



**WELCOME
TO
BIBLE HOUSE
OF
GRACE**

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

**Constantine
Rome
and
Christianity**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



**Learn the
Bible
at Home**

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Constantine, Rome, and Christianity.

Topics.

- Constantine, Rome's emperor, and Christianity.
- Doctrinal errors of the Papal Church.
- The Papal Church, chief priests, Pharisees, and scribes.
- Christian churches decline and rise of the Papal Church.
- Constantine, the first Christian Roman Emperor.
- The edict of Milan.
- Establishment of the state church of the Roman empire.
- Constantinople, Istanbul, and Turkey.
- Constantinople and the Ottoman Turks.
- Facts concerning Turkey.

CONSTANTINE, ROME'S EMPEROR, AND CHRISTIANITY

When the Roman Empire started, there was no such religion as Christianity. In the 1st century Pontius Pilate, the prefect of the Roman province of Judaea had Jesus the founder of the Christian faith crucified. It took followers of Jesus a few centuries to gain enough strength that they were, able to win over Roman support which began in the early 4th century with emperor Constantine, who stopped all forms of Christian persecution and established religious tolerance in the Roman Empire. Constantine himself was not baptized until he was on his deathbed, and because of this (and various other reasons) there has been much debate over whether he was a Christian or not, but the answer to this is better left to the eternal Shephard who knows his sheep. What we do know for certain concerning emperor Constantine is:

- He stopped all forms of Christian persecution and established religious tolerance throughout the Roman Empire.
- He was actively involved in Christian policy-making and gave Christians privileges that they did not have under the rule of pagan Rome.
- He oversaw major Christian religious disputes and took on the title of Pontiff (meaning, Pope as leader of the Roman Catholic Church).

Over time Christianity superseded the old Roman religions and gods and Christian church leaders, became increasingly influential, eroding the emperors' powers until A.D. 390 when Christianity became the official religion of Rome.

DOCTRINAL ERRORS OF THE PAPAL CHURCH

False doctrines of the Papal Church refer to their doctrines that teach:

- The Catholic Church is the true church, and the Mother church over all the earth and universal church over all nations and all churches.

- The worship of the Virgin Mary.
- During the Eucharist, the wine mystically turns to the literal blood of Christ and the bread to his flesh.
- Attending mass and strictly adhering to the church's holy days, ceremonial rites and keeping its religious practises and traditions saves a person and secures their salvation.
- Celibacy and forbidding marriage to priests.
- Purgatory is a a place or state of suffering where the souls of sinners go to atone for their sins before going to heaven.
- To receive forgiveness of sins followers must confess their sins to a human priest rather than to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Priests have power to pardon sins.
- Popes have authority to exalt the dead to sainthood.

Added to these is the outward show of pompous, hypocritical, and theatrical religion and the followers of its religion highly esteeming and exalting the Pope for his supposed infallibility and holiness, and the splendour of the Vatican, and its worldly riches, grandeur, and pomp. This same self-exalting superior religious spirit the Popes manifest is the same spirit the great prostitute woman and the final antichrist will manifest in the latter days, and the same adoration the Popes receive from their followers, is the same adoration the great prostitute woman will receive from her followers.

THE PAPAL CHURCH, CHIEF PRIESTS, PHARISEES, AND SCRIBES

The Papal Church of Rome could be likened to the religious rulers of Jesus Generation, the prideful and hypocritical chief priests, Pharisees, and scribes believed they were doing the work of God, but were so spiritually blinded that they enticed a secular Roman king (Pilate) to have his soldiers crucify their own Messiah the Son of God, yet as evil as this act was, they were not only acting in God's sovereign will, but also bringing about the fulfilment of many prophecies. Likewise, the Papal Church of Rome wrongly believes they are upholding the true word of God and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, but like the prideful and hypocritical chief priests, Pharisees and scribes are so spiritually blind that they will like Israel's religious leaders of old, entice secular kings to send their armies against the King of kings and Lord of lords, yet as evil and foolish as this act is, they are not only acting in God's sovereign will, but also bringing about the fulfilment of many prophecies, because this time Jesus is not coming as a Lamb to be slaughtered, but as a King to conquer.

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES DECLINE AND RISE OF THE PAPAL CHURCH

Constantine adopted the Christian faith as the state religion of Rome and by doing so greatly advanced Christianity, but during this time Constantine bestowed upon Christian's riches and honours and the church gradually took on a new form. To appeal to the masses and pagan religions it embraced false doctrine and superstition, and Christians became vain, proud, and ambitious, seeking importance, power, and worldly riches. Outwardly the church flourished and spread itself

throughout the Roman empire, especially the Roman Papal Church, so much so that in process of time the true church, practically became invisible, like persons in wilderness not to be seen.

CONSTANTINE, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN ROMAN EMPEROR

A.D. 306 to 337 Constantine the Great became the first Christian Roman emperor (also known as Saint Constantine). Overtime his rule gradually changed the church so much so that it took on a different form to what the apostles and Paul had taught.

THE EDICT OF MILAN

The Edict of Milan was a letter issued in A.D. 313, that proclaimed religious toleration in the Roman Empire shortly after the end of the persecution of Christians by the emperor Diocletian, it was signed by the Roman emperors Constantine and Licinius. From this time onward religious toleration was permanently established for Christianity within the Roman Empire. However, as good as this was for the Christian church, over time Christianity gradually began to transition to the dominant religion of the Roman Papal Church. For these reasons and the fact, it is alleged that he was not water baptized until shortly before his death various commentators have differing opinions of whether Constantine himself was a true Christian or not. However, to what extent Constantine should be considered a Christian, we cannot know and it is not our place to judge since we do not know the man and cannot know the full circumstances.

There is no doubt the ending of Christian persecution and the toleration of all faiths at the time of Constantine was a good thing for the Christian church, since the second commandment of Jesus is "Love your neighbour as yourself," meaning do good to others and not harm, in contrast to imposing upon others what you believe by violence and force. The decision of Constantine and emperor Licinius to decriminalizing Christian worship and cease the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire was a turning point for early Christianity, sometimes referred to as the triumph of the church, the peace of the church or the Constantine shift. In A.D. 313, both Constantine and emperor Licinius became great supporters of the Christian church. Clearly this was a great blessing to the church, since from this time forward they could openly and publicly proclaim the Gospel and worship their King and Saviour. However, overtime it paved the way for:

- The orthodoxy of Christendom (i.e., conforming to creeds and doctrines of faith that Constantine and a council of bishops established with the aim of formalizing accepted doctrines).
- The establishment of ecumenical councils, where ecclesiastical dignitaries, priests, bishops, and so-called theological experts gathered-together to discuss and establish church doctrine and once established, force it upon all others.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE CHURCH OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Christian bishops by a series of ecumenical councils established their orthodoxy doctrines, which they adamantly believed to be the correct teaching of the Christian faith. From these doctrines The Roman state church was established, known by the name:

- The catholic church; the orthodox church and the imperial church.
- The imperial Roman church; the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Byzantine church.
- The Oriental Orthodox Church and the various Eastern Catholic Churches

In a wider sense these titles, also embrace all religions and nations in league with the Roman Papal Empire. Despite the counsels of these Bishops priest and theologians of the Roman Papal Church establishing a universal set of doctrines for all Christian churches to embrace, Christianity continued to suffer rifts and schisms, this is because it is contrary to the Spirit of Christ to force what one believes upon another. During Jesus time on earth, the Roman Empire was steeped in pagan gods, Jesus did not force his Gospel upon Rome, but taught it and left each individual free to choose or reject it. When a believer attempts to force what they believe upon others, especially by violence, they are not being influenced by the Spirit of God which is love and grace, but by the spirit of deception, pride, and very often selfish ambition.

CONSTANTINOPLE, ISTANBUL, AND TURKEY

Constantine named the new capital for Rome that he built Constantinople after himself. The city of Istanbul has been known by different names; besides the modern Turkish name the most notable names are Byzantium, Constantinople, and Stamboul (the old part of Istanbul, Turkey, south of the Golden Horn: the site of ancient Byzantium; sometimes used as a name for the whole city). After the Ottoman conquest of AD. 1453, Constantinople was used as the most formal official name in Ottoman Turkish empire, and remained in use throughout most of the time up to the fall of the Empire in AD. 1923. The most populous major religion in Istanbul, is Islam, the first mosque in Istanbul was built in ancient Chalcedon, which was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in AD. 1353, a full century before the conquest of Constantinople. Istanbul was the seat of the Islamic Caliphate (the rule or reign of a caliph or chief Muslim ruler and the area ruled and governed by him) between 1517 and 1924. According to the 2000 census of Turkey, there were 2,691 active mosques, 123 active churches and 20 active synagogues in Istanbul, which is to be expected since 98 percent of Turkey's population are Muslims, Christians are obviously a minority religion. It is the only Muslim country in the world that has no state religion and therefore considered a secular country and as such the Constitution guarantees religious freedom and tolerance as the general rule.

CONSTANTINOPLE AND THE OTTOMAN TURKS

The Ottoman Turks captured present-day Istanbul (formerly known as Constantinople and before that as Byzantium) in AD. 1453. It is the only city in the world that sits on two continents (Europe and Asia). The modern city of Istanbul and its surrounding area is the place where the ancient city of Byzantium was located, and the place where Constantine decided to build a new capital for Rome which he named Constantinople after himself. It was the largest and richest urban centre in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea during the late Eastern Roman Empire, mostly because of its strategic position commanding the trade routes between the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea. When the Republic of Turkey was founded in AD. 1923, the capital was moved from Constantinople to Ankara. Since AD.

1930. the name Istanbul has been the official name of the city in Turkish language and has in most western languages replaced the traditional name Constantinople.

FACTS CONCERNING TURKEY

- Behind France, USA, China, Spain and Italy, Turkey is the sixth most visited country in the world, in 2013 more than thirty-nine million people visited it
- Generally Turkish people are extremely friendly, warm, welcoming, and hospitable.
- Today, Turkey is a country with a 98 percent Muslim population that is enacting more Western reforms to be able to join the European Union. (2009)
- Most Turkish people are Muslims, but Turkey is not an Islamic country.
- It is the only secular Muslim country in the world. Secularism is established and protected by the constitution and it is one of the fundamental values of this country.
- Even though most of the population consider themselves to be Muslims, in general they do not strictly follow the rules of Islam.
- The constitution prohibits discrimination on religious grounds. In Turkey, it is illegal to convert from Islam. The two main Islamic streams in Turkey are Sunni and Alevi. Alevi are the minority in Turkey, estimated at 17 percent of the Muslim population.
- The major religion is Islam, the first mosque in Istanbul was built in Kadıköy (ancient Chalcedon) on the Asian side of the city, which was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in AD. 1353, a full century before the conquest of Constantinople across the Bosphorus, on the European side.
- More than half of the Turkish people go out, drink alcohol, and socialize with one and another in ways that are traditionally a 'sin' in Islam.
- The religion is more of a cultural thing in Turkey, especially amongst the young generation, people believe in the religion and they would get angry if their religion was criticized in front of them, but only a very small percentage of the population would go and join protests for religion-related issues. However, there are a small percentage who are dedicated to Islam who are perhaps even more powerful in the political and social spheres today than they have been in the last hundred years, but this does not change the fact that most travellers are safe to visit Turkey and are generally surprised by how middle eastern and Islamic this country is not.
- Tourism generates a huge income in Turkey and there are hundreds of thousands of people working in the industry.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
