle itself is, nevertheless, the only true one.

The ancient classical historians, and most of the English and French, generally present their subject in one homogeneous composition of successive books or chapters, without rubrical division. This method might seem to bring out better the living unity and variety of the history at every point. Yet it really does not. Language, unlike the pencil and the chisel, can exhibit only the succession in time, not the local concomitance. And then this method, rigidly pursued, never gives a complete view of any one subject, of doctrine, worship, or practical life. It constantly mixes the various topics, breaking off from one to bring up another, even by the most sudden transitions, till the alternation is exhausted.

The German method of periodical and rubrical arrangement has great practical advantages for the student, in bringing to view the order of subjects as well as the order of time. But it should not be made a uniform and monotonous mechanism, as is done in the Magdeburg Centuries and many subsequent works. For, while history has its order, both of subject and of time, it is yet, like all life, full of variety. The period of the Reformation requires a very different arrangement from the middle age; and in modern history the rubrical division must be combined with and made subject to a division by confessions and countries, as the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed churches in Germany, France, England, and America.

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The historian should aim then to reproduce both the unity and the variety of history, presenting the different topics in their separate completeness, without overlooking their organic connection. The scheme must not be arbitrarily made, and then pedantically applied, as a Procrustean framework, to the history; but it must be deduced from the history itself, and varied as the facts require.

Another difficulty even greater than the arrangement of the material consists in the combination of brevity and fullness. A general church history should give a complete view of the progress of Christ's kingdom in all its departments. But the material is so vast and constantly increasing, that the utmost condensation should be studied by a judicious selection of the salient points, which really make up the main body of history.

There is no use in writing books unless they are read. But who has time in this busy age to weary through the forty folios of Baronius and his continuators, or the thirteen folios of Flacius, or the forty-five octaves of Schroeckh? The student of ecclesiastical history, it is true, wants not miniature pictures only (as in Hase's admirable compend), but full-length portraits. Yet much space may be gained by omitting the processes and unessential details, which may be left to monographs and special treatises. Brevity is a virtue in the historian, unless it makes him obscure and enigmatic.

The historian, moreover, must make his work readable and interesting, without violating truth. Some parts of history are dull and wearisome; but, upon the whole, the truth of history is "stranger than fiction." It is God's own epos. It needs no embellishment. It speaks for itself if told with earnestness, vivacity, and freshness. Unfortunately, church historians, with very few exceptions, are behind the great secular historians in point of style, and represent the past as a dead corpse rather than as a living and working power of abiding interest. Hence church histories are so little read outside of professional circles.

3. Both scientific research and artistic representation must be guided by a sound moral and religious, that is, a truly Christian spirit. The secular historian should be filled with universal human sympathy, the church historian with universal Christian sympathy. The motto of the former is: "Homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto;" the motto of the latter: "Christianus sum, nihil Christiani a me alienum puto." [Note: you can use Google Translate to help with Latin, German, French (etc.) translations.]

The historian must first lay aside all prejudice and party zeal, and proceed in the pure love of truth. Not that he must become a tabula rasa. No man is able, or should attempt, to cast off the educational influences which have made him what he is. But the historian of the church of Christ must in every thing be as true as possible to the objective fact, "sine ira et studio;" do justice to every person and event; and stand in the centre of Christianity, whence he may see all points in the circumference, all individual persons and events, all confessions, denominations, and sects, in their true relations to each other and to the glorious whole.

The famous threefold test of catholic truth—universality of time (semper), place (ubique), and number (ab omnibus)—in its literal sense, is indeed untrue and inapplicable. Nevertheless, there is a common Christianity in the Church, as well as a common humanity in the world, which no Christian can disregard with impunity. Christ is the divine harmony of all the discordant human creeds and sects. It is the duty and the privilege of the historian to trace the image of Christ in the various physiognomies of his disciples, and to act as a mediator between the different sections of his kingdom.

Then he must be in thorough sympathy with his subject, and enthusiastically devoted thereto. As no one can interpret a poet without poetic feeling and taste, or a philosopher without speculative talent, so no one can rightly comprehend and exhibit the



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history of Christianity without a Christian spirit.

An unbeliever could produce only a repulsive caricature, or at best a lifeless statue. The higher the historian stands on Christian ground, the larger is his horizon, and the more full and clear his view of single regions below, and of their mutual bearings. Even error can be fairly seen only from the position of truth. "Verum est index sui et falsi."

Christianity is the absolute truth, which, like the sun, both reveals itself and enlightens all that is dark. Church history, like the Bible, is its own best interpreter.

So far as the historian combines these three qualifications, he fulfils his office. In this life we can, of course, only distantly approach perfection in this or in any other branch of study. Absolute success would require infallibility; and this is denied to mortal man. It is the exclusive privilege of the Divine mind to see the end from the beginning, and to view events from all sides and in all their bearings; while the human mind can only take up things consecutively and view them partially or in fragments.

The full solution of the mysteries of history is reserved for that heavenly state, when we shall see no longer through a gloss darkly, but face to face, and shall survey the developments of time from the heights of eternity. What St. Augustine so aptly says of the mutual relation of the Old and New Testament, "Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus in Novo patet," may be applied also to the relation of this world and the world to come. The history of the church militant is but a type and a prophecy of the triumphant kingdom of God in heaven—a prophecy which will be perfectly understood only in the light of its fulfillment.

### 1.7 Literature of Church History.

See VOLUME 1, Literature References

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Like every other science and art, church historiography has a history of development toward its true perfection. This history exhibits not only a continual growth of material, but also a gradual, though sometimes long interrupted, improvement of method, from the mere collection of names and dates in a Christian chronicle, to critical research and discrimination, pragmatic reference to causes and motives, scientific command of material, philosophical generalization, and artistic reproduction of the actual history itself.

In this progress also are marked the various confessional and denominational phases of Christianity, giving different points of view, and consequently different conceptions and representations of the several periods and divisions of Christendom; so that the

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development of the Church itself is mirrored in the development of church historiography. We can here do no more than mention the leading works which mark the successive epochs in the growth of our science.

#### I. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

The first works on church history are the canonical Gospels of MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN, the inspired biographical memoirs of Jesus Christ, who is the theanthropic head of the Church universal.

These are followed by LUKE'S Acts of the Apostles, which describes the planting of Christianity among Jews and Gentiles from Jerusalem to Rome, by the labors of the apostles, especially Peter and Paul.

#### II. THE Greek CHURCH HISTORIANS.

The first post-apostolic works on church history, as indeed all branches of theological literature, take their rise in the Greek Church.

EUSEBIUS, bishop of Caesarea, in Palestine, and contemporary with Constantine the Great, composed a church history in ten books (from the incarnation of the Logos to the year 324), by which he has won the title of the Father of church history, or the Christian Herodotus. Though by no means very critical and discerning, and far inferior in literary talent and execution to the works of the great classical historians, this ante-Nicene church history is invaluable for its learning, moderation, and love of truth; for its use of so since totally or partially lost; and for its interesting position of personal observation between the last persecutions of the church and her establishment in the Byzantine empire.

Eusebius was followed in similar spirit and on the same plan by SOCRATES, SOZOMEN, AND THEODORET IN THE FIFTH CENTURY, AND THEODORUS AND EVAGRIUS in the sixth, each taking up the thread of the narrative where his predecessor had dropped it, and covering in part the same ground, from

Constantine the Great till toward the middle of the fifth century.<sup>5</sup>

Of the later Greek historians, from the seventh century, to the fifteenth, the "Scriptores Byzantini," as they are called, NICEPHORUS CALLISTI (son of Callistus, about A.D. 1333) deserves special regard. His Ecclesiastical History was written with the use of the large library of the church of St. Sophia in Constantinople, and dedicated to the emperor Andronicus Palaeologus (d. 1327). It extends in eighteen books (each of which begins with a letter of his name) from the birth of Christ to the death of Phocas, A.D. 610, and gives in the preface a summary of five books more, which would have brought it down to 911. He was an industrious and eloquent, but uncritical and superstitious writer.

#### III. Latin CHURCH HISTORIANS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

The Latin Church, before the Reformation, was, in church history, as in all other theological studies, at first wholly dependent on the Greek, and long content with mere translations and extracts from Eusebius and his continuators.

The most popular of these was the *Historia Tripartita*, composed by CASSIODORUS, prime minister of Theodoric, and afterwards abbot of a convent in Calabria (d. about A.D. 562). It is a compilation from the histories of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, abridging and harmonizing them, and supplied— together with the translation of Eusebius by Rufinus—the West for several centuries with its knowledge of the fortunes of the ancient church.

<sup>5</sup> These Greek historians have been best edited by Henri de Valois (Valesius), in Greek and Latin with notes, in 3 folios, Paris, 1659-73; also Amsterd., 1695, and, with additional notes by W. Reading, Cambridge, 1720. Eusebius has been often separately published in several languages.

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The middle age produced no general church history of consequence, but a host of chronicles, and histories of particular nations, monastic orders, eminent popes, bishops, missionaries, saints, etc. Though rarely worth much as compositions, these are yet of great value as material, after a careful sifting of truth from legendary fiction.

The principal mediaeval historians are GREGORY OF TOURS (D. 595), WHO WROTE A CHURCH HISTORY OF THE FRANKS; THE VENERABLE BEDE, (D. 735), THE FATHER OF ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY; PAULUS DIACONUS (D. 799), THE HISTORIAN OF THE LOMBARDS;

ADAM OF BREMEN, the chief authority for Scandinavian church history from A.D. 788-1072;

HAIMO (or Haymo, Aimo, a monk of Fulda, afterwards bishop of Halberstadt, d. 853), who described in ten books, mostly from Rufinus, the history of the first four centuries (*Historiae Sacrae Epitome*);

ANASTASIUS (about 872), the author in part of the *Liber Pontificalis*, i.e., biographies of the Popes till Stephen VI. (who died 891);

BARTHOLOMAEUS OF LUCCA. (about 1312), who composed a general church history from Christ to A.D. 1312;

ST. ANTONINUS (Antonio Pierozzi), archbishop of Florence (d. 1459), the author of the largest mediaeval work on secular and sacred history (*Summa Historialis*), from the creation to A.D. 1457.

Historical criticism began with the revival of letters, and revealed itself first in the doubts of Laurentius Valla (d. 1457) and Nicolaus of Cusa (d. 1464) concerning the genuineness of the donation of Constantine, the Isidorian Decretals, and other spurious documents, which are now as universally rejected as they were once universally accepted.

#### IV. Roman Catholic HISTORIANS.

The Roman Catholic Church was roused by the shock of the Reformation, in the sixteenth

century, to great activity in this and other departments of theology, and produced some works of immense learning and antiquarian research, but generally characterized rather by zeal for the papacy, and against Protestantism, than by the purely historical spirit. Her best historians are either Italians, and ultramontane in spirit, or Frenchmen, mostly on the side of the more liberal but less consistent Gallicanism.

(a) Italians:

First stands the Cardinal CAESAR BARONIUS (d. 1607), with his *Annales Ecclesiastici* (Rom. 1588 sqq.), in 12 folio volumes, on which he spent thirty years of unwearied study. They come down only to the year 1198, but are continued by RAYNALDI (TO 1565), LADERCHI (TO 1571), AND THEINER (to 1584).<sup>6</sup>

This truly colossal and monumental work is even to this day an invaluable storehouse of information from the Vatican library and other archives, and will always be consulted

<sup>6</sup> We omit the inferior continuations of the Polish Dominican, ABR. BZOVIVUS, from 1198 to 1565, in 8 vols., and of HENR. SPONDÉ, bishop of Pamiers, from 1197 to 1647, 2 vols. The best of the older editions, including the continuation of Raynaldi (but not of Laderchi) and the learned criticisms of Pagi and his nephew, was arranged by Archbishop MANSI, in 8 folios, Lucca, 1738-57. A hundred years later, a German scholar in Rome, AUGUSTIN THEINER, prefect of the Vatican Archives, resumed the continuation in 3 vols., embracing the pontificate of Gregory XIII. (A.D. 1572-'84), Rome and Paris, 1856, 3 vols fol, and hoped to bring the history down to the pontificate of PIUS VII., A.D. 1800, in 12 folios; but he interrupted the continuation, and began, in 1864, a new edition of the whole work (including Raynaldi and Laderchi), which is to be completed in 45 or 50 volumes, at Bar-le-Duc, France. Theiner was first a liberal Catholic, then an Ultramontanist, last an Old Catholic (in correspondence with Döllinger), excluded from the Vatican (1870), but pardoned by the pope, and died suddenly, 1874. His older brother, Johann Anton, became a Protestant.

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by professional scholars. It is written in dry, ever broken, unreadable style, and contains many spurious documents. It stands wholly on the ground of absolute papacy, and is designed as a positive refutation of the Magdeburg Centuries, though it does not condescend directly to notice them. It gave immense aid and comfort to the cause of Romanism, and was often epitomized and popularized in several languages. But it was also severely criticized, and in part refuted, not only by such Protestants as Casaubon, Spanheim, and Samuel Basnage, but by Roman Catholic scholars also, especially two French Franciscans, Antoine and François Pagi, who corrected the chronology.

Far less known and used than the Annals of Baronius is the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of CASPAR SACHARELLI, which comes down to A.D. 1185, and was published in Rome, 1771–1796, in 25 quarto volumes.

Invaluable contributions to historical collections and special researches have been made by other Italian scholars, as MURATORI, ZACCAGNI, ZACCARIA, MANSI, GALLANDI, PAOLO SARPI, PALLAVICINI (THE LAST TWO ON THE COUNCIL OF TRENT), THE THREE ASSEMANI, AND ANGELO MAI.

(b) French Catholic historians.

NATALIS (NOEL) ALEXANDER, Professor and Provincial of the Dominican order (d. 1724), wrote his *Historia Ecclesiastica Veteris et Nova Testamenti* to the year 1600 (Paris, 1676, 2d ed. 1699 sqq. 8 vols. fol.) in the spirit of Gallicanism, with great learning, but in dry scholastic style. Innocent XI. put it in the Index (1684). This gave rise to the corrected editions.

The abbot CLAUDE FLEURY (d. 1723), in his *Histoire ecclésiastique* (Par. 1691–1720, in 20 vols. quarto, down to A.D. 1414, continued by CLAUDE FABRE, a very decided Gallican, to A.D. 1595), furnished a much more popular work, commended by mildness of spirit and fluency of style, and as useful for edification as for instruction. It is a minute and, upon the whole, accurate narrative of the course of

events as they occurred, but without system and philosophical generalization, and hence tedious and wearisome. When Fleury was asked why he unnecessarily darkened his pages with so many discreditable facts, he properly replied that the survival and progress of Christianity, notwithstanding the vices and crimes of its professors and preachers, was the best proof of its divine origin. <sup>7</sup>

JACQUES BÉNIGNE BOSSUET, the distinguished bishop of Meaux (d. 1704), an advocate of Romanism on the one hand against Protestantism, but of Gallicanism on the other against Ultramontanism, wrote with brilliant eloquence, and in the spirit of the Catholic church, a universal history, in bold outlines for popular effect. This was continued in the German language by the Protestant Cramer, with less elegance but more thoroughness, and with special reference to the doctrine history of the middle age.

SEBASTIEN LE NAIN DE TILLEMONT (d. 1698), a French nobleman and priest, without office and devoted exclusively to study and prayer—a pupil and friend of the Jansenists and in partial sympathy with Gallicanism—composed a most learned and useful history of the first six centuries (till 513), in a series of minute biographies, with great skill and conscientiousness, almost entirely in the words of the original authorities, from which he carefully distinguishes his own additions. It is, as far as it goes, the most valuable church history produced by Roman Catholic industry and learning.

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<sup>7</sup> A portion of Fleury's History, from the second oecumenical Council to the end of the fourth century (A.D. 381-400), was published in English at Oxford, 1842, in three volumes, on the basis of Herbert's translation (London, 1728), carefully revised by John H Newman, who was at that time the theological leader of the Oxford Tractarian movement, and subsequently (1879) became a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church.

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Contemporaneously with Tillemont, the Gallican, L. ELLIES DUPIN (d. 1719), furnished a biographical and bibliographical church history down to the seventeenth century. REMI CEILLIER (d. 1761) followed with a similar work, which has the advantage of greater completeness and accuracy. The French Benedictines of the congregation of St. Maur, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, did immense service to historical theology by the best critical editions of the fathers and extensive archaeological works.

We can only mention the names of MABILLON, MASSUET, MONTFAUCON, D'ACHERY, RUINART, MARTÈNE, DURAND. AMONG THE JESUITS, SIRMOND AND PETAU occupy a prominent place.

The Abbé ROHRBACHER. (Professor of Church History at Nancy, d. 1856) wrote an extensive *Universal History of the Church*, including that of the Old Testament, down to 1848. It is less liberal than the great Gallican writers of the seventeenth century, but shows familiarity with German literature.

(c) German Catholic historians.

The pioneer of modern German Catholic historians of note is a poet and an ex-Protestant, Count LEOPOLD VON STOLBERG (d. 1819). With the enthusiasm of an honest, noble, and devout, but credulous convert, he began, in 1806, a very full *Geschichte der Religion Jesu Christi*, and brought it down in 15 volumes to the year 430. It was continued by F. KERZ (vols. 16–45, to A.D. 1192) and J. N. BRISCHAR (vols. 45–53, to A.D. 1245).

THEOD. KATERKAMP (d. at Münster, 1834) wrote a church history, in the same spirit and pleasing style, down to A.D. 1153. It remained unfinished, like the work of LOCHERER (d. 1837), which extends to 1073.

Bishop HEFELE'S *History of the Councils (Conciliengeschichte, 1855-'86; revised edition and continuation, 1873 sqq.)* is a most valuable contribution to the history of doctrine and discipline down to the Council of Trent.

The best compendious histories from the pens of German Romanists are produced by JOS. IGN. RITTER, Professor in Bonn and afterward in Breslau (d. 1857); JOH. ADAM MÖHLER, formerly Professor in Tübingen, and then in Munich, the author of the famous *Symbolik* (d. 1838); JOH. ALZOG (d. 1878); H. BRÜCK (MAYENCE, 2D ED., 1877); F. X. KRAUS (TREVES, 1873; 3D ED., 1882); CARD. HERGENRÖTHER (FREIBURG, 3D ED., 1886, 3 VOLS.); F. X. FUNK (Tübingen, 1886; 2d ed., 1890).

A. F. GFRÖRER (d. 1861) began his learned *General Church History* as a Protestant, or rather as a Rationalist (1841-'46, 4 vols., till A.D. 1056), and continued it from Gregory VII. on as a Romanist (1859-'61).

Dr. JOHN JOSEPH IGNATIUS DÖLLINGER (Professor in Munich, born 1799), the most learned historian of the Roman Church in the nineteenth century, represents the opposite course from popery to anti-popery. He began, but never finished, a *Handbook of Christian Church History* (Landshut, 1833, 2 vols.) till A.D. 680, and a *Manual of Church History* (1836, 2d ed., 1843, 2 vols.) to the fifteenth century, and in part to 1517. He wrote also learned works against the Reformation (*Die Reformation, 1846-'48*, in 3 vols.), on *Hippolytus and Callistus* (1853), on the preparation for Christianity (*Heidenthum u Judenthum, 1857*), *Christianity and the Church in the time of its Founding (1860)*, *The Church and the Churches (1862)*, *Papal Fables of the Middle Age (1865)*, *The Pope and the Council* (under the assumed name of "Janus," 1869), etc.

During the Vatican Council in 1870 Döllinger broke with Rome, became the theological leader of the Old Catholic recession, and was excommunicated by the Archbishop of Munich (his former pupil), April 17, 1871, as being guilty of "the crime of open and formal heresy." He knows too much of church history to believe in the infallibility of the pope. He solemnly declared (March 28, 1871) that "as a Christian, as a theologian, as a historian, and

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as a citizen," he could not accept the Vatican decrees, because they contradict the spirit of the gospel and the genuine tradition of the church, and, if carried out, must involve church and state, the clergy and the laity, in irreconcilable conflict.

#### V. THE PROTESTANT CHURCH HISTORIANS.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century is the mother church history as a science and art in the proper sense of term. It seemed at first to break off from the past and to depreciate church history, by going back directly to the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice, and especially to look most unfavorably on the Catholic middle age, as a progressive corruption of the apostolic doctrine and discipline.

On the other hand, it exalted primitive Christianity, and awakened a new and enthusiastic interest in all the documents of the apostolic church, with an energetic effort to reproduce its spirit and institutions. It really repudiated only the later tradition in favor of the older, taking its stand upon the primitive historical basis of Christianity.

Then again, in the course of controversy with Rome, Protestantism found it desirable and necessary to wrest from its opponent not only the scriptural argument, but also the historical, and to turn it as far as possible to the side of the evangelical cause. For the Protestants could never deny that the true Church of Christ is built on a rock, and has the promise of indestructible permanence.

Finally, the Reformation, by liberating the mind from the yoke of a despotic ecclesiastical authority, gave an entirely new impulse, directly or indirectly to free investigation in every department, and produced that historical criticism which claims to clear fact from the accretions of fiction, and to bring out the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, of history.

Of course this criticism may run to the extreme of rationalism and skepticism, which oppose the authority of the apostles and of

Christ himself; as it actually did for a time, especially in Germany. But the abuse of free investigation proves nothing against the right use of it; and is to be regarded only as a temporary aberration, from which all sound minds will return to a due appreciation of history, as a truly rational unfolding of the plan of redemption, and a standing witness for the all-ruling providence of God, and the divine character of the Christian religion.

(a) German, Swiss, and Dutch historians.

Protestant church historiography has thus far flourished most on German soil. A patient and painstaking industry and conscientious love of truth and justice qualify German scholars for the mining operations of research which bring forth the raw material for the manufacturer; while French and English historians know best how to utilize and popularize the material for the general reader.

The following are the principal works:

MATTHIAS FLACIUS (D 1575), SURNAMED ILLYRICUS, a zealous Lutheran, and an unsparing enemy of Papists, Calvinists, and Melancthonians, heads the list of Protestant historians with his great *Eccelesiastica Historia Novi Testamenti, commonly called Centuriae Magdeburgenses* (Basle, 1560-'74), covering thirteen centuries of the Christian era in as many folio volumes. He began the work in Magdeburg, in connection with ten other, scholars of like Spirit and zeal, and in the face of innumerable difficulties, for the purpose of exposing the corruptions and, errors of the papacy, and of proving the doctrines of the Lutheran Reformation orthodox by the "witnesses of the truth" in all ages.

The tone is therefore controversial throughout, and quite as partial as that of the Annals of Baronius on the papal side. The style is tasteless and repulsive, but the amount of persevering labor, the immense, though ill-digested and unwieldy mass of material, and the boldness of the criticism, are imposing and astonishing.



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The "Centuries" broke the path of free historical study, and are the first general church history deserving of the name. They introduced also a new method. They divide the material by centuries, and each century by a uniform Procrustean scheme of not less than sixteen rubrics. This plan destroys all symmetry, and occasions wearisome diffuseness and repetition. Yet, in spite of its mechanical uniformity and stiffness, it is more scientific than the annalistic or chronicle method, and, with material improvements and considerable curtailment of rubrics, it has been followed to this day.

The Swiss, J. H. HOTTINGER (d. 1667), in his *Historia Ecclesiastica N. Testamenti* (Zurich, 1655-'67, 9 vols. fol.), furnished a Reformed counterpart to the Magdeburg Centuries. It is less original and vigorous, but more sober and moderate. It comes down to the sixteenth century, to which alone five volumes are devoted.

From FRED. SPANHEIM of Holland (d. 1649) we have a *Summa Historia Ecclesiasticae* (Lugd. Bat. 1689), coming down to the sixteenth century. It is based on a thorough and critical knowledge of the sources, and serves at the same time as a refutation of Baronius.

A new path was broken by GOTTFRIED ARNOLD (d. 1714), in his *Impartial History of the Church and Heretics to A.D. 1688*. He is the historian of the pietistic and mystic school. He made subjective piety the test of the true faith, and the persecuted sects the main channel of true Christianity; while the reigning church from Constantine down, and indeed not the Catholic church only, but the orthodox Lutheran with it, he represented as a progressive apostasy, a Babylon full of corruption and abomination.

In this way he boldly and effectually broke down the walls of ecclesiastical exclusiveness and bigotry; but at the same time, without intending or suspecting it, he opened the way to a rationalistic and skeptical treatment of history. While, in his zeal for impartiality and

personal piety, he endeavored to do justice to all possible heretics and sectaries, he did great injustice to the supporters of orthodoxy and ecclesiastical order. Arnold was also the first to use the German language instead of the Latin in learned history; but his style is tasteless and insipid.

J. L. VON MOSHEIM (Chancellor of the University at Göttingen, d. 1755), a moderate and impartial Lutheran, is the father of church historiography as an *art*, unless we prefer to concede this merit to Bossuet. In skilful construction, clear, though mechanical and monotonous arrangement, critical sagacity, pragmatic combination, freedom from passion, almost bordering on cool indifference, and in easy elegance of Latin style, he surpasses all his predecessors. His well-known *Institutiones Historiae Ecclesiasticae antiquae et recentioris* (Helmstädt, 1755) follows the centurial plan of Flacius, but in simpler form, and, as translated and supplemented by Maclaine, and Murdock, is still used extensively as a text-book in England and America.

J. M. SCHRÖCKH (d. 1808), a pupil of Mosheim, but already touched with the neological spirit which Semler (d. 1791) introduced into the historical theology of Germany, wrote with unwearied industry the largest Protestant church history after the Magdeburg Centuries. He very properly forsook the centurial plan still followed by Mosheim, and adopted the periodic. His *Christian Church History* comprises forty-five volumes, and reaches to the end of the eighteenth century. It is written in diffuse but clear and easy style, with reliable knowledge of sources, and in a mild and candid spirit, and is still a rich storehouse of historical matter.

The very learned *Institutiones Historiae Ecclesiasticae V. et N. Testamenti* of the Dutch Reformed divine, H. VENEMA (d. 1787), contain the history of the Jewish and Christian Church down to the end of the

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sixteenth century (Lugd. Bat. 1777-'83, in seven parts).

H. P. C. HENKE (d. 1809) is the leading representative of the rationalistic church historiography, which ignores Christ in history. In his spirited and able *Allgemeine Geschichte der christlichen Kirche*, continued by Vater (Braunschweig, 1788-1820, 9 vols.), the church appears not as the temple of God on earth, but as a great infirmary and bedlam.

AUGUST NEANDER. (Professor of Church History in Berlin, d. 1850), the "father of modern church history," a child in spirit, a giant in learning, and a saint in piety, led back the study of history from the dry heath of rationalism to the fresh fountain of divine life in Christ, and made it a grand source of edification as well as instruction for readers of every creed. His *General History of the Christian Religion and Church* begins after the apostolic age (which he treated in a separate work), and comes down to the Council of Basle in 1430, the continuation being interrupted by his death.

It is distinguished for thorough and conscientious use of the sources, critical research, ingenious combination, tender love of truth and justice, evangelical catholicity, hearty piety, and by masterly analysis of the doctrinal systems and the subjective Christian life of men of God in past ages.

The edifying character is not introduced from without, but naturally grows out of his conception of church history, viewed as a continuous revelation of Christ's presence and power in humanity, and as an illustration of the parable of the leaven which gradually pervades and transforms the whole lump. The political and artistic sections, and the outward machinery of history, were not congenial to the humble, guileless simplicity of Neander.

His style is monotonous, involved, and diffuse, but unpretending, natural, and warmed by a genial glow of sympathy and enthusiasm. It illustrates his motto: *Pectus est quod theologum facit*.

Torrey's excellent translation (Rose translated only the first three centuries), published in Boston, Edinburgh, and London, in multiplied editions, has given Neander's immortal work even a much larger circulation in England and America than it has in Germany itself.

Besides this general history, Neander's indefatigable industry produced also special works on the Life of Christ (1837, 4th ed. 1845), the Apostolic Age (1832, 4th ed. 1842, translated by J. E. Ryland, Edinburgh, 1842, and again by E. G. Robinson, N. York, 1865), Memorials of Christian Life (1823, 3d ed. 1845, 3 vols.), the Gnostic Heresies (1818), and biographies of representative characters, as Julian the Apostate (1812), St. Bernard (1813, 2d ed. 1848), St. Chrysostom (1822, 3d ed. 1848), and Tertullian (1825, 2d ed. 1849). His *History of Christian Doctrines* was published after his death by Jacobi (1855), and translated by J. E. Ryland (Lond., 1858).

From J. C. L. GIESELER (Professor of Church History in Göttingen, d. 1854), a profoundly learned, acute, calm, impartial, conscientious, but cold and dry scholar, we have a *Textbook of Church History* from the birth of Christ to 1854. He takes Tillemont's method of giving the history in the very words of the sources; only he does not form the text from them, but throws them into notes. The chief excellence of this invaluable and indispensable work is in its very carefully selected and critically elucidated extracts from the original authorities down to the year 1648 (as far as he edited the work himself).

The skeleton-like text presents, indeed, the leading facts clearly and concisely, but does not reach the inward life and spiritual marrow of the church of Christ. The theological views of Gieseler hardly rise above the jejune rationalism of Wegscheider, to whom he dedicated a portion of his history; and with all his attempt at impartiality he cannot altogether conceal the negative effect of a rationalistic conception of Christianity, which acts like a chill upon the



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narrative of its history, and substitutes a skeleton of dry bones for a living organism. Neander and Gieseler matured their works in respectful and friendly rivalry, during the same period of thirty years of slow, but solid and steady growth. The former is perfectly subjective, and reproduces the original sources in a continuous warm and sympathetic composition, which reflects at the same time the author's own mind and heart; the latter is purely objective, and speaks with the indifference of an outside spectator, through the *ipsissima verba* of the same sources, arranged as notes, and strung together simply by a slender thread of narrative.

The one gives the history ready-made, and full of life and instruction; the other furnishes the material and leaves the reader to animate and improve it for himself. With the one, the text is everything; with the other, the notes. But both admirably complete each other, and exhibit together the ripest fruit of German scholarship in general church history in the first half of the nineteenth century.

FERDINAND CHRISTIAN BAUR (Prof. of Church History in Tübingen, d. 1860) must be named alongside with Neander and Gieseler in the front rank of German church historians. He was equal to both in independent and thorough scholarship, superior in constructive criticism and philosophical generalization, but inferior in well-balanced judgment and solid merit.

He over-estimated theories and tendencies, and undervalued persons and facts. He was an indefatigable investigator and bold innovator. He completely revolutionized the history of apostolic and post-apostolic Christianity, and resolved its rich spiritual life of faith and love into a purely speculative process of conflicting tendencies, which started from an antagonism of Petrinism and Paulinism, and were ultimately reconciled in the compromise of ancient Catholicism.

He fully brought to light, by a keen critical analysis, the profound intellectual

fermentation of the primitive church, but eliminated from it the supernatural and miraculous element; yet as an honest and serious sceptic he had to confess at last a psychological miracle in the conversion of St. Paul, and to bow before the greater miracle of the resurrection of Christ, without which the former is an inexplicable enigma. His critical researches and speculations gave a powerful stimulus to a reconsideration and modification of the traditional views on early Christianity.

We have from his fertile pen a general *History of the Christian Church*, in five volumes (1853–1863), three of which were, published after his death and lack the originality and careful finish of the first and second, which cover the first six centuries; *Lectures on Christian Doctrine History* (*Dogmengeschichte*), published by his son (1865–'67, in 3 volumes), and a brief *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, edited by himself (1847, 2d ed. 1858).

Even more valuable are his monographs: on *St. Paul*, for whom he had a profound veneration, although he recognized only four of his Epistles as genuine (1845, 2d ed. by E. Zeller, 1867, 2 vols., translated into English, 1875); on *Gnosticism*, with which he had a strong spiritual affinity (*Die christliche Gnosis oder die christliche Religionsphilosophie*, 1835); the history of the Doctrine of the *Atonement* (1838, 1 vol.), and of the *Trinity and Incarnation* (1841–'43, in 3 vols.), and his masterly vindication of Protestantism against Möhler's *Symbolik* (2d ed. 1836).

KARL RUDOLPH HAGENBACH (Professor of Church History at Basel, d. 1874) wrote, in the mild and impartial spirit of Neander, with poetic taste and good judgment, and in pleasing popular style, a general *History of the Christian Church* in seven volumes (4th ed. 1868–'72), and a *History of Christian Doctrines*, in two volumes (1841, 4th ed. 1857).

Protestant Germany is richer than any other country in, manuals and compends of church

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history for the use of students. We mention ENGELHARDT (1834), NIEDNER (*Geschichte der christl. Kirche*, 1846, and *Lehrbuch*, 1866), HASE (11TH ED. 1886), GUERICKE (9TH ED. 1866, 3 VOLS.), LINDNER (1848-'54), JACOBI (1850, unfinished), FRICKE (1850), KURTZ (*Lehrbuch*, 10th ed. 1887, in 2 vols., the larger *Handbuch*, unfinished), HASSE (edited by Köhler, 1864, in 3 small vols.), KÖLLNER (1864), EBRARD (1866) 2 vols.), ROTHE (lectures edited by WEINGARTEN, 1875, 2 vols.), HERZOG (1876-'82, 3 vols.), H. SCHMID (1881, 2 vols.). Niedner's *Lehrbuch* (1866) stands first for independent and thorough scholarship, but is heavy. Hase's Compend is unsurpassed for condensation, wit, point, and artistic taste, as a miniature picture. Herzog's *Abriss* keeps the medium between voluminous fulness and enigmatic brevity, and is written in a candid Christian spirit. Kurtz is clear, concise, and evangelical. A new manual was begun by MÖLLER, 1889.

The best works on doctrine history (*Dogmengeschichte*) are by MÜNSCHER, GEISELER, NEANDER, BAUR, HAGENBACH, THOMASIVS, H. SCHMID, NITZSCH, AND HARNACK (1887).

It is impossible to do justice here to the immense service which Protestant Germany has done to special departments of church history. Most of the fathers, popes, schoolmen and reformers, and the principal doctrines of Christianity have been made the subject of minute and exhaustive historical treatment. We have already mentioned the monographs of Neander and Baur, and fully equal to them are such masterly and enduring works as ROTHE'S *Beginnings of the Christian Church*, ULLMANN'S *Reformers before the Reformation*, HASSE'S *Anselm of Canterbury*, and DORNER'S *History of Christology*.

(b) French works.

Dr. ETIENNE L. CHASTEL (Professor of Church History in the National Church at Geneva, d. 1886) wrote a complete *Histoire du Christianisme* (Paris, 1881-'85, 5 vols.).

Dr. MERLE D'AUBIGNÉ (Professor of Church History in the independent Reformed Seminary at Geneva, d. 1872) reproduced in elegant and eloquent French an extensive history both of the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation, with an evangelical enthusiasm and a dramatic vivacity which secured it an extraordinary circulation in England and America (far greater, than on the Continent), and made it the most popular work on that important period. Its value as a history is somewhat diminished by polemical bias and the occasional want of accuracy. Dr. Merle conceived the idea of the work during the celebration of the third centenary of the German Reformation in 1817, in the Wartburg at Eisenach, where Luther translated, the New Testament and threw his inkstand at the devil. He labored on it till the year of his death.

Dr. EDMUND DE PRESSENSÉ (pastor of a free church in Paris, member of the National Assembly, then senator of France), and able scholar, with evangelical Protestant convictions similar to those of Dr. Merle, wrote a *Life of Christ* against Renan, and a *History of Ancient Christianity*, both of which are translated into English.

ERNEST RENAN, the celebrated Orientalist and member of the French Academy, prepared from the opposite standpoint of sceptical criticism, and mixing history with romance, but in brilliant, and fascinating style, the *Life of Christ*, and the history of the *Beginnings of Christianity* to the middle of the second century.

(c) English works.

English literature is rich in works on Christian antiquity, English church history, and other special departments, but poor in general histories of Christianity.

The first place among English historians, perhaps, is due to EDWARD GIBBON (d. 1794). In his monumental *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (finished after twenty years' labor, at Lausanne, June 27, 1787), he notices

throughout the chief events in ecclesiastical history from the introduction of the Christian religion to the times of the crusades and the capture of Constantinople (1453), with an accurate knowledge of the chief sources and the consummate skill of a master in the art of composition, with occasional admiration for heroic characters like Athanasius and Chrysostom, but with a keener eye to the failings of Christians and the imperfections of the visible church, and unfortunately without sympathy and understanding of the spirit of Christianity which runs like a golden thread even through the darkest centuries.

He conceived the idea of his magnificent work in papal Rome, among the ruins of the Capitol, and in tracing the gradual decline and fall of imperial Rome, which he calls "the greatest, perhaps, and most awful scene in the history of mankind," he has involuntarily become a witness to the gradual growth and triumph of the religion of the cross, of which no historian of the future will ever record a history of decline and fall, though some "lonely traveler from New Zealand," taking his stand on "a broken arch" of the bridge of St. Angelo, may sketch the ruins of St. Peter's.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Cardinal Newman, shortly before his transition from Oxford Tractarianism to Romanism (in his essay on Development of Christian Doctrine, 1845), declared "the infidel Gibbon to be the chief, perhaps the only English writer who has any claim to be considered an ecclesiastical historian." This is certainly not true any longer. Dr. McDonald, in an essay "Was Gibbon an infidel?" (in the "Bibliotheca Sacra" for July, 1868, Andover, Ham.), tried to vindicate him against the charge of infidelity. But Gibbon was undoubtedly a Deist and deeply affected by the skepticism of Hume and Voltaire. While a student at Oxford he was converted to Romanism by reading Bossuet's Variations of Protestantism, and afterwards passed over to infidelity, with scarcely a ray of hope of any immortality but that of fame. See his Autobiography, Ch. VIII., and his letter to Lord Sheffield of April 27, 1793, where he says that his "only consolation" in view

JOSEPH MILNER (Vicar of Hull, d. 1797) wrote a *History of the Church of Christ* for popular edification, selecting those portions which best suited his standard of evangelical orthodoxy and piety. "Nothing," he says in the preface, "but what appears to me to belong to Christ's kingdom shall be admitted; genuine piety is the only thing I intend to celebrate. He may be called the English Arnold, less learned, but free from polemics and far more readable and useful than the German pietist. His work was corrected and continued by his brother, *Isaac Milner (d. 1820)*, by *Thomas Grantham* and Dr. *Stebbing*

Dr. WADDINGTON (Dean of Durham) prepared three volumes on the history of the Church before the Reformation (1835) and three volumes on the Continental Reformation (1841). Evangelical.

Canon JAMES C. ROBERTSON of Canterbury (Prof. of Church History in King's College, d. 1882) brings his *History of the Christian Church* from the Apostolic Age down to the Reformation (A.D. 64–1517). The work was first published in four octavo volumes (1854 sqq.) and then in eight duodecimo volumes (Lond. 1874), and is the best, as it is the latest, general church history written by an Episcopalian. It deserves praise for its candor, moderation, and careful indication of authorities.

From CHARLES HARDWICK (Archdeacon of Ely, d. 1859) we have a useful manual of the Church History of the *Middle Age* (1853, 3d ed. by Prof. *W. Stubbs*, 1872), and another on the Reformation (1856, 3d ed. by *W. Stubbs*, London, 1873). His *History of the Anglican Articles of Religion* (1859) is a valuable contribution to English church history.

Dr. TRENCH, Archbishop of Dublin, has published his *Lectures on Mediaeval Church History* (Lond. 1877), delivered before the girls of Queen's College, London. They are

of death and the trials of life was "the presence of a friend." Best ed. of Gibbon, by W. Smith.

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conceived in a spirit of devout churchly piety and interspersed with judicious reflections.

PHILIP SMITH'S *History of the Christian Church during the First Ten Centuries (1879)*, and *during the Middle Ages (1885)*, in 2 vols., is a skilful and useful manual for students.

The most popular and successful modern church historians in the English or any other language are Dean MILMAN of St. Paul's, Dean STANLEY of Westminster Abbey, and Archdeacon FARRAR OF WESTMINSTER. They belong to the broad church school of the Church of England, are familiar with Continental learning, and adorn their chosen themes with all the charms of elegant, eloquent, and picturesque diction. HENRY HART MILMAN (d. 1868) describes, with the stately march of Gibbon and as a counterpart of his decline and fall of Paganism, the rise and progress of Ancient and Latin Christianity, with special reference to its bearing on the progress of civilization. ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY (d. 1881) unrolls a picture gallery of great men and events in the Jewish theocracy, from Abraham to the Christian era, and in the Greek church, from Constantine the Great to Peter the Great. FREDERIC W. FARRAR (b. 1831) illuminates with classical and rabbinical learning, and with exuberant rhetoric the Life of Christ, and of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and the Early Days of Christianity.

(d) American works.

American literature is still in its early youth, but rapidly growing in every department of knowledge. PRESCOTT, WASHINGTON IRVING, MOTLEY, and BANCROFT have cultivated interesting portions of the history of Spain, Holland, and the United States, and have taken rank among the classical historians in the English language.

In ecclesiastical history the Americans have naturally so far been mostly in the attitude of learners and translators, but with every prospect of becoming producers. They have, as already noticed, furnished the best

translations of Mosheim, Neander, and Gieseler.

HENRY B. SMITH (late Professor in the Union Theol. Seminary, New York, d. 1877) has prepared the best Chronological Tables of Church History, which present in parallel columns a synopsis of the external and internal history of Christianity, including that of America, down to 1858, with lists of Councils, Popes, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, and Moderators of General Assemblies.

W. G. T. SHEDD (Professor in the same institution, b. 1820) wrote from the standpoint of Calvinistic orthodoxy an eminently readable *History of Christian Doctrine* (N. York, 1863, 2 vols.), in clear, fresh, and vigorous English, dwelling chiefly on theology, anthropology, and soteriology, and briefly touching on eschatology, but entirely omitting the doctrine of the Church and the sacraments, with the connected controversies.

PHILIP SCHAFF is the author of a special *History of the Apostolic Church*, in English and German (N. York, 1853, etc., and Leipzig, 1854), of a *History of the Creeds of Christendom* (N. York, 4th ed., 1884, 3 vols., with documents original and translated), and of a general *History of the Christian Church* (N. York and Edinb., 1859-'67, in 3 vols.; also in German, Leipzig, 1867; rewritten and enlarged, N. Y. and Edinb., 1882-'88; third revision, 1889, 5 vols.; to be continued).

GEORGE P. FISHER (Professor in New Haven, b. 1827) has written the best manual in the English language: *History of the Christian Church with Maps*. N. York, 1887. He has also published a *History of the Reformation (1873)*; *Beginnings of Christianity (1877)*, and *Outlines of Universal History (1885)*,—all in a calm, amiable, and judicious spirit, and a clear, chaste style.

Contributions to interesting chapters in the history of Protestantism are numerous. Dr. E. H. GILLET (d. 1875) wrote a Monograph on *John Hus* (N. York, 1864, 2 vols.), a *History of*

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*the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (Philad. 1864, 2 vols.), and a *History of Natural Theology (God in Human Thought*, N. York, 1874, 2 vols.); Dr. ABEL STEVENS, a *History of Methodism*, viewed as the great religious revival of the eighteenth century, down to the centenary celebration of 1839 (N. York, 1858-'61, 3 vols.), and a *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States* (1864-'67, 4 vols.); HENRY M. BAIRD, a *History of the Rise and Progress of the Huguenots in France* (N. York, 1879, 2 vols.), and *The Huguenots and Henry of Navarre* (1886, 2 vols.).

The denominational and sectarian divisions of American Christianity seem to be unfavorable to the study and cultivation of general church history, which requires a large-hearted catholic spirit. But, on the other hand, the social and national intermingling of ecclesiastical organizations of every variety of doctrine and discipline, on a basis of perfect freedom and equality before the law, widens the horizon, and facilitates comparison and appreciation of variety in unity and unity in variety; while the growth and prosperity of the churches on the principle of self-support and self-government encourages a hopeful view of the future. America falls heir to the whole wealth of European Christianity and civilization, and is in a favorable position to review and reproduce in due time the entire course of Christ's kingdom in the old world with the faith and freedom of the new.

(e) Finally, we must mention biblical and ecclesiastical Encyclopaedias which contain a large number of valuable contributions to church history from leading scholars of the age, viz.:

1. The *Bible Dictionaries* of WINER. (LEIPZIG, 1820, 3d ed. 1847, 2 vols.); SCHENKEL (Leipzig, 1869-'75, 5 vols.); RIEHM KITTO (Edinb., 1845, third revised ed. by W. L. ALEXANDER, 1862-'65, 3 vols.); WM. SMITH (LONDON, 1860-'64, in 3 vols., American edition much enlarged and improved by H. HACKETT and E. ABBOT, N. York, 1870, in 4

vols.); PH. SCHAFF (Philadelphia, 1880, with maps and illustrations; 4th ed., revised, 1887).

2. The *Biblical and Historical Dictionaries* of HERZOG (*Real-Encyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, Gotha 1854 to 1868, in 22 vols., new ed. thoroughly revised by HERZOG, PLITT AND HAUCK, Leipzig, 1877-'88, in 18 vols.), SCHAFF-HERZOG (*Religious Encyclopaedia*, based on Herzog but condensed, supplemented, and adapted to English and American students, edited by Philip Schaff in connection with Samuel M. Jackson and D. S. Schaff, N. York and Edinburgh, revised ed., 1887, in 3 vols., with a supplementary vol. on *Living Divines and Christian Workers*, 1887); WETZER and WELTE (*Roman Catholic Kirchenlexicon*, Freiburg i. Breisgau, 1847-1860, in 12 vols.; second ed. newly elaborated by Cardinal JOSEPH HERGENRÖTHER and Dr. FRANZ KAULEN, 1880 sqq., promised in 10 vols.); LICHTENBERGER. (*Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, Paris, 1877-'82, in 13 vols., with supplement); MCCLINTOCK and STRONG (*Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, New York, 1867-'81, 10 vols. and two supplementary volumes, 1885 and 1887, largely illustrated). The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (9th ed., completed 1889 in 25 vols.) contains also many elaborate articles on biblical and ecclesiastical topics.

3. For ancient church history down to the age of Charlemagne: SMITH and CHEETHAM, *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* (London and Boston, 1875, 2 vols.); SMITH and WACE, *Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrines during the first eight centuries* (London and Boston, 1877-'87, 4 vols.). The articles in these two works are written mostly by scholars of the Church of England, and are very valuable for fulness and accuracy of information.

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## **VOL 1: Chapter 1. Preparation for Christianity in the History of the Jewish and Heathen World**

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### **1.8 Position of Christ in History**

To see clearly the relation of the Christian religion to the preceding history of mankind, and to appreciate its vast influence upon all future ages, we must first glance at the preparation which existed in the political, moral, and religious condition of the world for the advent of our Saviour.

As religion is the deepest and holiest concern of man, the entrance of the Christian religion into history is the most momentous of all events. It is the end of the old world and the beginning of the new. It was a great idea of Dionysius "the Little" to date our era from the birth of our Saviour. Jesus Christ, the God-Man, the prophet, priest, and king of mankind, is, in fact, the centre and turning-point not only of chronology, but of all history, and the key to all its mysteries.

Around him, as the sun of the moral universe, revolve at their several distances, all nations and all important events, in the religious life of the world; and all must, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, contribute to glorify his name and advance his cause. The history of mankind before his birth must be viewed as a preparation for his coming, and the history after his birth as a gradual diffusion of his spirit and progress of his kingdom. "All things were created by him, and for him." He is "the desire of all nations." He appeared in the "fullness of time,"<sup>9</sup> when the process of preparation was finished, and

<sup>9</sup> Mark 1:15; Gal. 4:4



the world's need of redemption fully disclosed.

This preparation for Christianity began properly with the very creation of man, who was made in the image of God, and destined for communion with him through the eternal Son; and with the promise of salvation which God gave to our first parents as a star of hope to guide them through the darkness of sin and error.<sup>10</sup> Vague memories of a primitive paradise and subsequent fall, and hopes of a future redemption, survive even in the heathen religions.

With Abraham, about nineteen hundred years before Christ, the religious development of humanity separates into the two independent, and, in their compass, very unequal branches of Judaism and heathenism. These meet and unite—at last in Christ as the common Saviour, the fulfiller of the types and prophecies, desires and hopes of the ancient world; while at the same time the ungodly elements of both league in deadly hostility against him, and thus draw forth the full revelation of his all—conquering power of truth and love.

As Christianity is the reconciliation and union of God and man in and through Jesus Christ, the God-Man, it must have been preceded by a twofold process of preparation, an approach of God to man, and an approach of man to God.

In Judaism the preparation is direct and positive, proceeding from above downwards, and ending with the birth of the Messiah. In heathenism it is indirect and mainly, though not entirely, negative, proceeding from below upwards, and ending with a helpless cry of mankind for redemption. There we have a special revelation or self-communication of the only true God by word and deed, ever growing clearer and plainer, till at last the divine Logos appears in human nature, to raise it to communion with himself; here men,

<sup>10</sup> Gen. 3:15

guided indeed by the general providence of God, and lighted by the glimmer of the Logos shining in the darkness,<sup>11</sup> yet unaided by direct revelation, and left to "walk in their own ways,"<sup>12</sup> "that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him."

<sup>13</sup> In Judaism the true religion is prepared for man; in heathenism man is prepared for the true religion. There the divine substance is begotten; here the human forms are molded to receive it. The former is like the elder son in the parable, who abode in his father's house; the latter like the prodigal, who squandered his portion, yet at last shuddered before the gaping abyss of perdition, and penitently returned to the bosom of his father's compassionate love.<sup>14</sup> Heathenism is the starry night, full of darkness and fear, but of mysterious presage also, and of anxious waiting for the light of day; Judaism, the dawn, full of the fresh hope and promise of the rising sun; both lose themselves in the sunlight of Christianity, and attest its claim to be the only true and the perfect religion for mankind.

The heathen preparation again was partly intellectual and literary, partly political and social. The former is represented by the Greeks, the latter by the Romans.

Jerusalem, the holy city, Athens, the city of culture, and Rome, the city of power, may stand for the three factors in that preparatory history which ended in the birth of Christianity.

This process of preparation for redemption in the, history of the world, the groping of heathenism after the "unknown God"<sup>15</sup> and inward peace, and the legal struggle and

<sup>11</sup> John 1:5; Rom 1:19, 20; 2:14, 15.

<sup>12</sup> Acts 14:16.

<sup>13</sup> Acts 17:26, 27.

<sup>14</sup> Luke 15:11-32.

<sup>15</sup> Acts 17:23.

comforting hope of Judaism, repeat themselves in every individual believer; for man is made for Christ, and "his heart is restless, till it rests in Christ."

## 1.9 Judaism

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- "Salvation is of the Jews." <sup>16</sup> This wonderful people, whose fit symbol is the burning bush, was chosen by sovereign grace to stand amidst the surrounding idolatry as the bearer of the knowledge of the only true God, his holy law, and cheering promise, and thus to become the cradle of the Messiah. It arose with the calling of Abraham, and the covenant of Jehovah with him in Canaan, the land of

<sup>16</sup> John 4:22. Comp. Luke 24:47; Rom. 9:4, 5.

promise; grew to a nation in Egypt, the land of bondage; was delivered and organized into a theocratic state on the basis of the law of Sinai by Moses in the wilderness; was led back into Palestine by Joshua; became, after the Judges, a monarchy, reaching the height of its glory in David and Solomon; split into two hostile kingdoms, and, in punishment for internal discord and growing apostasy to idolatry, was carried captive by heathen conquerors; was restored after seventy years' humiliation to the land of its fathers, but fell again under the yoke of heathen foes; yet in its deepest abasement fulfilled its highest mission by giving birth to the Saviour of the world.

"The history of the Hebrew people," says Ewald, "is, at the foundation, the history of the true religion growing through all the stages of progress unto its consummation; the religion which, on its narrow national territory, advances through all struggles to the highest victory, and at length reveals itself in its full glory and might, to the end that, spreading abroad by its own irresistible energy, it may never vanish away, but may become the eternal heritage and blessing of all nations. The whole ancient world had for its object to seek the true religion; but this people alone finds its being and honor on earth exclusively in the true religion, and thus it enters upon the stage of history."<sup>17</sup>

Judaism, in sharp contrast with the idolatrous nations of antiquity, was like an oasis in a desert, clearly defined and isolated; separated and enclosed by a rigid moral and ceremonial law. The holy land itself, though in the midst of the three Continents of the ancient world, and surrounded by the great nations of ancient culture, was separated from them by deserts south and east, by sea on the west, and by mountain on the north; thus securing to the Mosaic religion freedom to unfold itself and to fulfil its great work without disturbing influenced from abroad.

<sup>17</sup> Geschichte du Volkes Israel, Vol. I. p. 9 (3d ed.).

Israel carried in its bosom from the first the large promise, that in Abraham's seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

Abraham, the father of the faithful, Moses, the lawgiver, David, the heroic king and sacred psalmist, Isaiah, the evangelist among the prophets, Elijah the Tishbite, who reappeared with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration to do homage to Jesus, and John the Baptist, the impersonation of the whole Old Testament, are the most conspicuous links in the golden chain of the ancient revelation.

The outward circumstances and the moral and religious condition of the Jews at the birth of Christ would indeed seem at first and on the whole to be in glaring contradiction with their divine destiny. But, in the first place, their very degeneracy proved the need of divine help. In the second place, the redemption through Christ appeared by contrast in the greater glory, as a creative act of God. And finally, amidst the mass of corruption, as a preventive of putrefaction, lived the succession of the true children of Abraham, longing for the salvation of Israel, and ready to embrace Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world.

Since the conquest of Jerusalem by Pompey, B.C. 63 (the year made memorable by the consulship of Cicero, the conspiracy of Catiline, and the birth of Caesar Augustus), the Jews had been subject to the heathen Romans, who heartlessly governed them by the Idumean Herod and his sons, and afterwards by procurators. Under this hated yoke their Messianic hopes were powerfully raised, but carnally distorted.

They longed chiefly for a political deliverer, who should restore the temporal dominion of David on a still more splendid scale; and they were offended with the servant form of Jesus, and with his spiritual kingdom. Their morals were outwardly far better than those of the heathen; but under the garb of strict obedience to their law, they concealed great corruption.

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They are pictured in the New Testament as a stiff-necked, ungrateful, and impenitent race, the seed of the serpent, a generation of vipers. Their own priest and historian, Josephus, who generally endeavored to present his countrymen to the Greeks and Romans in the most favorable light, describes them as at that time a debased and wicked people, well deserving their fearful punishment in the destruction of Jerusalem.

As to religion, the Jews, especially after the Babylonian captivity, adhered most tenaciously to the letter of the law, and to their traditions and ceremonies, but without knowing the spirit and power of the Scriptures. They cherished a bigoted horror of the heathen, and were therefore despised and hated by them as misanthropic, though by their judgment, industry, and tact, they were able to gain wealth and consideration in all the larger cities of the Roman empire.

After the time of the Maccabees (B.C. 150), they fell into three mutually hostile sects or parties, which respectively represent the three tendencies of formalism, skepticism, and mysticism; all indicating the approaching dissolution of the old religion and the dawn of the new. We may compare them to the three prevailing schools of Greek philosophy—the Stoic, the Epicurean, and the Platonic, and also to the three sects of Mohammedanism—the Sunnis, who are traditionalists, the Sheas, who adhere to the Koran, and the Sufis or mystics, who seek true religion in "internal divine sensation."

1. The PHARISEES, the "separate,"<sup>18</sup> were, so to speak, the Jewish Stoics. They represented the traditional orthodoxy and stiff formalism, the legal self-righteousness and the fanatical bigotry of Judaism. They had most influence with the people and the women, and controlled the public worship. They

<sup>18</sup> They were separated from ordinary persons and all foreign and contaminating influences by the supposed correctness of their creed and the superior holiness of their life. Ewald (IV. 482):

confounded piety with theoretical orthodoxy. They overloaded the holy Scriptures with the traditions of the elders so as to make the Scriptures "of none effect."

They analyzed the Mosaic law to death, and substituted a labyrinth of casuistry for a living code. "They laid heavy burdens and grievous to be borne on men's shoulders," and yet they themselves would "not move them with their fingers." In the New Testament they bear particularly the reproach of hypocrisy; with, of course, illustrious exceptions, like Nicodemus, Gamaliel, and his disciple, Paul.

2. The less numerous SADDUCEES<sup>19</sup> were skeptical, rationalistic, and worldly-minded, and held about the same position in Judaism as the Epicureans and the followers of the New Academy in Greek and Roman heathendom. They accepted the written Scriptures (especially the Pentateuch), but rejected the oral traditions, denied the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul, the existence of angels and spirits, and the doctrine of an all-ruling providence. They numbered their followers among the rich, and had for some time possession of the office of the high-priest. Caiaphas belonged to their party.

The difference between the Pharisees and Sadducees reappears among modern Jews, who are divided into the orthodox and the liberal or rationalistic parties.

3. The ESSENES (whom we know only from Philo and Josephus) were not a party, but a mystic and ascetic order or brotherhood, and lived mostly in monkish seclusion in villages and in the desert Engedi on the Dead Sea. They numbered about 4,000 members. With an arbitrary, allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament, they combined some foreign theosophic elements, which strongly resemble the tenets of the new Pythagorean

<sup>19</sup> So called either from their supposed founder, Zadoc (so Ewald, IV. 358), or from qyDix', "just."

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and Platonic schools, but were probably derived (like the Gnostic and Manichaeic theories) from eastern religions, especially from Parsism.

They practiced communion of goods, wore white garments, rejected animal food, bloody sacrifices, oaths, slavery, and (with few exceptions) marriage, and lived in the utmost simplicity, hoping thereby to attain a higher degree of holiness. They were the forerunners of Christian monasticism.

The sect of the Essenes came seldom or never into contact with Christianity under the Apostles, except in the shape of a heresy at Colossae. But the Pharisees and Sadducees, particularly the former, meet us everywhere in the Gospels as bitter enemies of Jesus, and hostile as they are to each other, unite in condemning him to that death of the cross, which ended in the glorious resurrection, and became the foundation of spiritual life to believing Gentiles as well as Jews.

### 1.10 The Law, and the Prophecy

Degenerate and corrupt though the mass of Judaism was, yet the Old Testament economy was the divine institution preparatory to the Christian redemption, and as such received deepest reverence from Christ and his apostles, while they sought by terrible rebuke to lead its unworthy representatives to repentance. It therefore could not fail of its saving effect on those hearts which yielded to its discipline, and conscientiously searched the Scriptures of Moses and the prophets.

Law and prophecy are the two great elements of the Jewish religion, and make it a direct divine introduction to Christianity, "the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

The law of Moses was the clearest expression of the holy will of God before the advent of Christ. The Decalogue is a marvel of ancient legislation, and in its two tables enjoins the sum and substance of all true piety and morality—supreme love to God, and love to

our neighbor. It set forth the ideal of righteousness, and was thus fitted most effectually to awaken the sense of man's great departure from it, the knowledge of sin and guilt.<sup>20</sup> It acted as a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ that they might be justified by faith."<sup>21</sup>

The same sense of guilt and of the need of reconciliation was constantly kept alive by daily sacrifices, at first in the tabernacle and afterwards in the temple, and by the whole ceremonial law, which, as a wonderful system of types and shadows, perpetually pointed to the realities of the new covenant, especially to the one all-sufficient atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

God in his justice requires absolute obedience and purity of heart under promise of life and penalty of death. Yet he cannot cruelly sport with man; he is the truthful faithful, and merciful God. In the moral and ritual law, therefore, as in a shell, is hidden the sweet kernel of a promise, that he will one day exhibit the ideal of righteousness in living form, and give the penitent sinner pardon for all his transgressions and the power to fulfill the law. Without such assurance the law were bitter irony.

As regards the law, the Jewish economy was a religion of repentance.

But it was at the same time, as already, hinted, the vehicle of the divine promise of redemption, and, as such, a religion of hope. While the Greeks and Romans put their golden age in the past, the Jews looked for theirs in the future. Their whole history, their religious, political, and social institutions and customs pointed to the coming of the Messiah, and the establishment of his kingdom on earth.

Prophecy, or the gospel under the covenant of the law, is really older than the law, which was added afterwards and came in between

<sup>20</sup> Rom. 3:20

<sup>21</sup> Gal. 3:24



the promise and its fulfillment, between sin and redemption, between the disease and the cure. Prophecy begins in paradise with the promise of the serpent-bruiser immediately after the fall. It predominates in the patriarchal age, especially in the life of Abraham, whose piety has the corresponding character of trust and faith; and Moses, the lawgiver, was at the same time a prophet pointing the people to a greater successor.<sup>22</sup>

Without the comfort of the Messianic promise, the law must have driven the earnest soul to despair. From the time of Samuel, some eleven centuries before Christ, prophecy, hitherto sporadic, took an organized form in a permanent prophetic office and order. In this form it accompanied the Levitical priesthood and the Davidic dynasty down to the Babylonian captivity, survived this catastrophe, and directed the return of the people and the rebuilding of the temple; interpreting and applying the law, reproving abuses in church and state, predicting the terrible judgments and the redeeming grace of God, warning and punishing, comforting and encouraging, with an ever plainer reference to the coming Messiah, who should redeem Israel and the world from sin and misery, and establish a kingdom of peace and righteousness on earth.

The victorious reign of David and the peaceful reign of Solomon furnish, for Isaiah and his successors, the historical and typical ground for a prophetic picture of a far more glorious future, which, unless thus attached to living memories and present circumstances, could not have been understood. The subsequent catastrophe and the sufferings of the captivity served to develop the idea of a Messiah atoning for the sins of the people and entering through suffering into glory.

The prophetic was an extraordinary office, serving partly to complete, partly to correct the regular, hereditary priesthood, to prevent it from stiffening into monotonous formality,

<sup>22</sup> Deut. 18:15.

and keep it in living flow. The prophets were, so to speak, the Protestants of the ancient covenant, the ministers of the spirit and of immediate communion with God, in distinction from the ministers of the letter and of traditional and ceremonial mediation.

The flourishing period of our canonical prophecy began with the eighth century before Christ, some seven centuries after Moses, when Israel was suffering under Assyrian oppression. In this period before the captivity, Isaiah ("the salvation of God"), who appeared in the last years of king Uzziah, about ten years before the founding of Rome, is the leading figure; and around him Micah, Joel, and Obadiah in the kingdom of Judah, and Hosea, Amos, and Jonah in the kingdom of Israel, are grouped. Isaiah reached the highest elevation of prophecy, and unfolds feature by feature a picture of the Messiah—springing from the house of David, preaching the glad tidings to the poor, healing the broken-hearted, opening the eyes to the blind, setting at liberty the captives, offering himself as a lamb to the slaughter, bearing the sins of the people, dying the just for the unjust, triumphing over death and ruling as king of peace over all nations—a picture which came to its complete fulfillment in one person, and one only, Jesus of Nazareth.

He makes the nearest approach to the cross, and his book is the Gospel of the Old Testament. In the period of the Babylonian exile, Jeremiah (i.e. "the Lord casts down") stands chief. He is the prophet of sorrow, and yet of the new covenant of the Spirit. In his denunciations of priests and false prophets, his lamentations over Jerusalem, his holy grief, his bitter persecution he resembles the mission and life of Christ.

He remained in the land of his fathers, and sang his lamentation on the ruins of Jerusalem; while Ezekiel warned the exiles on the river Chebar against false prophets and carnal hopes, urged them to repentance, and depicted the new Jerusalem and the revival of the dry bones of the people by the breath of

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God; and Daniel at the court of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon saw in the spirit the succession of the four empires and the final triumph of the eternal kingdom of the Son of Man.

The prophets of the restoration are Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. With Malachi who lived to the time of Nehemiah, the Old Testament prophecy ceased, and Israel was left to himself four hundred years, to digest during this period of expectation the rich substance of that revelation, and to prepare the birth-place for the approaching redemption.

3. Immediately before the advent of the Messiah the whole Old Testament, the law and the prophets, Moses and Isaiah together, reappeared for a short season embodied in John the Baptist, and then in unrivalled humility disappeared as the red dawn in the splendor of the rising sun of the new covenant. This remarkable man, earnestly preaching repentance in the wilderness and laying the axe at the root of the tree, and at the same time comforting with prophecy, and pointing to the atoning Lamb of God, was indeed, as the immediate forerunner of the New Testament economy, and the personal friend of the heavenly Bridegroom, the greatest of them that were born of woman; yet in his official character as the representative of the ancient preparatory economy he stands lower than the least in that kingdom of Christ, which is infinitely more glorious than all its types and shadows in the past.

This is the Jewish religion, as it flowed from the fountain of divine revelation and lived in the true Israel, the spiritual children of Abraham, in John the Baptist, his parents and disciples, in the mother of Jesus, her kindred and friends, in the venerable Simeon, and the prophetess Anna, in Lazarus and his pious sisters, in the apostles and the first disciples, who embraced Jesus of Nazareth as the fulfiller of the law and the prophets, the Son

of God and the Saviour of the world, and who were the first fruits of the Christian Church.

### 1.11 Heathenism

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Heathenism is religion in its wild growth on the soil of fallen human nature, a darkening of the original consciousness of God, a deification of the rational and irrational creature, and a corresponding corruption of the moral sense, giving the sanction of religion to natural and unnatural vices.

Even the religion of Greece, which, as an artistic product of the imagination, has been justly styled the religion of beauty, is deformed by this moral distortion. It utterly lacks the true conception of sin and consequently the true conception of holiness. It regards sin, not as a perverseness of will and an offence against the gods, but as a folly of the understanding and an offence against men, often even proceeding from the gods themselves; for "Infatuation," or Moral Blindness ( [Ath), is a "daughter of Jove," and a goddess, though cast from Olympus, and the source of all mischief upon earth. Homer knows no devil, but he put, a devilish element into his deities.

The Greek gods, and also the Roman gods, who were copied from the former, are mere men and women, in whom Homer and the popular faith saw and worshipped the weaknesses and vices of the Grecian character, as well as its virtues, in magnified forms. The gods are born, but never die. They

have bodies and senses, like mortals, only in colossal proportions. They eat and drink, though only nectar and ambrosia. They are awake and fall asleep. They travel, but with the swiftness of thought. They mingle in battle. They cohabit with human beings, producing heroes or demigods. They are limited to time and space.

Though sometimes honored with the attributes of omnipotence and omniscience, and called holy and just, yet they are subject to an iron fate (Moirai), fall under delusion, and reproach each other with folly and crime. Their heavenly happiness is disturbed by all the troubles of earthly life. Even Zeus or Jupiter, the patriarch of the Olympian family, is cheated by his sister and wife Hera (Juno), with whom he had lived three hundred years in secret marriage before he proclaimed her his consort and queen of the gods, and is kept in ignorance of the events before Troy. He threatens his fellows with blows and death, and makes Olympus tremble when he shakes his locks in anger. The gentle Aphrodite or Venus bleeds from a spear-wound on her finger. Mars is felled with a stone by Diomedes. Neptune and Apollo have to serve for hire and are cheated. Hephaestus limps and provokes an uproarious laughter. The gods are involved by their marriages in perpetual jealousies and quarrels.

They are full of envy and wrath, hatred and lust prompt men to crime, and provoke each other to lying, and cruelty, perjury and adultery. The Iliad and Odyssey, the most popular poems of the Hellenic genius, are a *chronique scandaleuse* of the gods. Hence Plato banished them from his ideal Republic. Pindar, Aeschylus, and Sophocles also rose to loftier ideas of the gods and breathed a purer moral atmosphere; but they represented the exceptional creed of a few, while Homer expressed the popular belief. Truly we have no cause to long with Schiller for the return of the "gods of Greece," but would rather join the poet in his joyful thanksgiving:

*"Einen zu bereichern unter allen,*

*Musste diese Götterwelt vergehen."*

Notwithstanding this essential apostasy from truth and holiness, heathenism was religion, a groping after "the unknown God." By its superstition it betrayed the need of faith. Its polytheism rested on a dim monotheistic background; it subjected all the gods to Jupiter, and Jupiter himself to a mysterious fate. It had at bottom the feeling of dependence on higher powers and reverence for divine things. It preserved the memory of a golden age and of a fall. It had the voice of conscience, and a sense, obscure though it was, of guilt. It felt the need of reconciliation with deity, and sought that reconciliation by prayer, penance, and sacrifice. Many of its religious traditions and usages were faint echoes of the primal religion; and its mythological dreams of the mingling of the gods with men, of demigods, of Prometheus delivered by Hercules from his helpless sufferings, were unconscious prophecies and fleshly anticipations of Christian truths.

This alone explains the great readiness with which heathens embraced the gospel, to the shame of the Jews. <sup>23</sup>

There was a spiritual Israel scattered throughout the heathen world, that never received the circumcision of the flesh, but the unseen circumcision of the heart by the hand of that Spirit which bloweth where it listeth, and is not bound to any human laws and to ordinary means. The Old Testament furnishes several examples of true piety outside of the visible communion with the Jewish church, in the persons of Melchisedek, the friend of Abraham, the royal priest, the type of Christ; Jethro, the priest of Midian; Rahab, the Canaanite woman and hostess of Joshua and Caleb; Ruth, the Moabitess and ancestress of our Saviour; King Hiram, the friend of David; the queen of Sheba, who came to admire the wisdom of Solomon; Naaman the Syrian; and

<sup>23</sup> Comp. Matt. 8:10; 15:28. Luke 7:9. Acts 10:35.



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especially Job, the sublime sufferer, who rejoiced in the hope of his Redeemer.<sup>24</sup>

The elements of truth, morality, and piety scattered throughout ancient heathenism, may be ascribed to three sources. In the first place, man, even in his fallen state, retains some traces of the divine image, a knowledge of God,<sup>25</sup> however weak, a moral sense or conscience,<sup>26</sup> and a longing for union with the Godhead, for truth and for righteousness.

<sup>27</sup> In this view we may, with Tertullian, call the beautiful and true sentences of a Socrates, a Plato, an Aristotle, of Pindar, Sophocles, Cicero, Virgil, Seneca, Plutarch, "the testimonies of a soul constitutionally Christian," of a nature predestined to Christianity. Secondly, some account must be made of traditions and recollections, however faint, coming down from the general primal revelations to Adam and Noah. But the third and most important source of the heathen anticipations of truth is the all-ruling providence of God, who has never left himself without a witness. Particularly must we consider, with the ancient Greek fathers, the influence of the divine Logos before his incarnation, who was the tutor of mankind, the original light of reason, shining in the darkness and lighting every man, the sower scattering in the soil of heathendom the seeds of truth, beauty, and virtue.<sup>28</sup>

The flower of paganism, with which we are concerned here, appears in the two great nations of classic antiquity, Greece and Rome. With the language, morality, literature, and religion of these nations, the apostles came

<sup>24</sup> Even Augustine, exclusive as he was, adduces the case of Job in proof of the assertion that the kingdom of God under the Old dispensation was not confined to the Jews and then adds.

<sup>25</sup> Rom. 1:19

<sup>26</sup> Rom. 2:14, 15

<sup>27</sup> Comp. Acts 17:3, 27, 28

<sup>28</sup> Comp. John 1:4, 5, 9, 10.

directly into contact, and through the whole first age the church moves on the basis of these nationalities. These, together with the Jews, were the chosen nations of the ancient world, and shared the earth among them. The Jews were chosen for things eternal, to keep the sanctuary of the true religion. The Greeks prepared the elements of natural culture, of science and art, for the use of the church. The Romans developed the idea of law, and organized the civilized world in a universal empire, ready to serve the spiritual universality of the gospel. Both Greeks and Romans were unconscious servants of Jesus Christ, "the unknown God."

These three nations, by nature at bitter enmity among themselves, joined hands in the superscription on the cross, where the holy name and the royal title of the Redeemer stood written, by the command of the heathen Pilate, "in Hebrew and Greek and Latin."<sup>29</sup>

### 1.12 Grecian Literature; Roman Empire

The literature of the ancient Greeks and the universal empire of the Romans were, next to the Mosaic religion, the chief agents in preparing the world for Christianity. They furnished the human forms, in which the divine substance of the gospel, thoroughly prepared in the bosom of the Jewish theocracy, was molded. They laid the natural foundation for the supernatural edifice of the kingdom of heaven. God endowed the Greeks and Romans with the richest natural gifts, that they might reach the highest civilization possible without the aid of Christianity, and thus both provide the instruments of human science, art, and law for the use of the church, and yet at the same time show the utter impotence of these alone to bless and save the world.

The GREEKS, few in number, like the Jews, but vastly more important in history than the numberless hordes of the Asiatic empires,

<sup>29</sup> John 19:20.

were called to the noble task of bringing out, under a sunny sky and with a clear mind, the idea of humanity in its natural vigor and beauty, but also in its natural imperfection. They developed the principles of science and art. They liberated the mind from the dark powers of nature and the gloomy broodings of the eastern mysticism. They rose to the clear and free consciousness of manhood, boldly investigated the laws of nature and of spirit, and carried out the idea of beauty in all sorts of artistic forms. In poetry, sculpture, architecture, painting, philosophy, rhetoric, historiography, they left true masterpieces, which are to this day admired and studied as models of form and taste.

All these works became truly valuable and useful only in the hands of the Christian church, to which they ultimately fell. Greece gave the apostles the most copious and beautiful language to express the divine truth of the Gospel, and Providence had long before so ordered political movements as to spread that language over the world and to make it the organ of civilization and international intercourse, as the Latin was in the middle ages, as the French was in the eighteenth century and as the English is coming to be in the nineteenth. "Greek," says Cicero, "is read in almost all nations; Latin is confined by its own narrow boundaries." Greek schoolmasters and artists followed the conquering legions of Rome to Gaul and Spain.

The youthful hero Alexander the Great, a Macedonian indeed by birth, yet an enthusiastic admirer of Homer, an emulator of Achilles, a disciple of the philosophic world-conqueror, Aristotle, and thus the truest Greek of his age, conceived the sublime thought of making Babylon the seat of a Grecian empire of the world; and though his empire fell to pieces at his untimely death, yet it had already carried Greek letters to the borders of India, and made them a common possession of all civilized nations. What Alexander had begun Julius Caesar completed. Under the protection of the

Roman law the apostles could travel everywhere and make themselves understood through the Greek language in every city of the Roman domain.

The Grecian philosophy, particularly the systems of Plato and Aristotle, formed the natural basis for scientific theology; Grecian eloquence, for sacred oratory; Grecian art, for that of the Christian church. Indeed, not a few ideas and maxims of the classics tread on the threshold of revelation and sound like prophecies of Christian truth; especially the spiritual soarings of Plato,<sup>30</sup> the deep religious reflections of Plutarch,<sup>31</sup> the sometimes almost Pauline moral precepts of Seneca.<sup>32</sup> To many of the greatest church fathers, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and in some measure even to Augustine, Greek philosophy was a bridge to the Christian faith, a scientific schoolmaster leading them to Christ. Nay, the whole ancient Greek church rose on the foundation of the Greek language and nationality, and is inexplicable without them.

Here lies the real reason why the classical literature is to this day made the basis of liberal education throughout the Christian world. Youth are introduced to the elementary forms of science and art, to models of clear, tasteful style, and to self-made humanity at the summit of intellectual and artistic culture, and thus they are at the same time trained to the scientific

<sup>30</sup> Compare C. Ackermann, *The Christian Element in Plato and the Platonic Philosophy*, 1835, transl. from the German by S. R. Asbury, with an introductory note by Dr. Shedd. Edinburgh, 1861.

<sup>31</sup> As in his excellent treatise: *De sera numinis vindicta*. It is strange that this philosopher, whose moral sentiments come nearest to Christianity, never alludes to it. Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius do mention it, but only once.

<sup>32</sup> On the relation of Paul and Seneca comp. an elaborate dissertation of Bishop Lightfoot in his *Commentary on the Philippians*, pp. 268-331 (3d ed. 1873).

apprehension of the Christian religion, which appeared when the development of Greek and Roman civilization had reached its culmination and began already to decay. The Greek and Latin languages, as the Sanskrit and Hebrew, died in their youth and were embalmed and preserved from decay in the immortal works of the classics. They still furnish the best scientific terms for every branch of learning and art and every new invention. The primitive records of Christianity have been protected against the uncertainties of interpretation incident upon the constant changes of a living language.

But aside from the permanent value of the Grecian literature, the glory of its native land had, at the birth of Christ, already irrecoverably departed. Civil liberty and independence had been destroyed by internal discord and corruption. Philosophy had run down into skepticism and refined materialism. Art had been degraded to the service of levity and sensuality. Infidelity or superstition had supplanted sound religious sentiment. Dishonesty and licentiousness reigned among high and low.

This hopeless state of things could not but impress the more earnest and noble souls with the emptiness of all science and art, and the utter insufficiency of this natural culture to meet the deeper wants of the heart. It must fill them with longings for a new religion.

The ROMANS were the practical and political nation of antiquity. Their calling was to carry out the idea of the state and of civil law, and to unite the nations of the world in a colossal empire, stretching from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, and from the Libyan desert to the banks of the Rhine. This empire embraced the most fertile and civilized countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe, and about one hundred millions of human beings, perhaps one-third of the whole race at the time of the introduction of Christianity.<sup>33</sup> To this

<sup>33</sup> Charles Marivale, in his *History of the Romans under the Empire* (Lond. 1856), Vol. iv. p. 450

outward extent corresponds its historical significance. The history of every ancient nation ends, says Niebuhr, as the history of every modern nation begins, in that of Rome. Its history has therefore a universal interest; it is a vast storehouse of the legacies of antiquity. If the Greeks had, of all nations, the deepest mind, and in literature even gave laws to their conquerors, the Romans had the strongest character, and were born to rule the world without. This difference of course reached even into the moral and religious life of the two nations. Was the Greek, mythology the work of artistic fantasy and a religion of poesy, so was the Roman the work of calculation adapted to state purposes, political and utilitarian, but at the same time solemn, earnest, and energetic. "The Romans had no love of beauty, like the Greeks. They held no communion with nature, like the Germans. Their one idea was Rome—not ancient, fabulous, poetical Rome, but Rome warring and conquering; and orbis terrarum domina. S. P. Q. R. is inscribed on almost every page of their literature."<sup>34</sup>

The Romans from the first believed themselves called to govern the world. They looked upon all foreigners—not as barbarians, like the cultured Greeks, but—as enemies to be conquered and reduced to servitude. War and triumph were their highest conception of human glory and happiness. The "Tu, regere imperio populos, Romane, memento!" had been their motto, in fact, long before Virgil thus gave it form. The very name of the urbs aeterna, and the characteristic legend of its founding, prophesied its future. In their greatest straits the Romans never for a moment despaired of the commonwealth. With vast energy,

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and 451, estimates the population of the Roman empire in the age of Augustus at 85 millions, namely, 40 millions for Europe, 28 millions for Asia, and 17 millions for Africa, but he does not include Palestine. Greswell and others raise the estimate of the whole population to 120 millions.

<sup>34</sup> Hare *Guesses at Truth*, p. 432 (Lond. ed. 1867).

profound policy, unwavering consistency, and wolf-like rapacity, they pursued their ambitious schemes, and became indeed the lords, but also, as their greatest historian, Tacitus, says, the insatiable robbers of the world.

Having conquered the world by the sword, they organized it by law, before whose majesty every people had to bow, and beautified it by the arts of peace. Philosophy, eloquence, history, and poetry enjoyed a golden age under the setting sun of the republic and the rising sun of the empire, and extended their civilizing influence to the borders of barbarianism. Although not creative in letters and fine arts, the Roman authors were successful imitators of Greek philosophers, orators, historians, and poets. Rome was converted by Augustus from a city of brick huts into a city of marble palaces.<sup>35</sup>

The finest paintings and sculptures were imported from Greece, triumphal arches and columns were erected on public places, and the treasures of all parts of the world were made tributary to, the pride, beauty, and luxury of the capital. The provinces caught the spirit of improvement, populous cities sprung up, and the magnificent temple of Jerusalem was rebuilt by the ambitious extravagance of Herod. The rights of persons and property were well protected. The conquered nations, though often and justly complaining of the rapacity of provincial governors, yet, on the whole, enjoyed greater security against domestic feuds and foreign invasion, a larger share of social comfort, and rose to a higher degree of secular civilization. The ends of the empire were brought into military, commercial, and literary communication by carefully constructed roads, the traces of which still exist in Syria, on the Alps, on the banks of the Rhine. The facilities and security of travel were greater

<sup>35</sup> So the nephew of the modern Caesar transformed Paris into a city of straight and broad streets and magnificent palaces.

in the reign of the Caesars than in any subsequent period before the nineteenth century.

Five main lines went out from Rome to the extremities of the empire, and were connected at seaports with maritime routes. "We may travel," says a Roman writer, "at all hours, and sail from east to west." Merchants brought diamonds from the East, ambers from the shores of the Baltic, precious metals from Spain, wild animals from Africa, works of art from Greece, and every article of luxury, to the market on the banks of the Tiber, as they now do to the banks of the Thames.

The Apocalyptic seer, in his prophetic picture of the downfall of the imperial mistress of the world, gives prominence to her vast commerce: "And the merchants of the earth," he says, "weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul desired are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and sumptuous are perished from thee, and men shall find them no more at all."

<sup>36</sup>

Heathen Rome lived a good while after this prediction, but, the causes of decay were already at work in the first century. The immense extension and outward prosperity brought with it a diminution of those domestic and civil virtues which at first so highly distinguished the Romans above the Greeks. The race of patriots and deliverers, who came from their ploughs to the public service, and humbly returned again to the

<sup>36</sup> Rev. 18:11-14



<b>History of the Christian Church</b> , Philip Schaff	<b>45</b>
CH101: Volume 1, Chapter 1	a Grace Notes course

plough or the kitchen, was extinct. Their worship of the gods, which was the root of their virtue, had sunk to mere form, running either into the most absurd superstitions, or giving place to unbelief, till the very priests laughed each other in the face when they met in the street.

Not infrequently we find unbelief and superstition united in the same persons, according to the maxim that all extremes touch each other. Man must believe something, and worship either God or the devil.<sup>37</sup> Magicians and necromancers abounded, and were liberally patronized. The ancient simplicity and contentment were exchanged for boundless avarice and prodigality. Morality and chastity, so beautifully symbolized in the household ministry of the virgin Vesta, yielded to vice and debauchery. Amusement came to be sought in barbarous fights of beasts and gladiators, which not rarely consumed twenty thousand human lives in a single month. The lower classes had lost all nobler feeling, cared for nothing but "panem et circenses," and made the proud imperial city on the Tiber a slave of slaves. The huge empire of Tiberius and of Nero was but a giant body without a soul, going, with steps slow but sure, to final dissolution. Some of the emperors were fiendish tyrants and monsters of iniquity; and yet they were enthroned among the gods by a vote of the Senate, and altars and temples were erected for their worship.

This characteristic custom began with Caesar, who even during his lifetime was honored as "Divus Julius" for his brilliant victories, although they cost more than a million of lives slain and another million made captives

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<sup>37</sup> "Unbelief and superstition, different hues of the same historical phenomenon, went in the Roman world of that day hand in hand, and there was no lack of individuals who in themselves combined both—who denied the gods with Epicurus, and yet prayed and sacrificed before every shrine." Theod. Mommsen, *History of Rome*. transl. by Dickson, Lond. 1867, vol. iv. p. 560.

and slaves.<sup>38</sup> The dark picture which St. Paul, in addressing the Romans, draws of the heathenism of his day, is fully sustained by Seneca, Tacitus, Juvenal, Perseus, and other heathen writers of that age, and shows the absolute need of redemption. "The world," says Seneca, in a famous passage, "is full of crimes and vices. More are committed than can be cured by force. There is an immense struggle for iniquity. Crimes are no longer bidden, but open before the eyes. Innocence is not only rare, but nowhere."<sup>39</sup> Thus far the negative. On the other hand, the universal empire of Rome was a positive groundwork for the universal empire of the gospel. It served as a crucible, in which all contradictory and irreconcilable peculiarities of the ancient nations and religions were dissolved into the chaos of a new creation. The Roman legions razed the partition-walls among the ancient nations, brought the

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<sup>38</sup> "In the excess of their adoration, the Roman Senate desired even to place his image in the Temple of Quirinus himself, with an inscription to him as *geo*;" *ajnivkto*", the invincible God. Golden chairs, gilt chariots, triumphal robes, were piled one upon another, with laurelled fasces and laurelled wreaths. His birthday was made a perpetual holiday, and the month Quinctilis was renamed, in honor of him, July. A temple to Concord was to be erected in commemoration of his clemency. His person was declared sacred and to injure him by word or deed was to be counted sacrilege. The Fortune of Caesar was introduced into the constitutional oath, and the Senate took a solemn pledge to maintain his acts inviolate. Finally, they arrived at a conclusion that he was not a man at all; no longer Caius Julius, but Divus Julius, a God or the Son of God. A temple was to be built to Caesar as another Quirinus, and Antony was to be his priest." J. A. Froude, *Caesar* (1879), Ch. XXVI. p. 491. The insincerity of these adulations shortly before the senatorial conspiracy makes them all the worse. "One obsequious senator proposed that every woman in Rome should be at the disposition of Caesar." *Ibid.*, p. 492.

<sup>39</sup> *De Ira*, II. 8.

extremes of the civilized world together in free intercourse, and united north and south and east and west in the bonds of a common language and culture, of common laws and customs. Thus they evidently, though unconsciously, opened the way for the rapid and general spread of that religion which unites all nations in one family of God by the spiritual bond of faith and love.

The idea of a common humanity, which underlies all the distinctions of race, society and education, began to dawn in the heathen mind, and found expression in the famous line of Terentius, which was received with applause in the theatre:

"Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto."

This spirit of humanity breathes in Cicero and Virgil. Hence the veneration paid to the poet of the Aeneid by the fathers and throughout the middle ages. Augustine calls him the noblest of poets, and Dante, "the glory and light of other poets," and "his master," who guided him through the regions of hell and purgatory to the very gates of Paradise. It was believed that in his fourth Eclogue he had prophesied the advent of Christ. This interpretation is erroneous; but "there is in Virgil," says an accomplished scholar, "a vein of thought and sentiment more devout, more humane, more akin to the Christian than is to be found in any other ancient poet, whether Greek or Roman. He was a spirit prepared and waiting, though he knew it not, for some better thing to be revealed."

The civil laws and institutions, also, and the great administrative wisdom of Rome did much for the outward organization of the Christian church. As the Greek church rose on the basis of the Grecian nationality, so the Latin church rose on that of ancient Rome, and reproduced in higher forms both its virtues and its defects. Roman Catholicism is pagan Rome baptized, a Christian reproduction of the universal empire seated of old in the city of the seven hills.

### 1.13 Judaism and Heathenism in Contact

The Roman empire, though directly establishing no more than an outward political union, still promoted indirectly a mutual intellectual and moral approach of the hostile religious of the Jews and Gentiles, who were to be reconciled in one divine brotherhood by the supernatural power of the cross of Christ.

1. The Jews, since the Babylonian captivity, had been scattered over all the world. They were as ubiquitous in the Roman empire in the first century as they are now throughout Christendom. According to Josephus and Strabo, there was no country where they did not make up a part of the population.<sup>40</sup>

Among the witnesses of the miracle of Pentecost were "Jews from every nation under heaven ... Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers of Mesopotamia, in Judaea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians."<sup>41</sup> In spite of the antipathy of the Gentiles, they had, by talent and industry, risen to wealth, influence, and every privilege, and had built their synagogues in all the

<sup>40</sup> Jos., Bell. Jud., VII. c. 3, § 3: "As the Jewish nation is widely dispersed over all the habitable earth," etc. Antiqu., XIV. 7, 2: "Let no one wonder that there was so much wealth in our temple, since all the Jews throughout the habitable earth, and those that worship God, nay, even those of Asia and Europe, sent their contributions to it." Then, quoting from Strabo, he says: "These Jews are already gotten into all cities, and it is hard to, find a place in the habitable earth that has not admitted this tribe of men, and is not possessed by it; and it has come to pass that Egypt and Cyrene and a great number of other nations imitate their way of living, and maintain great bodies of these Jews in a peculiar manner, and grow up to greater prosperity with them, and make use also of the same laws with that nation."

<sup>41</sup> Acts 2:5, 9-11.

commercial cities of the Roman empire. Pompey brought a considerable number of Jewish captives from Jerusalem to the capital (B.C. 63), and settled them on the right bank of the Tiber (Trastevere). By establishing this community he furnished, without knowing it, the chief material for the Roman church. Julius Caesar was the great protector of the Jews; and they showed their gratitude by collecting for many nights to lament his death on the forum where his murdered body was burnt on a funeral pile. He granted them the liberty of public worship, and thus gave them a legal status as a religious society. Augustus confirmed these privileges. Under his reign they were numbered already by thousands in the city. A reaction followed; Tiberius and Claudius expelled them from Rome; but they soon returned, and succeeded in securing the free exercise of their rites and customs. The frequent satirical allusions to them prove their influence as well as the aversion and contempt in which they were held by the Romans. Their petitions reached the ear of Nero through his wife Poppaea, who seems to have inclined to their faith; and Josephus, their most distinguished scholar, enjoyed the favor of three emperors—Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. In the language of Seneca (as quoted by Augustin) "the conquered Jews gave laws to their Roman conquerors."

By this dispersion of the Jews the seeds of the knowledge of the true God and the Messianic hope were sown in the field of the idolatrous world. The Old Testament Scriptures were translated into Greek two centuries before Christ, and were read and expounded in the public worship of God, which was open to all. Every synagogue was a mission-station of monotheism, and furnished the apostles an admirable place and a natural introduction for their preaching of Jesus Christ as the fulfiller of the law and the prophets.

Then, as the heathen religious had been hopelessly undermined by skeptical philosophy and popular infidelity, many earnest Gentiles especially multitudes of women, came over to Judaism either, wholly

or in part. The thorough converts, called "proselytes of righteousness," were commonly still more bigoted and fanatical than the native Jews. The half-converts, "proselytes of the gate"<sup>42</sup> or "fearers of God,"<sup>43</sup> who adopted only the monotheism, the principal moral laws, and the Messianic hopes of the Jews, without being circumcised, appear in the New Testament as the most susceptible hearers of the gospel, and formed the nucleus of many of the first Christian churches. Of this class were the centurion of Capernaum, Cornelius of Caesarea, Lydia of Philippi, Timothy, and many other prominent disciples.

2. On the other hand, the Graeco-Roman heathenism, through its language, philosophy, and literature, exerted no inconsiderable influence to soften the fanatical bigotry of the higher and more cultivated classes of the Jews. Generally the Jews of the dispersion, who spoke the Greek language—the "Hellenists," as they were called—were much more liberal than the proper "Hebrews," or Palestinian Jews, who kept their mother tongue. This is evident in the Gentile missionaries, Barnabas of Cyprus and Paul of Tarsus, and in the whole church of Antioch, in contrast with that at Jerusalem. The Hellenistic form of Christianity was the natural bridge to the Gentile.

The most remarkable example of a transitional, though very fantastic and Gnostic-like combination of Jewish and heathen elements meets us in the educated circles of the Egyptian metropolis, Alexandria, and in the system of PHILO, who was born about B.C. 20, and lived till after A.D. 40, though he never came in contact with Christ or the apostles. This Jewish, divine sought to harmonize the religion of Moses with the philosophy of Plato by the help of an ingenious but arbitrary allegorical

<sup>42</sup> Ex. 20:10; Deut. 5:14.

<sup>43</sup> Acts 10:2; 13:16, etc., and Josephus

interpretation of the Old Testament; and from the books of Proverbs and of Wisdom he deduced a doctrine of the Logos so strikingly like that of John's Gospel, that many expositors think it necessary to impute to the apostle an acquaintance with the writings, or at least with the terminology of Philo. But Philo's speculation is to the apostle's "Word made flesh" as a shadow to the body, or a dream to the reality. He leaves no room for an incarnation, but the coincidence of his speculation with the great fact is very remarkable.

The THERAPEUTAE or Worshippers, a mystic and ascetic sect in Egypt, akin to the Essenes in Judaea, carried this Platonic Judaism into practical life; but were, of course, equally unsuccessful in uniting the two religions in a vital and permanent way. Such a union could only be effected by a new religion revealed from heaven.

Quite independent of the philosophical Judaism of Alexandria were the Samaritans, a mixed race, which also combined, though in a different way, the elements of Jewish and Gentile religion.<sup>44</sup> They date from the period of the exile. They held to the Pentateuch, to circumcision, and to carnal Messianic hopes; but they had a temple of their own on Mount Gerizim, and mortally hated the proper Jews. Among these Christianity, as would appear from the interview of Jesus with the woman of Samaria,<sup>45</sup> and the preaching of Philip,<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> A remnant of the Samaritans (about 140 souls) still live in Nablous, the ancient Shechem, occupy a special quarter, have a synagogue of their own, with a very ancient copy of the Pentateuch, and celebrate annually on the top of Mount Gerizim the Jewish Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles. It is the only spot on earth where the paschal sacrifice is perpetuated according to the Mosaic prescription in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. See Schaff, *Through Bible Lands* (N. York and Lond. 1878), pp. 314 sqq. and Hausrath, l.c. I. 17 sqq.

<sup>45</sup> John 4

found ready access, but, as among the Essenes and Therapeutae fell easily into a heretical form. Simon Magus, for example, and some other Samaritan arch-heretics, are represented by the early Christian writers as the principal originators of Gnosticism.

3. Thus was the way for Christianity prepared on every side, positively and negatively, directly and indirectly, in theory and in practice, by truth and by error, by false belief and by unbelief—those hostile brothers, which yet cannot live apart—by Jewish religion, by Grecian culture, and by Roman conquest; by the vainly attempted amalgamation of Jewish and heathen thought, by the exposed impotence of natural civilization, philosophy, art, and political power, by the decay of the old religions, by the universal distraction and hopeless misery of the age, and by the yearnings of all earnest and noble souls for the religion of salvation.

"In the fullness of the time," when the fairest flowers of science and art had withered, and the world was on the verge of despair, the Virgin's Son was born to heal the infirmities of mankind. Christ entered a dying world as the author of a new and imperishable life.

<sup>46</sup> Acts 8