

The Origin Of The Papal Office

Nimrod, the king and founder of Babylon, was not only a political leader and great warrior, he was also a religious leader.

Genesis 10:8-10 [NIV] *“Cush was the father of Nimrod, who grew to be a mighty warrior on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, ‘Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.’ The first centres of his kingdom were Babylon, Erech, Akkad and Calneh, in Shinar.”*

Nimrod was a priest-king and from him descended a line of priest-kings, each standing as the head of the occult Babylonian mystery religion.

This line continued down to the days of Belshazzar.

Daniel 5:1-4 [NIV] *“King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.”*

This was more than a social party, it was a religious gathering, a celebration of the Babylonian mysteries of which Belshazzar was the head at that time.

Adding to the blasphemy of the occasion, they drank their wine from the holy vessels of the Lord God which had been taken from the Jerusalem temple, [**2 Chronicles 36:7**].

This attempt to mix that which was holy with that which was heathenism brought about divine judgement.

Babylon was marked for doom and is now uninhabited ruins, completely desolate, [**Jeremiah 50:35-39; Jeremiah 51:62**].

But though the city was destroyed, concepts that were part of the old Babylon religion survived, [Genesis 11:1-9].

When Rome conquered all the nations around the Mediterranean Sea, the paganism that had spread from Babylon and developed in various nations was merged into the religious system of Rome.

This included the idea of a priest/king supreme pontiff [Pontifex Maximus].

This Babylon paganism, which had originally been carried out under the rulership of Nimrod, was united under the rulership of one man at Rome, Julius Caesar.

It was the year 63 B.C. that Julius Caesar was officially recognised as the “Pontifex Maximus” of the mystery religion, now established at Rome.

The old Roman coins had the words “Pont Max” stamped on them.

Matthew 22:17-22 [NIV] *“Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, ‘You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax.’ They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, ‘Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?’ ‘Caesar’s,’ they replied. Then he said to them, ‘Give to*

Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.' When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away."

Such coins were in circulation during the days of Jesus Christ's ministry.

The Roman Emperors [including Constantine] continued to hold the office of Pontifex Maximus until 376 when Gratian for Christian reasons, refused it. He recognised this title and office as idolatrous and blasphemous. **By this time the Bishop of Rome had arisen to political power and prestige.**

Consequently, in 378, Demasus, Bishop of Rome, was elected the Pontifex Maximus, the official high priest of the mysteries.

Since Rome was considered the most important city in the world, some Christians, especially those who had come out of pagan worship, looked to the Bishop of Rome as head of the Church.

This produced a unique situation, one man was now looked to as head of both Christians and pagans.

By this time, and through the years that followed, paganism and Christianity flowed together, producing what is known as the Roman Catholic Church under the headship of the Pontifex Maximus, the Pope.

In an attempt to cover this discrepancy, church leaders sought for similarities between the two religions.

The motivation behind this was a desire for numbers of followers and political power, the Truth was secondary.

One striking similarity was that the Supreme Pontiff of paganism bore the Chaldean title "Peter" or interpreter of mysteries. [Reference: 'Parkhurt's Hebrew Lexicon', page 602; also quoted by Hislop, 'The Two Babylons', page 208.]

This was used to "Christianise" the pagan office of Pontifex Maximus the Bishop of Rome now held, by associating the "Peter" or Grand Interpreter of Rome with Peter the apostle.

To do this, it was necessary to teach that the apostle Peter had spent time in Rome.

This is the real reason that since the fourth century, and **not** before, that numerous tales began to be voiced about Peter being the first Bishop of Rome. [Reference: 'The Two Babylons', by Hislop, page 210] so to blinded Christians of the apostasy, the Pope was the representative of Peter the apostle, while to the initiated pagans, he was the only representative of Peter, the interpreter of their well-known mysteries.

According to an old tradition, Nimrod was "*the opener*" of the secrets or mysteries, the "*firstborn*" of deified human beings.

The word translated "*openeth*" in verses such as **Exodus 13:2** is the Hebrew word "*peter*" [**Strong's Concordance**', Ref. 6363].

Since the apostle Peter was known as Simon Peter, it is interesting to note that Rome not only had a "Peter", an opener or interpreter of the mysteries, but also a religious leader named Simon who went there in the first century!

In fact, it was the Simon who had practiced sorcery in Samaria, [Acts 8:9-24] that later went to Rome and founded a counterfeit Christian religion there!

Quotation from 'The Catholic Encyclopaedia'; volume 7, page 699 –

“Justin Martyr and other early writers inform us that he [Simon the interpreter] afterwards went to Rome, worked miracles there by the power of demons, and received divine honours both in Rome and his own country. Though much extravagant legend afterwards gathered the name of this Simon ... It seems nevertheless probable that there must be some foundation for the account given by Justin and accepted by Eusebius. The historical Simon Magus no doubt founded some sort of religion as a counterfeit of Christianity in which he claimed to play a part analogous to that of Christ.”

Apparently Simon the sorcerer made the same claim as the Popes have to be “Christ in office” on earth, but we never read of any such claim being made by the apostle Peter!

Another mixture of Christianity and paganism in Rome involved “keys”.

For almost a thousand years, the pagan people of Rome had believed in the mystic keys of the pagan god Janus and the goddess Cybele, [**The Two Babylons**’, by Hislop; page 207].

In Mithraism, one of the main branches of the mysteries that came to Rome, the sun-god carried two keys, [**Man and His Gods**’ by Smith; page 129].

When the emperor claimed to be successor of the “gods” and the Supreme Pontiff of the mysteries, the keys came to be symbols of his authority.

Later when the Bishop of Rome became Pontifex Maximus in about 378, he automatically became possessor of the mystic keys.

This gained recognition for the Pope from the pagans and again there was the opportunity to mix Peter into the story.

Matthew 16:19 [King James] *“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”*

Had not Christ given Peter the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven!

It was **not** until 431, however, that the Pope publically claimed that the keys he possessed were the keys of authority given to the apostle Peter. This was over fifty years after the Pope had become Pontifex Maximus, the possessor of the keys.

The key given to Peter and all the other disciples, represented the message of the gospel whereby people could enter the Kingdom, created family of God, also internal discipline within the Church, [Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5].

Applied to Jesus Christ, [**Revelation 1:18; Revelation 3:7; Revelation 9:1; Revelation 20:1**].

Because some have not rightly understood this, it is not uncommon for Peter to be pictured as the gatekeeper of heaven, deciding who he will let in and who he won’t.

This is very much like the ideas that were associated with the pagan god Janus, for he was the keeper of the doors and gates in the pagan mythology of Rome, [‘Encyclopaedia of Religions’, volume 2; page 311].

It is certain that the title “Supreme Pontiff” or “Pontifex Maximus” which the Pope bears is not a Christian designation, for it was the title used by Roman Emperors before the Christian era.

The branch of the mysteries known as Mithraism grew in Rome until it became, at one time, almost the only faith of the Empire, [**Encyclopaedia of Religions**’, volume 2; page 545].

The head priest was called the *“Pater Patrum”*, that is the Father of the Fathers, [**The Catholic Encyclopaedia**’, volume 10; page 403].

Borrowing directly from the title, at the head of the Roman Catholic Church is the Papa or Pope, the Father of Fathers.

The expensive and highly decorated garments that the Popes wear were not adopted from Christianity, but are patterned after those of the Roman Emperors, [‘The Story of Civilisation: The Age of Faith’, by Durant; page 745].

The tiara crown that the Popes wear, though decorated in different ways, at different times, is identical in shape to that worn by the “gods” that are shown on ancient pagan tablets, [‘Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism’, by Inman; pages 63-64].

It is also similar to that seen on Dagon and pagan fish-god, who was a mystery form of the false Babylonian “saviour”. The name Dagon comes from “dag” a word commonly translated “fish” in the Christian Bible and means fish-god, [‘Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Biblical’, Numbers 1709 and 1712].

Though Dagon originated in the paganism of Babylon, [‘Encyclopaedia of Religions’, volume 1; page 502], Dagon worship became especially popular among the heathen philistines, [Judges 16:21-30; 1 Samuel 5:5-6].

The fish-head mitre worn by the Pope is a direct successor of the high priest’s headgear of the Babylonian mysteries the god Dagon, he also wears the fisherman’s “ring” with the title Pontifex Maximus inscribed on it was associated with Peter the fisherman.

But a ring like this was never worn by the apostle Peter, [Acts 3:6] and certainly Peter would never expect people to kiss such a ring if he had one.

For centuries the Romish church claimed to possess the very chair which Peter had sat on and ministered at Rome, the plates on the front of this chair showed fabulous animals of mythology as well as the fabled “labours of Hercules, [‘The Catholic Encyclopaedia’, volume 3; page 554].

None of these things would cause us to think of this chair as being of Christian origin.

Near to the high altar of St. Peter’s is a large bronze statue supposedly of Peter. This statue is looked upon with the most profound veneration and its foot has been kissed so many times that the toes are nearly worn away.

This practice of kissing an idol or statue was borrowed from paganism.

1 Kings 19:18 [King James] *“Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.”*

Not all had worshipped Baal in this way, [Hosea 13:1-3].

The pagan practice of carried idols in religious processions are a common practice of the Romish church, yet this did not originate with Christianity.

In the fifteenth century B.C. an image of the Babylonian goddess Ishtar was carried with great pomp and ceremony from Babylon to Egypt, [‘Hastings’ Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics’, article ‘Images and Idols’].

Idol processions were practiced in Greece, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mexico, and many other countries in olden days.

Isaiah 46:6-7 [King James] *“They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.”*

The Christian Bible shows the folly of those who think good can come from idols, idols so powerless that they have to be carried!

Not only have such processions continued in the Roman Catholic Church in which powerless idols are carried, but the Pope is also carried in procession.

We can be certain that the apostle Peter was never carried through crowds of people bowing to him, [Acts 10:25-26].

That the papal office was produced by a mixture of paganism and Christianity there can be little doubt.

The fact is that Jesus Christ never instituted the office of Pope in His Church, plainly shows that the Pope is not the vicar of Christ or the successor of the apostle Peter.

Jesus Christ is the head of the true Christian Church, [Ephesians 1:19-23; Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 1:16-18].

Philippians 2:1-2, 9-12 [NIV] *“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.” ... “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,”*

Jesus Christ is the only one as God before whom we should bow and worship, in fear and trembling at His Word, the Christian Bible, not a man who will one day bow before Jesus Christ and be judged by Him, [2 Corinthians 5:10-12].