

## THE RACE CHANGE IN ANCIENT ITALY!

300 B. C. and 300 A. D.

by

Ernest L. Martin

Why was Simon Magus and his Gnostic teachings so readily accepted in Rome? Why did the ancient cool tempered and secular minded Romans come to accept an Oriental and emotional religious teaching, which was seemingly so foreign to their nature?

All the textbooks observe this tremendous change of attitude and temperament in the Roman people between the 3rd century B.C. and the 3rd century A.D., but few of them treat the question at any length. It just doesn't occur to them to find the answer. However, the major historians now realize what caused this change in temperament! To be truthful, there was hardly a temperament change (or at best only a slight one). It wasn't the temperament that changed — *it was the race!* Simon Magus, in going to Rome, came amongst his own type of people — they were basically Chaldeans, Syrians, Phoenicians, and Samaritans, with only a very small Latin minority. Italy, by the first century of our era, was in reality, Shemitic country. The evidence to support the truth of this assertion is beyond reproof.

The knowledge of this *change of race* not only helps us in explaining why the Roman populace accepted Simon Magus, but even more importantly *IT HISTORICALLY CONFIRMS BIBLICAL PROPHECIES!* The Bible states that the Babylon of prophecy is modern Rome. Many people accept this Biblical indication merely as a symbol, but it is far from being a symbol, it is literal — actual! Old Babylon was destroyed; the Chaldeans left Mesopotamia; the land turned into a desert — but where did these Babylonians go? The records of history show them today, primarily, in Italy! It is thus important to us that we have this evidence before us. The evidence is not only interesting from a historical point of view, *but it shows that Bible prophecy is again proved to be right after all!*

This article is intended to place the basic facts of this race change at our disposal. The evidence comes from some of the world's most recognized historians — men who have devoted their whole lives to the study of Roman History. They have been quoted at length in order that no one could possibly charge an "out-of-context" evaluation on the material. It is hoped that the longer quotes (which I feel are important) will not prove too laborious reading — they are necessary for the student of history.

The first portion of this paper, concerning this race change, is mainly centered around the work of Professor T. Frank of John Hopkins University. He is the recognized authority on the economic history of ancient Rome. He was the author and editor of the five-volume *Economic History of Rome*, and the author of many other books on ancient Roman history. His contributions to the various classical journals were frequent and always looked for with anticipation by historians around the world. As a matter of interest, the authoritative *Cambridge Ancient History* and the *Oxford History of Rome* by Cory, as well as Professor Boak in America, freely quote from his various works. Much of the material in this paper is founded on Professor Frank's researches, and because of that (for the benefit of those not having studied much Roman History), I have felt it necessary to mention his qualifications. Mention also must be made of Professor Duff of Oxford University whose book, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, represents a substantiation of Professor Frank's work. Truly, there is no lack of authority for the conclusions reached in this paper, for they are not merely personal conclusions, but those of world-recognized historians.

### The Race Change In Ancient Italy!

Astounding as it may seem, it can be stated with the greatest of confidence that a fundamental change of race occurred in the Italian peninsula between the

3rd century B. C. and the 3rd century A. D. The records of history are beyond reproof in showing the truth of this change. What we find is Chaldean, Syrian and Phoenician stock replacing the basic Latin races in Italy. A little amalgamation of Latins and these immigrant Shemites did take place, but the Latin element was so weak when the mixing began, that, in Italy, the remnant of the Latin race was completely submerged by these incoming Shemites. And by the end of the Empire, Italy had become a Shemitic country. When the Bible speaks of Babylonians and Tyrians being the Romans of prophecy — the Romans of our day — *it means it!* The very descendants of those ancient Babylonians and Tyrians are now found in Italy. And, even secular history puts them there!

Is this difficult to believe? Then let us notice the evidence from history.

In this article, we will quote at length what the most imminent historians have to say on this subject. And, the only conclusion we can possibly come to is that a change of race did take place in Italy and that Shemites from the East took over the country.

First, we will quote from the foremost historian on the economic history of Rome before his death in 1939, Professor T. Frank. His monumental five-volume work on *Roman Economics and Social Life* is the recognized authority on the subject. He, probably more than any other person, has studied at length the native Roman records, epigraphical information and archaeological finds relative to his subject.

*The Cambridge Ancient History* consistently refers to his works. Now, let us notice what Professor Frank says about the race question in the *American Historical Review*, vol. 21, July 1916, p. 689. The information he records is illuminating.

There is one surprise that the historian usually experiences upon his first visit to Rome. It may be the Galleria Lapidaria of the Vatican or at the Lateran Museum, but, if not elsewhere, it can hardly escape him upon his first walk up the Appian Way. As he stops to decipher the names upon the old tombs that line the road, hoping to chance upon one familiar to him from his Cicero or Livy, he finds prenomens and nomen promising enough, but the cognomina *all* seem awry. L. Lucretius *Pamphilus*, A. Aemilius *Alexa*, M. Clodius *Philostogas* do not smack of freshman Latin. And he will not readily find in the Roman writers now extant an answer to the questions that these inscriptions invariably raise. Do these names imply that the Roman stock was completely changed after Cicero's day, and was the satirist (Juvenal) recording a fact when he wailed that the Tiber had captured the waters of the Syrian Orontes? If so, are these foreigners ordinary immigrants, or did Rome become a nation of ex-slaves and their offspring?

Unfortunately, most of the sociological and political data of the empire are provided by satirists. When Tacitus informs us that in Nero's day a great many of Rome's senators and knights were descendants of slaves and that the native stock had dwindled to surprisingly small proportions, we are not sure whether we are not to take it as an exaggerated thrust by an indignant Roman of the old stock. . . . To discover some new light upon these fundamental questions of Roman history, I have tried to gather such fragmentary data as the corpus of inscriptions might afford. This evidence is never decisive in its purport, and it is always, by the very nature of the material, partial in its scope, but at any rate it may help us to interpret our literary sources to some extent. IT HAS AT LEAST CONVINCED ME THAT JUVENAL AND TACITUS WERE NOT EXAGGERATING. It is probable that when these men wrote a very small percentage of the free plebians on the streets of Rome could prove unmixed Italian descent. By far the larger part — *PERHAPS NINETY PERCENT* — had Oriental blood in their veins (pp. 689,

690).

What Professor Frank did, besides referring to literary sources, was to study the epigraphical information on the various tombs and monuments in Rome and throughout Italy. He studied over 13,900 different names and found that about three quarters bore names of foreign derivation. The vast majority had Greek cognomina — not Latin at all.

For reasons which will presently appear I have accepted the Greek cognomen as a true indication of recent foreign extraction, and, since citizens of native stock did not as a rule unite in marriage with *liberti*, a Greek cognomen in a child or one parent is sufficient of status (i.e., was foreign) (p. 691).

On the other hand, the question has been raised whether a man with a Greek cognomen must invariably be of foreign stock. Could it not be that Greek names became so popular that, like Biblical and classical names today, they were accepted by the Romans of native stock? In the last days of the empire this may have been the case; but the inscriptions *prove* that the Greek cognomen was not in good repute. I have tested this matter by classifying all the instances in the 13,900 inscriptions where the names of both father and son appear. From this it appears that fathers with Greek names are very prone to give Latin names to their children, whereas *the reverse is not true* (pp. 692, 693).

Clearly the Greek name was considered as a sign of dubious origin among the Roman plebians, and the freedman family that rose to any social ambitions made short shift of it. For these reasons, therefore, I consider that the presence of a Greek name in the immediate family is good evidence that the subject of the inscription is of servile or foreign stock. The conclusion of our pro's and con's must be that nearly *ninety per cent* of the Roman-born folk represented in the above mentioned sepulchral inscriptions are of foreign extraction.

Who are these Romans of the NEW type and whence do they come? How many are immigrants, and how many are of servile extraction? *Of what race are they?* (p. 693).

Professor Frank will answer these questions! Information on this matter cannot come from epigraphical material, it must come from literary sources — from eyewitnesses. In this we are not left without evidence. In fact, there is quite a lot of information on who these foreigners were. These "Romans" bore Greek names. This is enough to show that the majority came from the East — from Greece and the Hellenistic world. However, from literary evidence we can gain a better insight into the *exact* locality from whence most came into Italy. Juvenal, speaking of the Roman population speaks about these people with Greek names. He says most epithetically: "These dregs call themselves Greeks but how small a portion is from Greece; the River Orontes has long flowed into the Tiber" (III, 62).

Juvenal, then, tells us that very few of these people were actually Greek. They were from the Hellenistic world — to be exact, from the Levant.

How did these Orientals get into Italy? Some came by migration, but the vast majority — as the records show — came as *slaves*. When Rome conquered the East, vast numbers of peoples were captured and brought back to Italy as slaves. The great majority of slaves came from the East — particularly Asia Minor and Syria!

Therefore, when the urban inscriptions show that seventy per cent of the city slaves and freedmen bear Greek names and that a larger

portion of the children who have Latin names have parents of Greek names, this at once implies that *THE EAST WAS THE SOURCE* of most of them, and with that inference Bang's conclusions (Dr. Bang of Germany) entirely agree. In his list of slaves that specify their origin as being outside Italy (during the empire), by far the larger portion came from the Orient, especially *FROM SYRIA* and the provinces of *ASIA MINOR*, with some from Egypt and Africa (which for racial classification may be taken with the Orient). Some are from Spain and Gaul, but a considerable portion of these came originally from the East. Very few slaves are recorded from the Alpine and Danube provinces, while Germans *rarely* appear, except among the imperial bodyguard. Bang remarks that Europeans were of greater service to the empire as soldiers than servants. This is largely true, but, as Strach has commented, the more robust European war-captives were apt to be chosen for the grueling work in the mines and in industry, and largely they have vanished from the records. Such slaves were probably also the least productive of the class; and this, in turn, helps to explain *the strikingly ORIENTAL aspect of the new population* (pp. 700,701).

There is another reason why European captives were not found with much representation in Italy. When the Romans took over prosperous Gaul, with its vast agricultural areas, the captive slaves were kept in the areas to farm the land. This is also true for Spain. After all, Italy was being stocked with masses of Oriental slaves, to bring Gauls to Italy would bring about redundancies; and who would care for the farms of Gaul and Spain? This is the main reason Dr. Bang found so very few western and northern Europeans as slaves in Italy. The East supplied most to the fatherland.

However, can it really be said that these Eastern slaves displaced the old Latin stock of Italy? Can we believe that slaves, even though they were brought by the tens of thousands to Italy could completely take over the country? It seems, at first glance, almost an impossibility for such a thing to happen.

But it did! There are many reasons which brought about the change of race. It was not alone the bringing of these new races. Other factors were happening to the original Latin race as well. Let us get a rundown of them by Professor Frank.

There are other questions that enter into the *PROBLEM OF CHANGE — OF RACE AT ROME*, for the solution of which it is even more difficult to obtain statistics. For instance, one asks, without hope of a sufficient answer, *why the native stock did not better hold its own*. Yet there are at hand not a few reasons. We know for instance that when Italy had been devastated by Hannibal and a large part of its population put to the sword, immense bodies of slaves were brought up in the East to fill the void; and that during the second century B. C., when the plantation system with its slave service was coming into vogue, *the natives were pushed out* of the small farms and many disappeared to the provinces of the ever-expanding empire. Thus, during the thirty years before Tiberius Gracchus, the census statistics show no increase. During the first century B. C., the importation of captives and slaves continued, while the free-born citizens were being wasted in the social, Sullan, and civil wars. Augustus affirms that he had had half a million citizens under arms, one eighth of Rome's citizens, and that the most vigorous part. During the early empire, twenty to thirty legions, drawn of course from the best free stock, spent their twenty years of vigor in garrison duty *while the slaves, exempt from such services, lived at home and increased in numbers*. In other words, the native stock was supported by less than a normal birthrate, whereas the stock of foreign extraction had not only a fairly normal birthrate but a liberal quota of manumissions to its advantage (p. 703).

The foregoing are the main problems which affected the race decay of the Latins in Italy. The main points were the decimation and emigration of the native stock, while foreigners, especially from Syria and Asia Minor, took their place. Also, records show the birthrate of the Latins was very low while that of slaves was very large (slaves were encouraged to have children so that more servants could be had). So, the slave population in Italy, during the first century B.C., increased rapidly while the native stock, who were still in the peninsula, diminished to an alarming proportion.

*To this increase in the population the native stock seems not to have contributed much.* Decimated by long wars, fought by citizen crimes, which secured to Rome a Mediterranean empire, its ranks were thinned still further by the withdrawal of colonies of citizens to the provinces beyond the sea and by a heavy decline in the birthrate even among the poorer classes. The native Roman and Italian population *steadily dwindled and the gaps were filled by NEW RACES* (La Piana, *Foreign Groups in Rome During the First Centuries of the Empire*, *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. XX, pp. 188, 189).

This population decline of the native races was alarming to Caesar and to Augustus. Laws were enacted by these rulers to attempt some reversal of the "race-suicide" (as the historians call it) of the Latin peoples. But their laws were completely thwarted.

One of the most serious evils with which the imperial government was called upon to contend was the decline in population. *Not only had the Italian stock almost disappeared from the towns*, but the descendants of freedmen had not been born in sufficient numbers to take its place. Accordingly, while the *Lex Papia Poppaea* offered privileges to freeborn citizens for the possession of three children, it used the whole question of inheritances of freedmen and freedwomen *for the encouragement of procreation* (A. M. Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford Univ. Press 1928, p. 191).

In other words the laws backfired on them. Instead of causing an increase in native Italian stock, it encouraged the procreation of multitudes of ex-slaves who had been freed by magnanimous Romans. Caesar simply could not stem the tide by laws — everything was against him.

The centre of the empire had been more exhausted by the civil wars than any of the provinces. *The rapid disappearance of the free population had been remarked with astonishment and dismay*, at least from the time of the Gracchi. If the numbers actually maintained on the soil of the Peninsula had not diminished, *it was abundantly certain that the independent native races had given way almost throughout its extent to a constant importation of slaves.* The remedies to which Caesar resorted would appear as frivolous as they were arbitrary . . . . He prohibited all citizens between the age of twenty and forty from remaining abroad more than three years together, while, as a matter of state policy, he placed more special restrictions upon the movements of the youths of senatorial families. He required also that the owners of herds and flocks, to the maintenance of which large tracts of Italy were exclusively devoted, should employ free labour to the extent of at least one-third of the whole. Such laws could only be executed constantly under the vigilant superintendance of a sovereign ruler. *They fell in fact into immediate disuse, or rather were never acted upon at all.* They served no other purpose at the time but to evince Caesar's

perception of one of the fatal tendencies of the age (i.e. race deterioration in Italy), to which the eyes of most statesmen of the day were already open (Merivale, *The Romans Under the Empire*, vol. 2. pp. 395, 396. 397).

Or, as Professor Duff says: "Even in Augustus' day the process of *Orientalization* had gone too far. The great emperor saw the clouds, but he did not know they had actually burst. His legislation would have been a prudent and not a whit excessive a century earlier; but in his time Rome was a cosmopolitan city, and the doom of the Empire was already sealed" (*Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, pp. 207, 208).

These laws were enacted too late, and never enforced! Professor Frank shows, despite their inaction.

*The race went under.* The legislation of Augustus and his successors, *while aiming at preserving the native stock*, was of the myopic kind so usual in social lawmaking, and failing to reckon with the real nature of the problem involved, *it utterly missed the mark.* By combining epigraphical and literary references, a fairly full history of the noble families can be procured, and this reveals a startling inability of such families to perpetuate themselves. We know, for instance, in Caesar's day of forty-five patricians, only one of whom is represented by posterity when Hadrian came to power. The Aemilii, Fabii, Claudii, Manlii, Valerii, *and all the rest*, with the exception of Comelii, have disappeared. Augustus and Claudius raised twenty-five families to the patriciate, and all but six disappear before Nerva's reign. Of the families of nearly four hundred senators recorded in 65 A. D. under Nero, all trace of a half is lost by Nerva's day, a generation later. And the records are so full that these statistics may be assumed to represent with a fair degree of accuracy the disappearance of the male stock of the families in question. Of course members of the aristocracy were the chief sufferers from the tyranny of the first century, but this havoc was *not* all wrought by delatores and assassins. The voluntary choice of childlessness accounts largely for the unparalleled condition. This is as far as the records help in this problem, which, despite the silences is probably the most important phase of the whole question *of the change of race.* Be the causes what they may, the rapid decrease of the old aristocracy *and the native stock* was clearly concomitant with a twofold increase from below; by a more normal birth-rate of the poor, and the constant manumission of slaves (pp. 704, 705).

To all of this, the remarks of Professor Duff will not be unappropriate:

It may be asked in this connexion what became of the Latin and Italian stock. Reasons may be given for the coming of the foreigners, but at the same time *some explanation may be demanded for the disappearance of the native.* In the first place there was a marked decline in the birthrate among the aristocratic families. . . . As society grew more pleasure-loving, as convention raised artificially the standard of living, the voluntary choice of celibacy and childlessness became a common feature among the upper classes. . . . *But what of the lower-class Romans of the old stock?* They were practically untouched by revolution and tyranny, and the growth of luxury cannot have affected them to the same extent as it did the nobility. *Yet even here the native stock declined.* The decay of agriculture. . . drove numbers of farmers into the towns, where, unwilling to engage in trade, they sank into unemployment and poverty, and where, in their endeavours to maintain a high standard of living, *they were not able to support the*

*cost of rearing children.* Many of these free-born Latins were so poor that they often complained that the foreign slaves were much better off than they — and so they were. At the same time many were tempted to emigrate to the colonies across the sea which Julius Caesar and Augustus founded. Many went away to Romanize the provinces, *while society was becoming Orientalized at home.* Because slave labour had taken over almost all jobs, the free born could not compete with them. They had to sell their small farms or businesses and move to the cities. Here they were placed on the doles because of unemployment. They were, at first, encouraged to emigrate to the more prosperous areas of the empire — to Gaul, North Africa and Spain. Hundreds of thousands left Italy and settled in the newly-acquired lands. Such a vast number left Italy — leaving it to the Orientals — that finally restrictions had to be passed to prevent the complete depopulation of the Latin stock, but as we have seen, the laws were never effectively put into force. The migrations increased and Italy was being left to another race. The free-born Italian, anxious for land to till and live upon, displayed the keenest colonization activity (*Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, pp. 200, 201).

There were two major reasons why the native Latin flocked first to the cities and then to *foreign lands*. The first, as we have mentioned, was slave labor. The small farm owner with a few acres could not compete with the large landowner with hundreds if not thousands of slave labourers. The free-born farmer, by sheer economics, was often forced to sell his small holding to the larger farmer and then go to live in the cities and onto the doles. But there is a second important reason why the small farmers and even the village free-born, gave up their holdings — this was the desolation of a good deal of the land in Italy. The Hannibalic and Civil wars had rendered whole sections sterile by the ravages that took place. Vast areas of once fertile soil in Italy were, by the first century B.C., desolate wastelands. This was especially true in certain Central and Southern regions. The Central Etruscan area was so desolate that one General returning to Rome, complained of traveling for miles without so much as seeing a village.

The stock of (Latin) men capable of bearing arms in this (Central) district on which Rome's ability to defend herself had once mainly depended, had so totally vanished, that people had read with astonishment and perhaps with horror the accounts of annals — *sounding fabulous in comparison with things as they now stood* — respecting the Aequian and Volscian wars. . . . Varro complains, 'the once populous cities,' in general 'stood desolate' (Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, vol. V, p. 394).

What had happened was disastrous to Italy — at least to the Latin stock. Italian land was in two general states: either vast areas were rendered completely unproductive through desolation and were worth hardly anything agriculturally, or, the areas that were fertile came to be in the hands of large rich land-owners and farmed by thousands of slaves. There was no place for the freemen. It is no wonder that the poor native Latin looked elsewhere for his fortune — there was little place for him in Italy by the first century B.C.

Riches and misery in close league *drove the Italians out of Italy, and filled the peninsula partly with swarms of slaves, partly awful silence* (because of desolation) (*ibid.*, p. 395).

Huge masses of Latins left Italy for Spain and Gaul. This desire for the Roman of free-birth to go to other areas of the empire, is mentioned by Seneca. He shows how the Italian looked for every opportunity to leave his native country:

This people (the Romans), how many colonies has it sent to every province! Wherever the Roman conquers, there he dwells. With a view to this change of country, volunteers would gladly ascribe their name, and even the old man, leaving his home would follow the colonists overseas (*Helvia on Consolation*, VII, 7).

Or, as Mommsen continues:

The Latin stock of Italy underwent an alarming diminution, and its fair provinces were overspread partly by parasitic immigrants, partly by sheer desolation. A considerable portion of the population of Italy flocked to foreign lands. Already the aggregate amount of talent and of working power, which the supply of Italian magistrates and Italian garrisons for the whole domain of the Mediterranean demanded, transcended the resources of the peninsula, especially as the elements thus sent abroad were in great part lost for ever to the nation (*ibid.*, p. 393).

And what is equally important to explain the loss of Latin stock, the thousands of soldiers in foreign countries (Augustus had over 100,000 in foreign garrisons alone), when retiring from their service careers, more often than not chose for their pension-lands, territory outside of Italy. Merivale shows that by the first century D. C. "there were no tracts of land of public domain left within the Alps for the state to distribute in public grants" (*ibid.* p. 395). The veterans had to take provincial areas, especially those in Gaul, Spain, and North Africa, as their demobilization pay. This was not objected to by the veterans because Italy just wasn't productive enough to live on, especially if the holding was small. The veteran normally chose the immediate area in which he had been stationed for his twenty some years service. Let us remember that the garrisoned soldier often had his family with him — it was not unlike the armed forces today in this regard.

However, when the Caesars finally awoke to the disastrous effect that this draining of the Latin population was having to the native hold on Italy, the process of the unwitting de-Latinization of Italy had gone so far that it became impossible to do anything about it. Of course, the state tried to reverse the situation. Lands were even bought up in Italy and many veterans were forced to take up residence in their homeland. But this even backfired! The veterans, yearning for the better provincial areas, soon sold their lands to the large landowners and went back to the new provinces. In fact, all the legislation regarding the strengthening of the Latin stock in the home country came to nothing. "They (the laws) fell in fact into immediate disuse, or rather were never acted upon at all" (Merivale, vol. II, p.397).

In summing up, Professor Duff gives us a keen insight on what was happening in Italy and why the Latin race went under with a new stock taking its place:

Among all the causes of the change of race (apart from manumission) war was the most important. The armies of the late Republic and civil wars had consisted largely of Italians, who, if they were not killed off, were at least deprived of domestic life during their prime. Meanwhile the freedmen, usually excluded from the army, and the freedman's descendant, never a keen soldier, were allowed an uninterrupted family life and produced offspring with greater freedom. Moreover, after his twenty years' service, it was frequently the case that the legionary never returned home, but joined his fellow veterans to found a colony in the province where he had served.

The Roman thus gave away to the Easterner in Italy, while he made a place for himself in the provinces (*Freedmen in the Early Roman*



*Empire*, pp. 201, 202).

What a strange situation! By the first century B.C., Italy found itself stocked with slaves (Merivale says at least two-thirds were of servile origin at this time), and the natives were constantly leaving the country. And, of those free-born who remained in Italy, the thought of propagation was not taken seriously while the slaves were producing many times the offspring. It can easily be seen how this slave population — the vast majority were from Asia Minor and Syria — replaced the old stock.

On top of this, there was a strong movement in the first century B.C. of freeing slaves — letting them take over the activities of the former free-born who had left or was leaving the country. The rate of emancipation was so high that laws were finally enacted to curtail the practice. For what was happening? Simply this: thousands of slaves were becoming freedmen and by virtue of this, they became the *new* Roman citizens. The emancipations or manumissions were not done a corner, but were becoming the fashion of the day by the beginning of our era. When a slave owner died, he often freed every slave in his household — and some households had upwards of several thousand. These ex-slaves — now freedmen and consequently Roman citizens — were the most energetic of peoples in Italy. They were the ones, who as slaves, had done the business, the teaching, the doctoring, the farming, the building, etc., while the rich Roman did nothing but amuse himself and the poverty stricken free-born was shifting for himself, more often than not on the dole and idle. Now, that thousands of these slaves were gaining their freedom, they continued their trading and business activities. They became the energetic stock of Italy.

*The Cambridge Ancient History* says:

With thoughtful citizens, partly owing to the Stoic doctrine of the fraternity of man, humaner views gradually spread and made for amelioration in the lot of servitude, and for *so much readiness in masters to liberate slaves* that Augustus, *recognizing the serious infiltration of alien blood into the body politic*, introduced restrictions on manumission. *Yet this proved but a slight check*, and Tacitus records a significant remark that 'if freedmen were marked off as a separate grade, *then the scanty number of free-born would be evident.*' This shows how very few native free-born were left in Italy by our era. This freemen were now freedmen — ex-slaves or their descendants. They were taking over the complete population. The rise of successful freedmen to riches made a social change of the utmost moment, and the wealth amassed by a Narcissus or a Pallas gives point to Martial's use of 'wealthy freedmen' as something proverbial (vol. VI, pp. 755, 756).

The ex-slaves, now freedmen, who really made names for themselves were generally from Syrian or Eastern extraction.

It seems unquestionable that the slaves from the eastern provinces were numerically preponderant in Rome, and — what is still more important — that they played a more important part in Roman life. . . . The large population of slaves gave rise to a *numerous class of foreign origin*, the *liberti* or freedmen, which came to play an important part in the life of the city. Rome's policy of manumitting slaves *was very liberal* and the grant of freedom and citizenship made it possible for them to become merged in the citizen body of Rome. Former slaves and sons of slaves spread into trades and crafts that required civil standing, and in Cicero's day *it was these people who already constituted the larger element of the plebian classes* (La Piana, *Foreign Groups in Rome*, pp. 190, 191).

These freedmen from the East began to take over almost all of the active enterprises which govern society and commerce as a whole. By the first

century, freedmen were beginning to be so powerful — their number far out did any Latin stock that remained — that even top governmental posts were coming their way.

One thing which must, most of all, have shocked the aristocracy, even though of recent date, *was the large number of Orientals, especially freedmen, who — had been given some of the highest posts in the empire (Cambridge Ancient History, vol. X, p. 727).*

This history goes on and on showing personal incidents of Oriental ex-slaves gaining posts that only the Latin aristocracy could hold in the Republic. In fact, these ex-slaves finally took over almost complete control. Tacitus complains that in Nero's day most of the senators and members of the aristocracy were now men of ex-slave status — and most of these were of Eastern origin.

Ex-slaves became so powerful that in Nero's time they were put in charge of the highest governmental offices — a thing which an ancient republican Roman would have gasped at.

The reign of Nero saw no abatement in the power of the imperial freedmen (ex-slaves). When Agrippina was accused of treason, freedmen were present to hear her defense. One of Nero's freedmen, Polyclitus, was actually employed as an arbitrator between a senator and a knight; for when Suetonius Paullinus, the legate of Britain, had disputes with his procurator, Polycritus was sent to settle their differences. He proceeded to the island (of Britain) with *the gorgeous train of an Oriental potentate*, but the barbarians failed to comprehend why their conqueror should bow the knee to a slave. When Nero went on his theatrical tour to Greece he left the freedman, Helius, *in charge of Rome*. Twelve years before this menial had been employed by Nero to murder Silanus; and *was now absolute master of the imperial city* (Duff, pp. 178, 179).

These instances of freedmen taking over the government are *not* isolated cases. This was the general trend. Professor Duff gives examples of how in times after Nero, the descendants of these ex-slaves were the power behind the throne. In fact, by the third century even many of the Emperors were actually descendants of the slaves of earlier centuries.

The denationalized capital of the great empire, came to be ruled by the offspring of races which originally had come to the city only to serve (La Piana, *Foreign Groups in Rome*, p. 223).

Let us not for a moment forget that by the first century B.C. the urban populace of the cities in all Italy were of slave or ex-slave extraction. These are the clear findings of the historians. The taking over the government by the descendants of slaves was brought about because the major population, by the end of the first century A. D., was of ex-slave extraction — the former Latin nobles disappeared almost completely.

But however numerous the offspring of the servile classes, unless the Romans had been liberal in the practice of manumission, *these people would not have merged with the civil population*. Now, literary and legal records present abundant evidence of an *unusual* liberality in this practice at Rome, and the facts need not be repeated after the full discussion of Wallon, Buckland, Freulander, Dill, Lemonnier, and Cicotti. If there were any doubt that the laws passed in the early empire for the partial restriction of manumission did *not* seriously check the practice, the statistics given at the beginning of the paper should allay it. *When from eighty to ninety per cent* of the urban population proves to have been of servile

extraction, we can only conclude that manumissions were not seriously restricted (Frank, *ibid.*, pp. 698, 699).

Yes, by the first century of our era, the vast majority of free Italians were now ex-slaves or the descendants of ex-slaves. "*By far the larger part — perhaps ninety per cent — had Oriental blood in their veins*" (*Ibid.*, p. 690).

### The Effect of the Race Change

Professor Frank can now be called on to analyze the overall effect of this change. His findings, along with others, now make many things hitherto somewhat unclear, just as clear as daylight! Many enigmas are now explained! Let us notice what he relates.

This Orientalization of Rome's populace has a more important bearing than is usually accorded it upon the larger question of why *the spirit and acts* of imperial Rome ARE TOTALLY DIFFERENT from those of the republic. There was a complete change in the temperament! There is today a healthy activity in the study of the economic factors that contributed to Rome's decline. But what lay behind and constantly reacted upon all such causes of Rome's disintegration was, after all, to a considerable extent, *the fact that the people who had built Rome HAD GIVEN WAY TO A DIFFERENT RACE*. The lack of energy and enterprise, the failure of foresight and common sense, the weakening of moral and political stamina, all were concomitant with the gradual diminution of the stock which, during the earlier days, had displayed these qualities. It would be wholly unfair to pass judgment upon the native qualities of the *Oriental*s without a further study, or to accept the self-complacent slurs of the Romans, who, ignoring certain imaginative and artistic qualities, chose only to see in them unprincipled and servile egoists. We may even admit that had these new races had time to amalgamate and attain a political consciousness a more brilliant and versatile civilization might have come to birth (*ibid.*, p. 705).

Professor Frank has given us the answer, which has long puzzled people: why is the temperament of the early Roman so utterly different from the Italian of Constantine's time? As the *Cambridge Ancient History* puts it:

*What of the enormous change in intellectual outlook and spiritual atmosphere between Augustus and Constantine? Is not the result something more Oriental than Greek or Roman in type and temper?* (vol. XII, p. 448).

The answer is plain. It is *not* the ancient Roman gradually changing his basic temperament; this change represents *a change of race*. The later intellectual and spiritual temperament of Constantine's Italians are outright Oriental and *totally different* from the earlier Romans.

Let us notice the spiritual side of this change, not of temperament, but of race. These incoming races from Syria, Asia Minor and Phoenicia brought with them their Chaldean sun-worship and the mystery cults. The early Romans repudiated these Oriental religions, but the slaves, who soon became the greater part of the population and freedmen, accepted them outright. Professor Frank calls attention to this change from one type of religion to another. "It would be illuminating by way of illustration of *this change* to study the spread of the mystery religions." What of this change? How did the Romans accept the Chaldean mystery religion? Professor Frank answers:

*May it not be that Occidentals who are actually of Oriental extraction, men of emotional nature, are simply finding in these cults the satisfaction that, after long deprivation, their*

*temperaments naturally* required?

Why of course. This is the clear answer. Most of the Oriental slaves brought their Chaldean religion right with them into Italy. Then, when later, in the first and second centuries of our era, the *new* Gnostic-Chaldean cults springing up in Syria and Samaria, found fertile ground in the now Orientalized Italy. These Italians were the same type of peoples as those who were bringing in the new mystery cults. It is just that plain!

Professor Duff also notices the striking differences in the early race in Italy and the Oriental one which followed. He calls attention to the fact that these later "Romans" accepted the Oriental religions so quickly.

The cumulative effect of these Oriental religions helped to break the old Roman character. Another more powerful solvent was also inherited from slavery and manumissions. The profuse intermixture of race, containing without interruption from 200 B.C. far into the history of the Empire, *PRODUCED A TYPE UTTERLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT WHICH CHARACTERIZED THE HEROES OF THE EARLY REPUBLIC*. Instead of the hardy and patriotic Roman with his proud indifference to pecuniary gain, we find too often under the Empire an idle pleasure-loving cosmopolitan whose patriotism goes no further than applying for the dole and swelling the crowds in the amphitheatre (*ibid.*, pp. 205, 206).

Yes, what a difference! This change cannot be explained as being a gradual change in temperament. It goes much deeper than that. As the work by the *Encyclopedia Britannica* says:

Slavery was the most determined enemy of that spirit of conservatism and tradition which had been the strength of the Roman race. The slaves did not spring from the soil of Rome, their recollections and affections were elsewhere, and *when they became citizens* they did not hesitate to welcome foreign customs and to introduce them into the city. Whilst the statesmen and leading men wore themselves out in trying to preserve what remained of the ancient spirit and old customs, down below, amongst those classes of the populace which were constantly being recruited from slavery, *there was a continual working to destroy it*. It was thus that, thanks to this secret and powerful influence, *new religions easily spread throughout the empire* (*Historians History of the World*, vol. 6, p. 365).

It was this new, ex-slave population — now the people of the land, the new Italians — who readily absorbed and propagated these Chaldean mystery cults. It was in their nature to do so.

"In short," says Professor Frank, "the mystery cults permeated the city, Italy, and the western provinces only to such an extent as the city, Italy, and the provinces were permeated *BY THE STOCK THAT HAD CREATED THOSE RELIGIONS*" (*ibid.*, p. 707).

What foresight! How correct Professor Frank is!

Those mystery religions had their creation in ancient Babylon. These vast hordes of Easterners who had come or had been brought to Italy to make their new homes, were saturated with Chaldeans — literal Chaldeans, from Babylon, Syria, Samaria, and Phoenicia. Almost the whole new Italian stock was Shemitic and that was largely Babylonian by origination.

In the third and fourth centuries A.D., *when even the aristocracy at Rome was almost completely foreign*, these Eastern cults, rather than those of old Rome, became the centers of 'patrician' opposition to Christianity. In other words, *the western invasion of the mystery cults in hardly a miraculous conversion of the even-tempered,*

*practical-minded Indo-European to an orgiastic emotionalism foreign to his nature. THESE RELIGIONS CAME WITH THEIR PEOPLES, and so far as they gained new converts, they attracted for the most part people of Oriental extraction who had temporarily fallen away from native ways in the western world (ibid., p. 708).*

How true that observation is! There was practically a complete change of race between the third century B.C. and the time of Constantine — the Shemite had come! As Professor Duff states:

The fact that the Romans who resisted Hannibal (late 3rd century B.C.) and those who succumbed to the Goths (5th century A.D.) WERE TOTALLY DIFFERENT PEOPLES is one of the main explanations of the decline and fall" (*Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford University Press, p. 207).

With the observations of these historians, perhaps it will be in order to bring in God's revelation on this matter. That is, do peoples change their basic natures?

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, Or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (**Jer. 13:23**).

"Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods?" (**Jer. 2:11**).

How plain the whole matter is, the later 'Romans' didn't change their gods. They were basically Babylonian by race and brought their Babylonian gods and worship with them to Italy.

Historians have long been aware of the striking similarities between ancient Babylonian civilization and that of Rome — particularly Medieval Rome. Professor Sayce, the noted historian of Near Eastern nations, gave a remarkable parallel between Babylon and later Rome.

Babylon remained (after the time of Solomon) the capital of the Kingdom and the *holy city* of Western Asia. Like the sovereigns of the *HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE*, it was necessary for the prince, who claimed rule in Western Asia, to go to Babylon and there be acknowledged as the adopted son of Bel before his claim to legitimacy could be admitted. Babylon became more and more a priestly city, living on its ancient prestige and merging its ruler INTO A PONTIFF. From this time down to the Persian era, it was the *religious head of the civilized East*" (*Historians History of the World*, pub. by the *Ency. Brit.* vol. 1, p. 364).

Such a parallel could hardly be accidental. Just as the rulers of Asia Minor, Syria, Assyria, and Babylon had to be acknowledged by the Pontifex Maximus of Babylon, so the later rulers of Austria, Germany, France, and Spain had to be recognized by the Pontifex Maximus of Rome — the Pope!

How plain it is that the Babylonians have made an exact replica of ancient Babylon. Rome is the new Babylon.

## CHAPTER TWO From Babylon to Syria

That the people of the later Roman Empire were basically from Syria and Asia Minor is without doubt! These "Syrians" replaced the old stock of Rome. As plain as this is, however, it is one thing to say that these new Romans were transplanted Syrians, but quite another to prove that they, were basically Babylonians. Realizing that evidence must be given, this portion of the article is designed to fill the gap. We will use Biblical and secular sources to show, without doubt, that Syria in the last centuries before our era was saturated with Babylonian stock. This being shown to be true, it will then follow that the slaves taken to Rome from the Levant area must represent the same general stock. The reality of this Babylonian movement to Italy will be self-evident as we

proceed in the article.

Let us first note that the Bible tells us to expect Babylonians in Rome! The Book of Revelation locates the new Babylon on the city of the seven hills. And, as we have seen, the Roman stock which brought about Babylonian religion to Italy, were the people "who created those religions." Does this not indicate a Chaldean movement into Italy? It certainly does! These people were primarily from Syria.

It only remains for us to find out who those Syrians were.

### The Bible the Key

All have recognized that the Bible gives information about several Babylonian nations being transported into the old hill country of Ephraim — into Samaria! But what is not generally known is that scripture reveals these Babylonians as being not only in the Samaritan area — they were placed in ALL the areas west of the Euphrates — IN ALL OF SYRIA!

We normally restrict the Babylonian colonization of the West only to Samaria, but from the records of the Samaritans, those of the Jews and especially the records of the Bible, we can prove that these Babylonians were not limited alone to Samaria. *Babylonian peoples were settled in Syria and Phoenicia as well as Samaria!* Let us carefully observe, first, the Biblical record of this matter.

### What the Bible Says!

When the Jews were rebuilding the temple right after the Babylonian captivity, the peoples of Samaria came to the Jews and said: "Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither" (**Ezra 4:2**).

The Jews declined this Samaritan petition because of their utterly corrupt religion. This refusal infuriated the Samaritans. They resolved to thwart any attempt to rebuild the temple if they couldn't have a hand in it. Thereupon, they wrote a letter to the king of Persia asking him to put a stop to the building. The contents of this letter is interesting because it reveals a lot more about the origin of the Samaritans and about where they were living in Palestine than any other Biblical reference. And the Bible has recorded this letter to afford us a key as to the distribution of Babylonians west of the Euphrates. Let us notice what these Samaritans said of themselves.

Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, *the Babylonians*, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Assnapper (Asshur-banipal) brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, **AND THE REST THAT ARE ON THIS SIDE OF THE RIVER** (i.e., west of the Euphrates), and at such a time (**Ezra 4:9, 10**).

Let us first notice that these tribes *were all SHEMITES!* (Almost all were from Mesopotamia with the exception of some Elamites from Persia). The major core were from the area of Babylon!

And more importantly, note that these nations (they were whole nations) were settled not only in the cities of Samaria, but also in the REST on this side the River — that is, the rest of the cities west of the Euphrates. This side the River:

This was the *ordinary designation of Syria* in the *official language* of the old Persian Empire (Bevan, *The House of Seleucus*, vol. I, p. 234).

How clear it all is! These Eastern peoples were brought *into the whole*

region THAT WE NOW CALL SYRIA, and not alone to Samaria. They were brought there to fill up the devastation and the void which hung on the land after the Assyrian wars. Let us remember that Northern Israel was emptied of Israelites — the Samaritan portion of these people came in to replace them. On the other hand, we are told that ancient Syria — north of Israel — was also invaded by Assyrian and that many of the ancient Arameans were taken back to northern Assyria. It was, like the land of Israel, left practically empty! The prophet **Amos (Chapter 1:3-5)** foretold that the Arameans *were to be taken captive* by the Assyrians to KIR (the Kir valley area just south of the Caucasus). This prophecy probably does not mean that every single Aramean was taken away — even though on the surface that is what the prophecy says. However a good deal of the native stock of ancient Aram were removed, like Israel, from their land. Those few who were left must have amalgamated with the incoming stock from the East. The land of Syria was repopulated, just like the land of Israel, with people allied with Assyria. After all, the eastern seaboard area of the Mediterranean was one of the most strategic to Assyria. They didn't move exiles or rebellious nations, into the Syrian and Palestine areas — that would have been the height of folly. Besides, Syria and Samaria were never regions of exile like the Caucasus and Caspian Sea areas. *These people were colonists.* Many of them came from regions annexed to Assyria by Esar-haddon, but they were his allies. They came to redevelop the land — to strengthen it for Assyria. It would have been a crazy maneuver to place rebellious tribes into an area bordering the naturally rebellious Egypt. Babylonian nations were being granted these lands by Assyria in order to stabilize the western flank of the empire and to make it secure. Later, when the Babylonian empire came along, these very people proved to be even more helpful. During the time of the Persian empire, these Babylonians — with a few other Shemitic peoples — *were still* in the Syrian region. They were, as the Bible says *"in all the areas west of the Euphrates."*

Even the records of the Samaritans and the Jews support the above information. Josephus mentions an official letter of the Samaritans which was written to Antiochus Epiphanes in which the Samaritans stated that their forefathers had at one time lived in the northern area near the city of Sidon. See *Antiquities*, Book XII, ch. 5, sec. 5. In fact, the Samaritans from Babylon had kinfolk all along the northern area of the Phoenician coast. Sidon was the center of this Babylonian influence.

In Assyrian times this ancient city of Sidon had been completely destroyed by Esar-haddon king of Assyria — the Sidonian king was killed and *all* the former people taken captive. Esar-haddon tells how the destruction came about in his own official cuneiform records. He states that after Sidon's destruction, he rebuilt the city and, naming it after himself, restocked it with people from the countries of the East. This official record can be checked in *The Assyrian Eponym Canon*, pp. 137, 138. This cuneiform record is the first of Esar-haddon bringing peoples from the East to the Phoenician seaboard. It agrees remarkably with the Bible record, when the Scriptures state that these Samaritans and their kin had come into the area "since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Assur, **WHICH BROUGHT US UP HITHER**" (**Ezra 4:2**). The Assyrian record and the Bible are speaking about the same peoples!

It was Esar-haddon who brought up these Babylonian and Elamite people; he first put them in his new city of SIDON. It is no wonder that the Samaritans told Antiochus that their original home was the area around SIDON. That is where those from Samaria were first placed. There can be no doubt of this for these Samaritans even asked Antiochus to check *"the public records."* There were state records which clearly showed that the Samaritans were telling the truth in this matter. When Antiochus answered their letter, after having checked those public records, he addressed them as *"the Sidonians who live at Shechem"* (*ibid.*). Even Josephus himself refers to them as SIDONIANS of recent origin (but at the same time saying they anciently came from Eastern countries). Plus all this, the Jewish Targum written about 50 B. C., referring to **Genesis 10**, *calls SIDON a Samaritan city.* It calls it Cutha — the city of the Cuthites. (Cuthites was, and still is, the name the Jews use for the Samaritans.)

Now what does this all prove? Very much! It serves to indicate that the Samaritan influence was not only limited to the hill country of Ephraim — the Samaritans were only a part of many nations brought over from Babylon into Palestine and Syria. Sidon was the first big stronghold of them (they were not called Samaritans in Sidon because the word 'Samaritan' is geographical and can only be used of those in Samaria). These Babylonians who lived in Sidon were called Sidonians, they were, of course, the same stock as the Samaritans. Likewise the transplanted Babylonians in the other cities west of the Euphrates were not called Samaritans, but were still of the same stock. There was a major difference between the Babylonians in Samaria and the Babylonians in Sidon and Syria (not in race but in religion): the Samaritans accepted the Old Testament Law as a basis for their idolatrous religion, while the others, at first, cared little for accepting the Old Testament. This singled out the Samaritans as being somewhat different from the others in Syria but they were all of the same general race.

So, what is the outcome of this? It means that the Bible puts Babylonians *in all the cities of Syria and Phoenicia* as well as *in Samaria*, and that the secular records support it. Thus, Babylonian influence in the West was much greater in scope than has hitherto been realized by some historians. But there is more to come!

### Syria Becomes the New Babylon

We now come to a matter concerning ancient history that all historians accept. And that is: The Seleucid kingdom (called 'the kingdom of the north' in **Daniel**) can be designated a Babylonian kingdom! Yes, actually a Babylonian kingdom.

It has been customary to call the Seleucid realm a Greco-Macedonian regime. And, this is true — but only on the surface. Let us see.

After Alexander the Great had conquered Asia, he made as capital of this vast eastern domain, the city of Babylon. He planned further African and European conquests but was prevented from carrying out his grandiose designs by his untimely death at Babylon. His death put the government into confusion. There was, however, a treaty between the major claimants to the domain: it was divided into four major areas with rulers over each. After some further bickering between the new rulers, the central area of the former empire fell out to Seleucus, a general of Alexander's army. He took over this central Babylonian region and proclaimed himself the king of Babylon. In a short time he took over all of Syria. And, for over 250 years he and his descendants controlled as "the kingdom of the north" the areas of Syria and Mesopotamia.

Seleucus, surnamed Nicator, who had received this province (of Syria) in his lot in the division of the Macedonian dominions, raised it into an empire, known in history by the name of the kingdom of Syria or *BABYLON* (*Lempriere's Classical Dictionary*, p. 587).

Yes, Seleucus' kingdom was called either Syrian or Babylonian. And what is interesting, in later times the kings of the Seleucid empire consistently call themselves *not* the kings of Syria, but rather *THE KINGS OF BABYLON* (e.g. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus*, vol. I, p. 255). They wanted to maintain the historical tradition of the old Babylonian empire — that they were its successors — not that they were "Syrians" who had little historical background. And as we will presently see, the Seleucid kings represented their kingdom as a resurrection of the old Babylonian kingdom.

What type of kingdom was this "kingdom of the north" racially? At first, it was made up of about five per cent Greeks and Macedonians (mainly of soldiers, veterans and a few Greek colonists) while the rest was made up of the native populations of the various countries of the kingdom. Seleucus was very prone to build new cities in his Asian empire. He built no less than thirty. They were all designed on the Greek manner. The architecture was Greek and so were the social institutions. Some few Greek colonists were brought in to give



the cities the 'Greek' flavour. And more importantly, Greek was the language imposed on the citizens of this kingdom.

From this, we might imagine that the kingdom was, in fact, a real Greek kingdom. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Greek element became a thin veneer upon the old traditions, religions and society in general. Oh yes, we must say that the old stock saw their own culture through Greek guise — especially, they used the Greek language — but the real warp and woof of the kingdom was as Oriental as it ever had been. The Greek religions were brought to Syria and Babylon, and they became Babylonian. Some Greek peoples came to the area, and they soon, by amalgamation became Syrians and Babylonians. The Seleucid kingdom was Oriental to the core! These are wide-sweeping statements, but they can be supported by the plain records of history. Let us see.

Dr. W.W. Tarn, one of the authors of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, shows how this "Greek" kingdom of Seleucus reverted quickly back to a Babylonian and Syrian kingdom.

Mercenaries settled in Asia (the Seleucid Empire) had from the start taken native wives; certainly by the first century intermarriage and the mixture of peoples in daily life and trade was doing its work, and, precisely as in Egypt at the time, *the term 'Greek' sometimes denoted culture, NOT BLOOD*; the 'Greek woman, a Syro-Phoenician **BY RACE**' of **Mark 7:26** was such a 'culture Greek', perhaps with Greek political rights in her city. After the European immigration of the few Greek colonists in the third century B. C. came to an end, first a balance was established, then the Greek began to lose ground, partly through mixing his blood with Asiatic stocks (*Hellenistic Culture*, p. 139).

The disintegration of this Greek veneer was started very early — even with Alexander. He commanded the bulk of his army officers to marry into the native population. This was done on a wide scale. Even Seleucus, the beginner of the new empire centred at Babylon, was married to an Oriental princess. The fruit of that mixed union was Antiochus the First, the king that followed Seleucus to the throne. From that time onward, the deterioration continued to such an extent that Greek blood almost wholly disappeared except in a few isolated districts in the extreme western part of the empire. Certain forms of Greek culture retained their force, and especially the Greek language became the official language of the empire, but the Greek race almost entirely disappeared within a few generations.

The Roman historian Livy reports a statement of a Roman consul to his troops in 189 B.C. Speaking about the submergence of the Greek racial characteristics in the East, he said:

The Macedonians who settled in Alexandria in Egypt, or in Seleucia, or in Babylonia, or in any of their other colonies scattered over the world, *have degenerated into Syrians, Parthians, or Egyptians*. Whatever is planted in a foreign land, by a gradual change in its nature, degenerates into that by which it is nurtured (Livy, XXXVIII, 17).

Also, even though the armies of Antiochus the Third were sometimes called Greeks, Livy and Plutarch report they were actually "all Syrians" (Livy, XXXV, 49, 8; Plutarch, *Titus*, 17).

Let us also recall that Juvenal said the multitudes of "Greeks" in Italy were not Greeks at all but were from Syria — "the river Orontes has long flowed into the Tiber" (III, 62). This clearly shows, even though the Syrians had Greek names and even some Greek cultural tendencies, they were hardly real Greeks!

In other words, the Greek race in Syria and Babylonia succumbed. This decay was begun by Alexander himself when he encouraged — actually ordered — his men to marry with eastern stocks. The effect was the complete

overwhelming of the Greek minority. By the end of the second century B. C. the Greek racial element was so small as to be non-existent in most regions of the empire. The Seleucid kingdom has virtually reverted to the native stock.

As an example of how this reverting can take place, historians give us a modern equivalent of the Greek invasion and penetration of Syria and Babylon: the British take-over of India. Just like the spread of the Greek language in Nearer Asia, so English became the official tongue of all India. And, as Alexander gave Asia a Greek culture, the British have given India its civil service, its jurisprudence and a form of democracy. However, there is one matter in which the analogy breaks down: Alexander had his men marry into the Asian stock thus deteriorating the race, while the British commanded no such thing, and in fact such intermarriage with the Indians was actively frowned upon. The intermarriage of Alexander's Greeks with the natives, soon extinguished the Greek blood, while in India there are still some British colonies of pure race.

Thus, it can be plainly observed, from the above analogy, and from the historical sources, that the Greek kingdom of Alexander degenerated directly back to its native population.

The records of history prove this conclusively! For example, when Alexander brought his Greek gods and religions to Syria and Babylonia, the natives were willing to call their own gods by some of the Greek names of deity, but to replace the Babylonian gods with the Greek ones, they most emphatically refused. In actual fact, the Greek gods turned into Babylonian ones!

Greece was ready to adopt the gods of the foreigner, but the foreigner rarely reciprocated; Greek Doura (the Greek temple in Mesopotamia) freely admitted the gods of Babylon, *but no Greek god entered Babylonian Uruk*. Foreign gods might take Greek names; they took little else. They (the Babylonian gods) were the stronger, and the conquest of Asia (by the Greeks) *was bound to fail* as soon as the East had gauged its own strength *and Greek weakness* (Tarn, *ibid.*, pp. 301, 302).

Speaking of this retention of indigenous worships in the East, Dr. Cumont remarks:

The native religions retained all their prestige and independence. In their ancient sanctuaries that took rank with the richest and most famous in the world, *a powerful clergy continued to practise ancestral devotions according to barbarian rites*, and frequently liturgy, everywhere performed with scrupulous respect, remained (in Syria) Semitic (*Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, p. 22).

Yes, the old Babylonian gods of the Syrians were *not* exchanged for the incoming Greek ones. Besides, as it can be clearly shown, well over ninety-five per cent of the people of Syria and Asia, even at the beginning of the Seleucid empire, were native Orientals. The invading Greeks had little chance of uprooting the basic religions and philosophies of these people. And, by intermarriage and mixture, it was the Greek alien who gave way to the native Oriental. The later 'Greek' kings succumbed almost entirely to Oriental ways — especially in religion. "*The East led its conqueror captive*" says Dr. Tarn (*ibid.*, p. 306).

The *political aspects* of the Seleucid kingdom were no less Oriental. They based their administration on the old Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian forms. Thus, there was a historical continuity in government all the way from Assyria to the Seleucid kingdom (Tarn, *ibid.*, p. 118).

One feature of Seleucid rule *was the resurrection of Babylonia*, whose ancient culture was to the Seleucids what that of Egypt was to the Ptolemies. Cuneiform literature revived (under Persian rule the art had decayed); besides scientific astronomical work and

business documents, chronicles of current events were written, and myths were versified. Rituals, incantations, and omen literature were frequently copied and studied, as were Sumerian hymns and their Babylonian translations. . . . The last cuneiform document extant dates from 7 B.C. *This activity points to a RELIGIOUS REVIVAL, which was fostered by the early kings.* Antiochus I carried to completion Alexander's project of restoring Bel's temple at Babylon which Xerxes had destroyed. He re-founded Nebo's temple at Borsippa, while Bel's priest Berossus dedicated to him (Antiochus) his work on Babylonian history. Under Seleucus a priest of Uruk, possibly at his request, found at Susa and copied the old ritual of the gods at Uruk, whose worship was re-established. The temple of Anu at Uruk was restored in 182 B. C. under Seleucus IV. The priests of Uruk also collected a temple library. Mr. Sidney Smith has suggested to me [Dr. Tarn] *that the Seleucids favoured Babylonian religion as a bulwark against Zoroasterianism (ibid., pp. 118, 119).*

The Seleucids almost totally abandoned the religious forms of the Olympian gods and reverted to Babylonianism! The Seleucid empire saw, as Dr. Tarn has clearly observed, *"the resurrection of Babylonia."* Even Alexander's policy was to bring back the old Babylonian empire. *"Alexander presented himself to the Babylonians as the restorer of the old order than as an innovator"* (Bevan, *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 245). And even though the Greek language became the lingua franca of the kingdom, and though the Babylonian gods took Greek names, the religious and political society remained Babylonian. As an example of this, perhaps we can mention the idol which Antiochus Epiphanes erected in the Holy Place. Native records tell us that it was Baal Shamayim — the Babylonian sun-god! See Moses Hadas, *Hellenistic Culture*, p. 25. The Greek name of the idol was Zeus Olympus, but it was clearly the old Mesopotamian sun-god. The Seleucids adopted Babylonian religion throughout their domain. Throughout Syria, the Seleucids restored temple lands — vast territories in some cases — to the priests. This was to get the priesthood on their side in governing the people. The co-operation between the priests and the kings was generally very good — except when their power got so strong that they, in the time of the later Seleucids, began to dictate to the kings certain policies to be followed.

In short, as Dr. Tarn remarks, the Seleucid kingdom saw the resurrection of, Babylonia. All of the sudden Babylon had come back to prominence. No wonder the Seleucids consistently identified themselves with the ancient Babylonians, and that their kingdom, as *Lempriere's Classical Dictionary* records, was known as *the Kingdom of Babylon* (p. 587).

### **Babylonians and Syrians**

Seleucus had his first capital at Babylon. In commemoration of his desire to make a revived Babylonian kingdom, he devised a new standard calendar for his realm. The first year of this new calendar was the year 312 B.C. when he first made Babylon the capital of his empire. Throughout his realm people were required to date all documents from this new era. The new system (based upon the old Babylonian Lunar-Solar calendar) was called the Seleucid calendar, and the first year of it was known as the beginning of the Seleucid Era. All the Jews of Babylon took over this Era for computation of dates subsequent to 312 B. C. it was even followed, later on, by Palestinian Jews. It was only abandoned by official Jews when the creation era was finally adopted in the second century after Christ.

This new calendar of Seleucus was important, for it focused attention upon Seleucus as the new Babylonian king and by virtue of this, the ruler of the central region of Alexander's empire.

A few years after making the city of Babylon his capital, Seleucus decided to build a new capital city some 40 miles north on the Tigris. The reason for the move was mainly brought about by nature. Old Babylon was decaying. The

Euphrates was changing its course away from the city. Uncontrollable swamps were beginning to abound in the area. On the other hand, the ravages of wars had their toll on the old city.

Seleucus built a new city, using some of the material of old Babylon. All the population moved to this city on the Tigris — it was called Seleucia-on-the-Tigris or *new Babylon*. Thus, the Babylon of Belshazzar was left empty and very soon, according to the records, taken over by serpents, strange birds and fowl animals.

Seleucus, having called this city by his own name, and designed it for an eminent monument thereof in after ages, gave it many privileges above the other cities of the east, *and these were a further invitation to the Babylonians to transport themselves to it*, and by these means, Babylon became wholly desolated so that nothing was left remaining of it but its walls (Prideaux, *Connexion*, vol. I, p. 540).

The new city of Seleucus was Greek on the outside, but in the core Babylonian. The ground plan, for instance, was built in the form of an eagle — the symbol of the old Babylonian empire.

“Although the days were long past when the Babylonians had borne rule in Asia, the Babylonian people and the Babylonian civilization existed still” (Bevan, *ibid.*, p. 250).

The new city gathered to it not only the old inhabitants of old Babylon but also people “from Assyria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Syria, and Judaea” — that is, from all Mesopotamia! (*Smith’s Smaller Classical Dictionary*, p. 476). This city was new Babylon, the capital of the Seleucid empire. As Bevan says, Babylon was simply “transferred to another site” (*ibid.*, p. 253). It became common to call the inhabitants of Seleucus-on-the-Tigris as “Babylonians” (Strabo, XVI, 743).

### **The Seleucid Capital Moved West — to Antioch**

It was not long after the building of “new Babylon” that Seleucus made another important decision. Recognizing that the western part of his kingdom was politically more important than the East, he decided to build a further new city in the West — a city which could be his political capital. And thus, the famous city of Antioch was built.

This new city of Antioch represents an important link in our present study of Chaldeans moving into the West — into Syria. For just as old Babylon was left desolate when the Babylonians flocked to Seleucia-on-the-Tigris, there were likewise swarms of people from Mesopotamia moving to Antioch when it became the real capital of the kingdom. In fact, Seleucus didn’t stop with building Antioch in the West — he built new cities all over Syria. No less than 30 completely new cities were built over his empire *and most were in Syria*. He invited thousands of people to come from Mesopotamia to populate these cities. Josephus tells us that many of the Jews who were in Mesopotamia flocked to *every one* of these new western cities (see *Antiquities*, XII, 3, 1). But Jews weren’t the only ones to move west into this new area of influence, native Mesopotamians also migrated on a large scale. In fact, the region of western Syria had become so racially “Babylonian” by the end of the Seleucid rule, that Strabo said the peoples of Mesopotamia and those of Syria were a homogenous group — they had become the same racial stock with no appreciable differences between them (Book I, ch. II, sec. 34).

The plains of *Mesopotamia* and *Coele-Syria*, inhabited by kindred races, extended across frontiers which are not marked out by nature, and, relations between the great temples situated east and west of the Euphrates continued (even in Roman times) without interruption (Cumont, *Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans*, pp. 77, 78).

Yes, the priesthoods, and even the peoples, of Mesopotamia and those of Syria near the beginning of our Era were of the same general stock. There can be no doubt of this!

### Antioch — the New Babylonian Capital

When Seleucus built Antioch, he invited some Greek colonists to the city as well as bringing many Mesopotamian peoples with him as its new inhabitants. The Babylonian priests became the foremost of Antioch's citizens.

Antioch had "a high Greek civilization mixed with various Oriental elements and especially with the superstitions of CHALDEAN ASTROLOGY" (*Smith's Geography*, vol. I, p. 143).

It is a simple fact that the Seleucid empire soon became a Chaldean one. This was especially true in the field of religion — the Olympian religious forms were abandoned in favour of the original Chaldean ones.

The Seleucids believed in *CHALDEAN astrology*, and the kings of Commagne, as well as *a great number of Syrian cities*, had the signs of the zodiac as emblems on their coins. It is certain that this pseudo-science penetrated into those regions (of eastern and western Syria) long before the Hellenistic period. Chaldeanism modified the entire Semitic paganism (*Oriental Religions*, p. 251).

Speaking of Antioch, the Seleucid capital, and the religious motives which governed the region, Cumont says:

There can be no doubt that *Babylonian* doctrines exercised decisive influence on this gradual metamorphosis and this latest phase of Semitic religion. *The SELEUCID PRINCES OF ANTIOCH* showed as great a deference to the science of the Babylonian clergy as the Persian Achaemenids had done before them. We find Seleucus Nicator (the first king) consulting these official soothsayers (i.e. Chaldeans) about the propitious hour for founding Seleucia on the Tigris....The cities of Syria often stamp on their coins certain signs of the zodiac to mark the fact that they stood under their patronage. If the princes and cities (of Syria) thus acknowledged the authority of astrology (the special science of the Chaldeans), we may imagine what was the power of this scientific theology in the temples. We may say that in the age of Alexander *IT PERMEATED THE WHOLE OF SEMITIC PAGANISM* (*Astrology and Religion*, pp. 80, 81).

In other words, Syria and the Seleucid empire was saturated with Chaldean teaching. Its religion and philosophies, while using Greek names and Greek cultural words, were nevertheless thoroughly Babylonian. The temperaments of these people demanded such a religion.

It was *Babylon* that retained the intellectual supremacy, even after its political ruin. The powerful sacerdotal caste ruling it *did not fall* with the independence of the country, *and it survived the conquests of Alexander*. The researches of Assyriologists have shown that *its ancient worship persisted under the Seleucids*, and at the time of Strabo the Chaldeans still discussed cosmology and first principles in the rival schools of Borsippa and Orchoe. The ascendancy of that erudite clergy *affected the surrounding regions, but more than anywhere else* (it affected) *the SYRIANS, who were connected with the Oriental Semites by bonds of language and blood* (Cumont, *Oriental Religions*, p. 122).

And what is interesting, even when the capital of the empire moved to

Antioch, the Seleucid kings called themselves *not* kings of Antioch or Syria *but* retained the prestige title: *KINGS OF BABYLON* (e.g. Becan, *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 255). This was intended to show that though the geographical influence had changed, the historical tradition had not: the Seleucid kingdom was basically a Babylonian one with a Greek veneer.

Now what happened to the population of the Mesopotamian lands, and their economic position after the removal of the capital to Antioch? In both cases there was continual deterioration. First, many people were attracted to the West because political influence was in that direction. Secondly, in the later years of the Seleucid empire, the Mesopotamian area became a war-zone in the struggles between the Parthians and the Seleucids. Thousands of people, who had a natural affinity toward their brethren in the west (many had relatives there), retreated towards the Mediterranean areas. Also, because of the war-zone and the migrations, the irrigation system which had so wonderfully made Mesopotamia a huge garden was beginning to waste away to a considerable extent. Much of the land, near the end of Seleucid rule, was reverting to deserts or into impassable swamps. It was only natural that the people looked for, and went to, the more prosperous areas of the kingdom.

Dr. Cumont explains about the deterioration of Mesopotamia.

Hipparchus saw the ruin of the country (of Babylon) where was born the science (of astrology) which he illumined. Invaded by the Parthians about the year 140 B.C., recaptured by Antiochus VII of Syria in 130 B.C., reconquered soon afterwards by King Phraates, *Mesopotamia was terribly ravaged* for more than a quarter of a century. Babylon (Seleucia), sacked and burned in 125 B. C., *never recovered her former splendour: a progressive decay brought on her a death by slow consumption*. Henceforth it is far from the Chaldean's native land, in *Syria*, in *Egypt*, and *in the West*, that we must follow the development of the religious ideas derived from the Chaldea of Antiquity (*Astrology and Religion*, p. 41).

Yes, the Babylonians of Mesopotamia went into Syria and some into Egypt, and by transplantation even into the West. The first step from Mesopotamia to the West was, of course, Syria. It must be remembered that Syria was much more prosperous in Seleucid times than now. There were huge farms all over Syria, from the Mediterranean eastwards even beyond Palmyra. A Syrian of the second century before Christ, Posidonius, said: "All the people of Syria, because of the great plenty which their land afforded, were relieved of any distress regarding the necessaries of life" (Athenaeus, Bk. V., 195).

This western region was absorbing the Mesopotamian population. And what is revealing, the eastern Mesopotamian population was deteriorating and the region was turning into desert at the same rate as Syria was growing in population and prosperity. In fact, by Roman times Syria was the most populous area in the whole Roman Empire (Trevor-Roper, *The End of Antiquity, The Listener*, p. 916), while Mesopotamia had dwindled to remarkable proportions. Actually, by the second century of our era, when the Roman Empire finally annexed Mesopotamia to its rule, they considered the area so unworth anything that they withdrew their legions after only a generation of occupation. Hadrian, conquering the region for Rome, destroyed Seleucus-on-the-Tigris and reduced it to a ghost city. This was the fate of many of the few cities which remained in the region. In actual fact, Mesopotamia in not many generations after became a desert or a semi-desert region, and basically, still is to this day.

Now the important point for us to realize in this present study is that it was western Syria that absorbed most of the Mesopotamian movements of people. This is the plain truth of history. Thus, we can easily see why the kings of the Seleucid realm continued to call themselves the kings of Babylon and their kingdom Babylonian — the Babylonian system had now moved westward to Antioch.

It has already been mentioned in chapter one that most of the slaves that

came to Italy — and later became *the* citizens of Rome — were primarily from our area under discussion — *Syria*. During the decay of the later Seleucid kingdom, thousands of Syrian slaves were taken to Italy as indemnities to the Romans and further multitudes were taken when the Romans carried them off as the booty of war.

Under the Empire the importation of slaves increased. Depopulated Italy needed more and more foreign hands, AND *SYRIA* furnished a large quota of the forced immigration (Cumont, *Oriental Religions*, p. 106).

It is certain that the first worshipers of the Syrian goddess in the Latin world *were slaves*. During the wars against Antiochus the Great (the Seleucid king) a number of prisoners were sent to Italy to be sold at public auction, and *the first appearance in Italy of the CHALDAEI has been connected with that event (ibid., p. 105).*

After this time, we read of many Chaldeans in Italy — especially around Rome. They first came, however, with the Syrian slaves from the Seleucid empire — that empire, as we have seen, was filled with Chaldeans.

Another reason why people were taken from the Levant to the West, is simply because Syria was an overpopulated country just before our Era. Italy, on the other hand, after the Punic wars, had a great loss of population. Swarms of slaves were brought from Syria to fill up the "void" in Italy and Sicily. (It has been proved that almost every slave in Sicily was from Syria. See the *Story of the Nations* series on Sicily.)

These Syrians who were transported to Rome (many of them, as we have seen, were transplanted Mesopotamians) took their Chaldean religions directly with them.

The importance which the introduction of *THE SYRIAN RELIGIONS* into the Occident has for us consists in the fact that indirectly they brought certain theological doctrines *OF THE CHALDEANS WITH THEM* (Cumont, *Oriental Religions*, p. 124).

The *Chaldean astrology*, of which the Syrian priests were enthusiastic disciples, had furnished them (the Romans) with the elements of a scientific theology (*ibid.*, p. 199).

By the process of time these Orientals finally becoming the later Romans (as explained in Chapter One), Babylonian sun-worship and the mystery religions became the official religions of Rome. "The *Syrian* religions had spread far and wide *in the Occident IDEAS CONCEIVED ON THE DISTANT BANKS OF THE EUPHRATES*" (*ibid.*, p. 25). Yes, the transplanted Syrians were the primary vehicle which brought pure Babylonianism to the West — to Italy! As a matter of fact, the Emperor Aurelian in the third century of our era, had so strongly a temperament of a Syrian that he proclaimed the Syrian sun-god *as the official god of the Romans*. This Syrian sun-god was even proclaimed as the author of the Roman race, i.e., the *new Roman race*, of which the later Caesars were representatives.

This Sun-worship was the final form which Roman paganism assumed. In 274 A.D. the emperor Aurelian conferred on it official recognition when, on his return from *SYRIA*, inspired by what he had seen at Palmyra, he founded a gorgeous temple in honour of *Sol Invictus* — the invincible Sun — served by priests (which he had brought with him from Syria) who had precedence even over the members of the ancient Collegium pontificum; and in the following century, the Claudian emperors worshipped the almighty star (the sun) not only as the patron *BUT ALSO AS THE AUTHOR OF ITS RACE*. The invincible Sun raised to the supreme position in the

divine hierarchy, peculiar protector of sovereigns and of the Empire, tends to absorb or subordinate to himself all other divinities (Cumont, *Astrology and Religion*, p. 133).

The god Bel whom Aurelian brought from Asia to set up as a protector of his states, *was in reality a BABYLONIAN* who had emigrated to Palmyra [in Syria] (Cumont, *Oriental Religions*, p. 124).

What an interesting thing! Even the later Roman emperors, who had in their midst primarily a Syrian Oriental race, said that the BABYLONIAN SUN GOD was the author of that Roman race! The later Italians recognized their origin.

### Peoples from Syria Transform the Roman Empire

At this juncture we should briefly mention the later influence of Levantine Syrians (those who were not taken as slaves to the West). It is not too much to say that they played one of the most influential of parts in making the Roman Empire great. For one thing, the major part of Roman wealth was in the East. Nearly all manufacturing, industry, and culture remained eastern — the West being predominant only in agriculture and soldiery. The Syrians, being in the very center of this prosperous region, capitalized on their propitious situation, manufactured goods and delicacies from the further east were wanted and needed in the West. The Syrians being the natural heirs of the old Syro-Phoenician trading system, stepped into the shoes of their forefathers and became the giants of commerce throughout the Empire — they practically had a monopoly in the enterprise! These Syrians established many trading colonies in all the Roman world — every major port had colonies of Levantine Syrians (we are not now speaking of the freed Syrians who were making up the general population of Italy and Sicily). The influence of these trading Syro-Phoenicians cannot be over emphasized. The effect they played on later Roman history, particularly in the history of the Middle Ages, was of lasting influence.

Let us now observe what scholars say about these Syrian traders who monopolized trade in the Roman world. Dr. Cumont, who is the recognized authority on comparative religions in Rome, gives an excellent and correct rundown. "At the beginning of our Era the Syrian merchants undertook a veritable colonization of the Latin provinces. The Levantine traffic attained a development previously unknown. We can trace the history of the Syrian establishments in the Latin provinces from the first to the seventh century, and recently we have begun to appreciate their economic, social and religious importance at its true value.

"The Syrians' love of lucre was proverbial. Active, compliant and able, frequently a little scrupulous, they knew how to conclude first small deals, then larger ones, *everywhere*. Using the special talents of their race to advantage, they succeeded in establishing themselves *ON ALL COASTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN, even in Spain* The Italian ports where business was especially active, *attracted them in great numbers*. But they did not confine themselves to the seashore; they penetrated far into the interior of the countries, wherever they hoped to find profitable trade. They followed the commercial highways and traveled up big rivers. By the way of the Danube they went as far as Pannonia, by the way of the Rhone they reached Lyons.

*In Gaul* they were especially numerous. (Dr. Tarn says that Southern Gaul and up the Rhone was especially Oriental in race, not Greek or Gallic.) In this new country (Gaul) that had just been opened to commerce fortunes could be made rapidly. The Syrians traveled over the entire province (of Gaul) as far as Treves, where they had a strong colony. Not even the barbarian invasions of the fifth century stopped their immigration. Saint Jerome describes them traversing the entire Roman world amidst the troubles of invasion, prompted by the lust of gain to defy all dangers. In the barbarian society the part played by this civilized and city-bred element was even more considerable. Under the Merovingians in about 591 they had sufficient influence at Paris to have one of their number elected bishop and to gain possession of *ALL* ecclesiastical offices.



(It may be remarked that Syrians also gave the Papacy several popes in the eighth century and even an archbishop of Canterbury, as an example of their commercial importance in England, was a Syrian.)

"Those establishments [commercial colonies] exercised a strong influence upon the economic and material life of the Latin provinces, especially in Gaul. As *bankers*, the Syrians concentrated a large share of the money business in their hands and monopolized the importing of the valuable Levantine commodities as well as of the articles of luxury. Their moral and religious influence was not less considerable: for instance, it has been shown that *they furthered the development of monastic life* during the Christian period, (these transplanted Syrians were responsible for developing the monastic system — the system which virtually governed Medieval Europe for over two hundred years), and that *the devotion to the crucifix was introduced into the Occident by them*. During the first five centuries Christians felt an unconquerable repugnance to the representation of the Saviour of the world nailed to an instrument of punishment more infamous than the guillotine of today. *The Syrians were the first to substitute reality in all its pathetic horror for a vague symbolism*" (*Oriental Religions*, pp. 107-109).

Dr. Cumont stops in the eighth century with the story of these commercial peoples. Actually, some of their most important functions came later, for the later commercial cities of Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Marseilles, and the banking centres of Italy and France, which in the Middle Ages dominated the whole character of European life, were the heirs to and the descendants of these early Syro-Phoenicians. Even the Crusades were brought about, it has been maintained by some historians, by the wish of these commercial cities to open up again traffic into the East. Everyone knows that the Crusades were motivated more by greed and lucre than by the religious spirit. By the end of crusading times, there was some Jewish influence being felt in these commercial cities along with the Syrians.

We have, however, gone too far ahead in the story of how peoples from Syria (by SYRIA we mean the whole Levantine area: Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Samaritans, etc.), so radically changed the character of the later Roman world. We now have to go back to earlier times, for there is still very many important things to be said!

### Conclusion

The first chapter showed how Italy was taken over by Orientals — mainly coming from Syria. Now we have seen the Biblical evidence which shows that Babylonians came into Syria at the same time they were being placed in Samaria. But later, under the Seleucid kingdom — the new Babylonian kingdom — there were further migrations from Babylon westward. Upon the fall of Syria to the Romans, these Babylonians (for multitudes of them were outright Babylonians) were taken to Italy where they finally took over, with a little racial mixing, the whole of the country. THUS, from the clear records of history, we should have no problem in showing that new Babylon is literally located on the seven-hilled city of Rome.

In closing, it is interesting to note that the prophet Daniel spoke about the Babylonian image as legs and feet of iron and clay. The image is very top heavy and unstable, but it is *one* image! Babylon was the head of gold. The Persians, however, inherited all the Babylonian traditions and even established their winter headquarters at Babylon. This was the silver portion of the image. Alexander and his successors were the brass portion of the one image. Their headquarters was also at Babylon — the "resurrection" of Babylonia occurred. Seleucus moved "political" Babylon and Babylonian people to Antioch. Daniel, from this time onward, calls this government "the Kingdom of the North" (by this time the Babylonian system had moved directly north of Jerusalem). But the Babylonians later moved or were transported to Italy. Rome — the kingdom of iron and clay — assumed the role as the last political head, the *new* Babylon!

Thus, Daniel spoke of one image — one society and culture — one real political power. There was, of course, a Persian veneer in the silver portion, and a Greek one in the brass, but by later Roman times there was a clear reversal

to the original Babylonian society. So we see that the same people were predominant in all sections of the image. No wonder that Daniel saw only *one* image, not four!

### **CHAPTER THREE** **Eastern Teachings Transform Rome**

We have seen that the new Romans brought with them Oriental religions which, to early Latins would have been utterly repugnant to their nature. But, there was a race change in Italy. The new race was mainly Easterners who felt right at home in the old Babylonian sun-cults and mystery religions. It is hardly any wonder that Rome went over to Babylonianism — as Dr. Frank says:

The Mystery cults permeated the city, Italy and the western provinces only to such an extent as the city, Italy and the provinces were permeated BY THE STOCK THAT HAD CREATED THOSE RELIGIONS (*American Historical Review*, vol. 21, p. 707).

Understanding that these new Romans only accepted those beliefs which appealed to their temperaments, it will pay us to review the philosophies which the Oriental Romans accepted. The origin of the later Roman philosophies were directly in the East — primarily and basically *from Syria!*

Take for example the one philosophical belief which had practically universal acceptance by the whole of Roman society in the first and second centuries of our era — *the Stoic philosophy!*

Stoicism is one of the most interesting philosophies that ever came out of the East. It has been compared as the most 'Christian' of all philosophies. Many books have been written endeavouring to show the remarkable parallels between Stoicism and Christianity (especially Roman Catholicism). There is some definite agreement between Catholicism and this philosophy. Let us notice what it basically taught.

The philosophy taught the universal brotherhood of man, the doing away with national barriers, intermarriage, one law over all. They called the ideal state as one governed by a central city — the city of God! When the Roman Empire came along, all the Stoic philosophers saw in the Empire all the physical state. Because of this, and other reasons, the philosophy was taught in profusion over the Empire, and nowhere was it accepted more, and with a type of religious crusading spirit, than in Italy. Platonism had gone by the board, it was too etherial and sceptical; the Aristotelian position was abandoned because his teaching was not universal enough; Epicureanism, the only possible rival of Stoicism, was too selfish, anti-religious and not conducive to universal brotherhood. Only one philosophy suited the Roman temperament of the first and second centuries — that was STOICISM.

Stoicism was the one philosophy that did not, in one way or another, repudiate the pagan gods. It agreed that they should definitely be retained for man, for his happiness needs religion. So, the Stoic philosophers encouraged to a great degree paganism. The religion that the later Stoics advocated was generally the Roman variety because their utopian city of world rule *was Rome*. Only by acknowledging Rome could they hope to achieve their universal state. And they achieved their world-state to a remarkable degree through the Empire. It is little wonder why most of the noble Romans accepted the doctrines of Stoicism in deference to all other philosophies — no philosophy suited the temperaments nor the grandiose design of the later Romans than this one of Eastern origin.

#### **Stoicism Was Not of Greek Origin**

It has often been believed by most ordinary people that Greece was the home of philosophy, and to a certain extent that is true — all philosophies are basically Grecian in origin with the exception of STOICISM!

Dr. Lightfoot, writing about the two philosophies which gained more

adherents after the time of Aristotle — Epicureanism and Stoicism — says:

These two later developments of Greek philosophy both took root and grew to maturity in Greek soil. But while the seed of the one (Epicureanism) was strictly Hellenic, the other (Stoicism) was derived *from an Oriental stock*. Epicurus was a Greek of the Greeks, a child of Athenian parents. Zeno (the founder of Stoicism) on the other hand, a native of Citium, a Phoenician colony in Crete, *and probably of Shemitic race*, for he is commonly called 'the Phoenician.' Babylon, Tyre, Sidon, Carthage, reared some of his most illustrious of his successors. *Not a single Stoic of any name was a native of Greece proper (Philippians p. 273).*

The Stoic philosophy was entirely foreign to the pure Greek, as it would have been to the early Roman — their temperament would not have sustained *all* the teachings of Stoicism. Not a single Greek of pure stock joined the ranks of its teachers. They were *all* Orientals.

The principal Stoic teachers *all* came from the East, and that therefore their language and thought must in a greater or less degree have some the stamp of their Oriental origin. We advance a step further towards the object of our search, if we remember that the most famous of them were not only Oriental *but Shemitic, Babylonia, Phoenicia, Syria, Palestine, are their homes (ibid., p. 299).*

Yes, none of the Stoic teachers were Greeks — the teaching was too Oriental for the Greeks, but it wasn't too Oriental for the later Romans, for they accepted it as their national philosophy.

It was not however among the Greeks, *to whose national temper the genius of Stoicism was alien*, that this school achieved its proudest triumphs. . . . *The Romans offered a more congenial sphere for its influence.* And here again it is worth observing, that their principal instructors *were almost all Easterners*. Posidonius for instance, the familiar friend of many famous Romans and the most influential missionary of Stoic doctrine in Rome, *was a native of Syrian Apamea (ibid., p. 310).*

### **Stoicism Was Babylonian in Origin**

The truth is, the Chaldeans could not be outdone in the field of philosophy. When, during the Greek period, the religions in Greece took a back seat to the study of philosophy, and many influential people were abandoning their ancient religious allegiances, the Chaldeans entered the *new* field by creating a philosophy of their own — a philosophy which would retain the gods and at the same time be attractive to intellectuals. Thus, Stoicism was born.

Stoicism readily agreed also with the determinism of the *Chaldeans*, founded, as it was, upon the regularity of the sidereal movements. Thus it was that *this philosophy made remarkable conquests not only in Syria but far as Mesopotamia.* "I recall," says Dr. Cumont, "only the fact that one of the masters of Stoicism, the successor of Zeno of Tarsus at Athens, was Diogenes of Babylon and that, later on, another distinguished Stoic, Archidemus, founded a famous school at Babylon itself" (*Astrology in Greece & Rome*, p. 70).

And, as Dr. Cumont continues to reveal:

In the empire of the Seleucids *alongside 'Chaldaism'*, Hellenism had established itself in a commanding position: Above the old native

beliefs *the doctrines of STOICISM* in particular exercised dominion over men's minds. It has been often observed that *the masters of the Stoic school are for the most part Orientals*. The leading representatives of these doctrines — *were all Syrians*. In a certain sense it may be said that STOICISM was a Semitic philosophy (*ibid.*, pp. 81, 82).

And indeed it was. Stoicism was the Babylonian reaction to Greek philosophy. Stoicism was the philosophy designed for the Orientals — the philosophy designed to maintain Chaldeanism in an age which looked like Greek secular philosophy might take the place of religion. Thus, Stoic philosophy was invented to retain Chaldeanism amongst the intellectuals — and it succeeded remarkably. The whole Roman world virtually succumbed to it.

Speaking of Babylonian astrological beliefs, Dr. Cumont says:

We shall be struck with the power of this sidereal theology, *founded on ancient beliefs of Chaldean astrologies*, transformed in the Hellenistic age under the twofold influence of astronomic discoveries *AND STOIC THOUGHT*, and promoted, after becoming a pantheistic Sun-worship, *to the rank of official religion of the Roman Empire* (*ibid.*, p. 99).

What a revelation! Babylonian doctrines and religion came to be the official Roman religion, and one of the big helps in bringing it there *was STOICISM*. This was the philosophy that did not ridicule the gods, but felt they were ever necessary for true philosophy. In fact, STOICISM can be said to be the saviour of Babylonian paganism among the intellectual classes.

*The Chaldeans* were the first to conceive the idea of necessity dominating the universe. *This is also one of the ruling ideas of the STOICS* (*ibid.*, p. 153).

Certain profound affinities reconciled *STOICISM* with *CHALDEAN* doctrines (*ibid.*, p. 69).

And perhaps it will now be in order to quote from the *Cambridge Ancient History* on the agreement of STOICISM AND BABYLONIANISM.

As early as the Seleucids, Zeno of Citium and many of his chief disciples, such as Diogenes of Babylon and Antipater of Tarsus, *had been Orientals*, and it may be said *that STOICISM was largely a Semitic philosophy* not only in respect of its teachers but of its doctrines also. Its pantheism which defies all the elements of Nature, and its acceptance of the fatalism of astrology side by side with the retention of belief in the active intervention of God in earthly matters, *link the Porch (Stoicism) with the Syro-Babylonian temples*. Later there were *many Syrians* among the leading savants who *initiated the Romans* into the precepts of the various schools (vol. XI, p. 641).

There we have it! Need we go on?

It is so clear that Stoicism is Babylonian philosophy. Its teachings and doctrines were accepted open-armed in Italy, and why? The answer should be plain. Just as the new Romans brought their religions with them — religions which suited, their temperaments — so, they brought their philosophical beliefs with them. Stoicism made no headway among the secular-minded Greeks, and the ancient Roman would have laughed it to scorn, but the new class of Romans who were themselves Orientals accepted it lock, stock and barrel. In fact, the real development happened in Italy.

Though the germ of Stoicism was derived from the East, its

systematic development and its practical successes *were attained by its transplantation into western soil*. In this respect its career, as it traveled westward, *presents a rough but instructive parallel to the progress of the (Roman) Christian Church*. The fundamental ideas, derived from Oriental parentage, were reduced to a system and placed on an intellectual basis by the instrumentality of Greek thought (Lightfoot, *ibid.*, p. 276).

What an interesting and true remark! The Catholic Church, which Lightfoot calls the Christian Church, developed on the same lines as Stoicism — the Chaldean philosophy. Some of the very doctrines of the Stoics went directly into Catholicism.

One of the famous Stoics of the Roman world was Seneca — a Shemite himself. The Catholics continue to call him “our Seneca” and greatly praise his work, even though he was a firm advocate of paganism. Most of the famous Romans were Stoics.

Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and Plutarch could not think or speak otherwise than as they did because the philanthropic ideas of *Stoicism* have become an integral and essential part of their nature (*Historian's History*, vol. 6, p. 311).

Thus was Stoicism, the philosophy of the Oriental Romans. The widespread acceptance of this normally alien philosophy is proof enough that the Romans who accepted it are in themselves aliens to the old Roman stock. And it also proves that these new Romans must be basically Babylonian because they accepted a philosophy designed for Babylonians.

### **The Orientalization of Rome**

The histories are so full of information about the Orientalization of later Rome that we need not linger long on the subject — it is so plainly proved. As we have seen, in the first chapter, there was a complete change of race in Italy between the republican period and that of the later Empire. This race change accounts, in a primary sense, for the enormous difference in Roman government, religion and culture — in a word, for the strange difference in Roman civilization. The newer people coming in from the East completely revolutionized the whole of Roman society. But, the change took time: it didn't happen overnight! It is now for us to see briefly how this change took place.

There is much to say about our subject from the time of Augustus to the time of the Antonines, but to make a very long story shorter, we will look at events in the Roman Empire from the time of the Severi — that is, from 193 A. D. to Constantine.

By this time Orientalization had gone a long way: the emperors were now being deified as the old Babylonians had been (this was not done in ancient Rome until the time of Augustus); Chaldeans had already become advisors to the Emperors, and the religions from the East were making tremendous headway amongst the now Orientalized society of Italy. But with the Severi, we can say that Rome became, from this time onwards, especially Oriental. Let us see why this was the case.

First, Septimus Severus was the first Roman Emperor who was not of Roman extraction — he was a Phoenician from North Africa. As a matter of fact, he was so completely Phoenician that he never learned Latin until being taught it in school.

Later, when his sister visited him in Rome, her Latin was so “Phoenician” that he was ashamed for her to talk in public. He was not, however, ashamed of his Phoenician ancestry — far from it, he gloried in it.

After becoming Emperor, to show his independence of the old Roman institutions, and to bring a thoroughly Eastern flavour into his government, he went to Syria and there married the daughter of the high priest of Emesa — the priest of the Babylonian Sun-god. Her name was Julia Domna — the priestess of

the Sun. Why was this marriage concluded? Simply in order to make a Syro-Phoenician hierarchy to rule the Roman Empire. "That Septimus now chose to ally himself with Julia Domna is the clearest possible indication that his authority should depend *on his own race*. Rome had defeated Carthage, Rome had dominated Syria. Now, *Carthage would unite with Syria to dominate Rome*" (Perowne, *Caesars and Saints*, p. 51).

This union was highly propitious to the spread of Chaldeanism on a large scale in Rome — now the gates were wide open. In fact, Severus was told by his Chaldean advisors to marry Julia — great things were awaiting him and his race if he did (*Historians' History*, vol. 6. p. 388).

Julia was a sagacious and domineering woman. She had two desires: one, was the elevation of her two sons by Severus to the purple, and secondly, the glorification of her own race — it was to be Syria and Syrians to rule the whole Empire, and under the Severi it came just to that. "Severus and Julia now wished to demonstrate that it was from Africa and from Asia that the life and leadership of the Roman Empire had sprung. Phoenician Syria still spoke and wrote the Phoenician language, just as Severus' own Africa did. Syria, therefore, was to be the scene of a magnificent rulership, of the revival of an ancient race" (*ibid.*, p. 77). And indeed, Syria and the Syro-Phoenician race became the top peoples in the Empire. Severus made Antioch the capital of the whole empire for over five years, and when he was asked about his estimation of Rome, retorted that it was just one more province, like the rest. However, many benefits came to the inhabitants of Italy as they conformed to his policies — and in most cases they were completely willing to do so.

Severus was followed to the throne by his two sons, who reigned for a while together then successively. The throne later came to two grandsons. In all, the Syro-Phoenicians dominated the Roman Empire from 193 A.D. to 235 A. D. And during this period, Rome underwent a revolution in society — this begins the time of the real Orientalization of the whole system.

The two sons of Septimus Severus carried on their father's policies, but from our present study let us look at the reign of his grandson — Emperor Elagabalus (218-222 A. D.). This young man was a *full-pledge priest of the sun-god in his native country of Syria*. As Gibbon describes him, he was "consecrated to the honourable ministry of the high priest of the Sun; and this holy vocation contributed to raise the Syrian youth to the empire of Rome" (*Decline and Fall*, ch. 6).

Yes, it was his priesthood in the temple of the Sun which brought him to the purple. Gibbon continues telling how this came about. "The soldiers who resorted in crowds to the temple of the Sun, beheld with veneration and delight the elegant dress and figure of a young Pontiff, they recognized or they thought that they recognized, the features of Caracalla (the recently deposed emperor), whose memory they now adored.

His artful mother noticed the awe of the soldiers as they beheld her son performing the rituals, and then she proclaimed him the natural son of the murdered Caracalla.

With this knowledge, the eastern army proclaimed him emperor and very soon after he legally mounted the throne of the Empire. Thus, for the first time, a Syrian pontiff assumed the purple. We can imagine what such an ascendancy did to Roman Civilization — he carried religious reforms throughout the Empire to enormous proportions.

Let us again read Gibbon's account of Emperor Elagabalus' reforms: "The Sun was worshipped at Emesa (in Syria) under the name of Elagabalus, under the form of a black conical stone, which, as it was universally believed, had fallen from heaven on that sacred place. To this protecting deity, Emperor Elagabalus, not without some reason, ascribed his elevation to the throne. The display of superstitious gratitude was the only serious business of his reign. *The triumph of the god of Emesa over all religions of the earth, was the real object of his zeal and vanity*: and the appellation of Elagabalus (for he presumed as pontiff and favourite to adopt that sacred name) was dearer to him than all the titles of Imperial greatness. In a solemn procession through the streets of Rome, the way was strewn with gold dust; the black stone, set in precious

gems, was placed on a chariot drawn by six milk-white horses richly caparisoned. The pious emperor held the reins, and, supported by his ministers, moved slowly backwards, that he might perpetually enjoy the felicity of the divine presence. In a magnificent temple raised on the Palatine Mount, the sacrifices of the god Elagabalus were celebrated with every circumstance of cost and solemnity. Around the altar a chorus of *Syrian* damsels performed their lascivious dances to the sound of barbarian music, while the gravest personages of the state and the army, *clothed in long Phoenician tunics, officiated in the meanest functions, with affected zeal*" (*ibid.*).

The whole government at Rome was becoming, literally, an Oriental court. The people were dressing in long robe-like Syro-Phoenician garb. The Emperor himself dressed like a Babylonian pontiff with full regalia. Or, as Gibbon puts it: "He was drawn in his sacerdotal robes of silk and gold, after the loose flowing fashion of the Medes and Phoenicians (clearly Chaldean): his head was covered with a *lofty tiara, his numerous collars and bracelets were adorned with gems of an inestimable value.*"

What a description! Here was an Emperor — a pontiff himself — dressed exactly like the Popes today — tiara on the head, richly flowing robes and precious jewels, carried about from place to place. He elevated his own Syrian priests to the official priesthood at Rome (*Historians' History*, vol. 6, p. 398). And what is interesting, *he commanded everyone to address him as Sardanapolis* (Asshur-banipal) and claimed that the Roman Empire was, under him, a revival of the Assyro-Babylonian Empire (*ibid.*, p. 378). He was surnamed "the Assyrian" because of his pretensions (*ibid.*, p. 398). These incidents are all important, for it shows that this priest-emperor was thoroughly Oriental — that is, *Chaldean*.

The next reign was that of Elagabalus' cousin, Alexander Severus. His nature was not as extreme in religion as was his predecessor, even though he was likewise a pontiff of the sun-god. Alexander sought to conciliate some of the peoples in the Empire who were a little upset over Elagabalus' abruptness in endeavouring to change the character of religion. Alexander did away with the most odious forms of Elagabalus' religious fervour, but retained some of the essential elements in sun-worship. It is said that he, endeavouring, to conciliate all the religions in his empire, erected in his private chapel the images of Jupiter, Solon, Plato, Abraham and *Christ*. He was the first emperor who made an effort in syncretizing the religions in his domain. He was not quite successful.

In looking over the five reigns of these Phoenician and Syrian emperors, we read from the *Historians' History*: "The Syrian emperors, as far as political traditions are concerned, inasmuch as they were not Romans and had none of the Roman prejudices, often give proof of an openness of mind which would have been impossible to the great emperors of the second century, all of whom were intensely conservative. *They flung the doors of the empire wide open. It was in religion above all that these Syrian emperors inaugurated a liberality of mind and a tolerance unknown before.* The Syrian women of Emesa, Julia Domina, Julia Maesa, Julia Mamaea, Julia Soaemias, (the mothers or wives of the emperors), beautiful, intelligent, venturesome to the point of utopianism, are hampered by no Roman tradition or conventionality. They dared to do what no Roman woman had ever done; they entered the senate, took part in the deliberations, *and practically governed the empire, dreaming of Semiramis and Nitocris*" (vol. 6, p. 404).

From the end of the Syrian rulers, the next group of emperors, all the way to Constantine, were soldiers and not one of them was Roman, in fact, not a single one was even Italian. Most came from humble origins in the Balkans (by the way, the Balkan region was a strong-hold of Mithraic sun-worship which can be proved to have come out of Babylon). One emperor in this period was a Moor, and one was even an Arab. These emperors were *all* keenly interested in the new Oriental religions which were now completely infiltrated the Empire. One of these emperors, Aurelian, who reigned from 270 to 275 A. D., was from the Balkans. His father was a farmer while his mother, like the Syrian emperors' mothers, was a priestess of the Sun (*ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 421). He grew up as an adherent of Oriental Sun-worship. It is no wonder, as we have already seen in

chapter two of this work, that when he went to Syria, after having become emperor, he brought back with him the Babylonian Sun-god and its official priesthood to Rome and established that sun-god as the protector of the Empire. In fact, the later Claudian emperors stated that this Babylonian god was the author of their race.

With all this Babylonian sun-god worshipping going on, we can well imagine how the Roman world was turning into an Oriental one. It was progressively getting more Oriental all the time. The complete transformation, however, came with Diocletian, the predecessor of Constantine. The *Historian's History* informs us: "*Diocletian permanently introduced Eastern forms of government. Until his time the outward appearance of the emperor had only a passing air of Orientalism, but with Diocletian this character of government was established for all time to come. From Diocletian the white bandeau or diadem, borrowed from the East, became the distinctive sign of the ruler, whilst formerly the purple raiment had been the sole sign. Diocletian and his next successor (Constantine) introduced the remaining Oriental regal ornaments. The emperor Aurelian had, indeed, set them the example here*" (vol. 6, p. 435). "*The Asiatic pomp, which had been adopted by Diocletian, assumed an air of softness and effeminacy in the person of Constantine*" (*ibid.*, p. 456).

Why yes, the whole court by the time of Constantine was completely Orientalized it was an Eastern monarchy now in the West. It is interesting that Dr. Shotwell of Columbia University, speaking about the times of Diocletian and Constantine, said: "The tongue of Greece gave free access to the philosophy of the Orient, and its pantheon was filled with all the gods of the world, Rome's thought became the reflex of that of the Hellenized east (that is, the thought of Syria and Egypt). If Rome conquered the ancient world, it was made captive in return. The Roman government and society WERE NO LONGER ROMAN IN ANYTHING BUT NAME. The administration of the empire had become a Persian absolutism (inherited from Babylon), and its society was verging towards Oriental caste" (*ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. XIII, XIV).

With Constantine we find the real completion of the Chaldean movement to Rome and Italy, By now, not only the people, but the religion, philosophy and even the government of old Babylon had been transferred to the West. And, with the accepting of a form of Christianity — that type promulgated by Simon Magus, himself a Babylonian — the force had now arisen which was to govern the future Western world, a force which is still effecting us today, and a force which will effect us even more in the next few years.

Reprinted, 2001, by Giving & Sharing. For a printed copy, please send \$4 to: **Giving & Sharing, PO Box 100, Neck City, MO 64849.**