

A Children's History Of The Church

FROM THE DAY OF PENTECOST
TO THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON
A.D. 29 ~ A.D. 451

By
JOHN MASON NEALE
1852

✝
IDEA CLASSICS

Front Cover: The Church of the Holy Sepulcher built over the Tomb
of Christ in Jerusalem.

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Table of Contents

Author's Preface	xi
Editor's Preface	xii

BOOK I

A.D. 29 ~ A.D. 313

The World Persecutes the Church: The Church, by its Martyrs, Overcomes the World	1
The Gospel Preached to the Gentiles	2
Apostles Creed, A.D. 41	3
Division of the Apostles	4
The First Council	4
The Gospels, A.D. 54	6
St. James Confesses Christ and Suffers Martyrdom	7
Jerusalem, A.D. 65	9
The First Persecution, Under Nero, A.D. 64	10
Simon Magus	11
Martyrdom of Sts. Peter and Paul, A.D. 66	13
The Jewish War Begins	13
The Horrible Famine	15
Jerusalem is Taken, A.D. 70	16
The Second Persecution, Under Domitian, A.D. 81	18
The Last Days of St. John; Ebion and Cerinthus, Heretics	18
The Last Sayings and Doings of St. John the Apostle	19
The Third Persecution, Under Trajan, A.D. 98	20
Martyrdom of St. Ignatius, A.D. 107	23
The Gnostic Heresy	24
The Fourth Persecution	25
Marcion, Heretic	26
A Question About Easter; St. Polycarp, A.D. 158	28
Martyrdom of St. Polycarp, A.D. 167	29
Heresy of Montanus, A.D. 171	32
Persecution at Lyons, A.D. 174	33
Question About Easter	34
Sixth Persecution, Under Severus, A.D. 202; Beginnings of Origen	35
Origen and the Alexandrian School	37
Martyrdom of St. Potamiaena	38
Seventh Persecution, Under Maximin	39
St. Gregory the Wonderworker	40
Miracle of the Lycus	41

The Eighth Persecution, Under Decius	43
Sts. Pionius and Peter, Martyrs	44
St. Paul the First Hermit	45
Difficulties About Apostates	45
Schism of Novatian, A.D. 251	47
The Great Plague	48
Is Baptism Given by Heretics Valid Baptism?	49
The Ninth Persecution, Under Valerian; Martyrdom of St. Laurence	50
Martyrdom of St. Cyprian	51
Martyrdom of St. Cyril	53
The Thirty Tyrants	54
The Sabellian Heresy	55
Beginnings of St. Antony; St. Antony Lives With a Hermit, A.D. 250	57
The Theban Legion	58
St. Victor of Marseilles, Martyr	59
An Oracle Confesses Christ	60
The Great Tenth Persecution	61
Sts. Romanus and Barulas, Martyrs	61
St. Emeritus on the Rack	62
Letter of St. Phileas	63
St. Alban, Martyr	64
Second Year of the Persecution; St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr, A.D. 304	65
Multitude of the Martyrs	67
St. Antony in the Castle	68
Canons About the Reconciliation of Apostates, A.D. 306	69
St. Peter of Alexandria, Martyr	72
The Cross of Constantine	72
Licinius Defeats Daia; Despair and Death of Maximin Daia, A.D. 313	73

BOOK II

A.D. 313 ~ A.D. 451

Heresy Persecutes the Church: The Church, by its Doctors and Confessors, Overcomes Heresy	75
Beginnings of the Donatists	76
Council of Arles, A.D. 319	77
Defeat and Death of Licinius, A.D. 323	78
Beginnings of Arius, 313 A.D.	78
Arius is Anathematized, A.D. 320	79
Eusebius of Nicomedia	80

Letter of St. Alexander	81
The First Ecumenical Council, the Ecumenical Council of Nicea	82
The Three Hundred and Eighteen	82
Opening of the Council	84
The Word “Consubstantial”	84
The Creed of Nicea	85
End of the Council	86
Geographical Divisions of the Church	86
Constantinople and Antioch	88
Russia, Armenia, and Greece	88
The Monks of Egypt	89
The Invention of the Cross, A.D. 326	91
St. Frumentius, Apostle of Ethiopia and the Conversion of Ethiopia	92
Conversion of Iberia by St. Nonna, Apostle of Iberia	92
St. Athanasius deposed at Tyre, A.D. 335	93
Arius is Struck by God and Dies, A.D. 336	94
Council of Antioch, A.D. 341	95
First Banishment of St. Athanasius, A.D. 341	96
The Council of Sardica, A.D. 347	97
Division Among the Arians	98
The Great Persian Persecution, A.D. 349	99
Sapor Sees a Fearful Vision	101
Miracle of the Flies	102
The Arian Struggle (Continued), A.D. 351	103
Beginnings of St. Hilary	103
Council of Milan, A.D. 355	104
Fall of Hosius	104
Departure of St. Antony, Jan. 17, A.D. 356	105
Councils of Seleucia and of Rimini	106
Julian the Apostate, Emperor, A.D. 361	108
St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Basil and St. Martin	109
The Persecution of Julian the Apostate	111
Martyrs Under Julian	113
The Statue of Caesarea	115
Julian Tries to Rebuild the Temple	115
Julian’s Confession and Death, A.D. 363	116
Jovian Elected Emperor	118
Death of St. Hilarion and of St. Athanasius, (A.D. 366)	118
The Saints of the Second Arian Persecution: St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan	120
Persecution in Egypt	121
Apollinaris, Heretic	122
The Goths Become Arians	122

St. Gregory of Nazianzum, Bishop of Constantinople	123
The Second Ecumenical Council: First of	
Constantinople	125
Council of Aquileia	125
Hymns of St. Ambrose	126
The Gregorian Tones	127
Miracles of St. Martin	128
Heresy of the Priscillianists	129
Bishop of Treves, A.D. 383	130
Persecution at Milan	130
A Blind Man Recovers Sight	131
Beginnings of St. Augustine	132
Conversion of St. Augustine	133
Death of St. Monica	134
Beginnings of St. John Chrysostom	134
Sermons on the Statues	135
Terror at Antioch	136
Antioch is Pardoned	136
The Vulgate	137
Civil War	138
Penitence of Theodosius	139
The Temple of Serapis Destroyed	139
Image of Serapis Demolished	141
Murder of Valentinian	142
Eugenius, Emperor	142
Battle of Aquileia, Sep. 6, A.D. 394	143
Destruction of Paganism	144
Labors of St. Augustine	145
Death of St. Ambrose, April 4, A.D. 397	147
Death of St. Martin, Nov. 11, A.D. 400	147
St. John Chrysostom at Constantinople	148
Banishment of St. Chrysostom	149
What the Diptychs Were	150
Rome Taken by Alaric, Chief of the Goths	150
Great Conference of Carthage, A.D. 411	150
The Donatists Confuted	152
The Pelagian Heresy	152
Pelagius Condemned, A.D. 415	153
Affairs in the East	154
The Goths and Vandals, A.D. 413	154
Count Boniface	155
Death of St. Augustine	156
The Nestorian Heresy	156
Doctrine of the Incarnation	157
The Council of Ephesus	158

The Third Ecumenical Council: of Ephesus	158
Nestorius Condemned	159
Arrival of John of Antioch	160
Nestorius is Deposed	160
The Church in France	162
St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland	163
Miracles of St. Germanus	164
The Eutychian Heresy	164
The False Ecumenical Council, Otherwise Called the Robber's Meeting at Ephesus, August 8, A.D. 449	165
Violence of Dioscorus	166
St. Flavian is Condemned	167
The Fourth Ecumenical Council: of Chalcedon, October 8, A.D. 451	168
Dioscorus is Deposed	169
Jacobites and Monophysites	170

APPENDIX

Glossary	171
Chronological List of Early Church Texts from the Time Period	176
Chronological List of Saints from this time period	191
Chronological Listing of Events and Emperors	203
A Prayer for the Blessing of Icons (an excellent Orthodox Apology for the Use of Icons)	207
St. John of Damascus Addressing Orthodox Trinitarian Teaching, in Contrast to Monophytism and Miaphytism	209
Sources of the Christian Faith: Church–Sacred Tradition–Holy Scripture	213
Holy Scripture and Early Church Fathers on the Church, Apostolic Succession, and Holy Tradition	216
Holy Scripture and Early Fathers on the Church and Unity	220
Holy Scripture and the Early Fathers on Salvation	225
Holy Scripture and the Early Fathers on the Presence of Christ i the Holy Eucharist	226
Holy Scripture and Early Fathers on Praying for the Dead	232
Holy Scripture and the Early Church Fathers on the Veneration of Relics	235
The Early Church on Church Authority and the Role of Peter Among the Apostles	237
The Early Church on Triple-Immersion Baptism	242
The Nicene and Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed as well as Canon VII of The Third Ecumenical Council of Ephesus	248
Listing of Other Paideia Classics Publications	251

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

An apology can hardly be necessary for the present volume, since a History of the Church for Children does not as yet exist. Mr. Palmer's little work is scarcely intended to be understood below the age of fourteen or fifteen; mine may, I know by experience, be comprehended by a child of eight.¹

To follow the order of the great Church historians, in a child's book, would have been clearly out of the question. I have been guided principally by the arrangement of Rohrbacher, and by the details of Fleury. Where the Egyptian Church was the subject, I have naturally followed my own History of Alexandria. And for France, I have mainly relied on Longueval. Baronius, and the Bollandists, have also been constantly at my side. Some little perplexity was occasioned by its being necessary again to relate tales which I had already told in some of my Stories from Church History. Whenever it was possible, I have selected other anecdotes, in preference to those which I had already used; where it was not, I have in some instances employed my own words, thinking that to write a new account, for the sake of writing it, would be a very needless affectation of originality.

I shall be truly thankful if this little book (which has cost more anxiety than could well be believed, except by such as have engaged in a work in any way similar) shall be found to give a faithful, though rough and general, impression of the period of which it treats. Now, if ever, it is of the greatest importance that Church History should be first presented to a child's mind under a Church aspect.

John Mason Neale
Sackville College,
December 6, 1852.

¹ Because of the older style language, we feel this text is likely better suited for an older child at the middle school level, 12 and up.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Mason Neale was born in London in 1818, studied at Cambridge, and was ordained to the Anglican priesthood in 1842. Chronic ill health prevented him from accepting a parish, but in 1846 he was made warden of Sackville College, a charitable residence for the poor, a position which he held until his death in 1866. In 1854 Neale co-founded the sisterhood of St. Margaret, an order of women in the Anglican Church dedicated to nursing the sick.

Neale was the first westerner whose written history of the Orthodox Church was praised by Orthodox Patriarchs. He translated Orthodox liturgies into English and wrote a mystical and devotional commentary on the Psalms. He is best known as a hymn writer and translator, having enriched English hymnody with many ancient and medieval hymns translated from Latin and Greek. He also wrote a number of works for children emphasizing the faith and life of the Early Church.

John Mason Neale believed Rome was in error over the Filioque Clause in its schism with the eastern churches and in 1864 founded *Anglican and Eastern Churches Association* which was dedicated to pray and work towards reunion between the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

In one of his many letters, John Mason Neale wrote:

DISSERTATION ON THE FILIOQUE 131

To B. W. Jan. 23rd, 1850. S. C.

I don't know where Mill is: so I send you this to forward to him. It is to ask him to read the "Dissertation on the Procession of the Holy Ghost" which also I want you to read, because I feel so very strongly on the Eastern side, that I may have spoken more strongly than I meant. I wished to seem to pronounce no judgment, but to leave the reader to form his own; and if you will just mark any passage where it seems to you that I have spoken otherwise, I shall be obliged to you. I have been two years, on and off, at that Dissertation, and in my own mind I am convinced with Palmer

that the Latin Doctrine, if consistently carried out, would become heresy, and that the Holy Ghost does not proceed from the Son at all, except in the way of Temporal Mission, and then not according to His Divinity, but only according to His operations. However, of course, I don't say all this in the book.

Regardless of his actual leanings, he was accused of being a papist, suffered persecution from unruly crowds who threatened to stone him and burn his house down, and in the last 14 years of his life, was no longer allowed to serve as priest by his bishop because of his convictions.

ABOUT THE TEXT

Originally titled, A History of the Church for Children—From Pentecost Until the Council of Chalcedon, this book was written by John Mason Neale in 1852. In this edition, we have chosen not to change the often antiquated Anglican terminology employed by Neale. Instead, we have added explanatory annotations when appropriate. Minimal alterations in grammar, punctuation and spelling (switching to American style) have been made to the original text in order to improve its readability for the modern young person. A correction of one factual error of a name and a few other minor changes have also been made in order to simplify re-publication (we replaced a colored map included in the original publication with a black and white map from a different source, and had to alter Neale's references that were specific to the original color map). We have chosen to add numerous illustrations of early Christian art and artifacts not found in John Mason Neale's original publication to increase the educational value of this volume, as well as numerous annotations, patristic references and a substantial appendix. The text by itself, is suitable for a middle school student. With the addition of patristic readings as noted in the references found throughout the text, and in the appendix, this text could easily be used at the high school level as well.

ABOUT THE TERM “CATHOLIC” AND HOW THE APOSTOLIC FAITH WAS IDENTIFIED

Throughout this text, John Mason Neale uses the word “catholic” to refer to the Church maintaining orthodox doctrine and teaching as opposed to the various heretical sects also described in these pages. “Catholic,” which comes from the Greek term ‘catholiki,’ is found repeatedly in the earliest Church writings to describe the Church and the common Faith. ‘Catholo’ was originally a Platonic term used in Plato’s philosophy, describing ‘everything in accordance with the whole.’ ‘Holos’ is the same root as ‘whole,’ ‘cata’ is ‘according.’ In early Christianity it referred to the universal Faith that had been taught by all the Apostles, in all the ancient churches together, which they had established.

According to St. Vincent of Lerins (+445) in his:

A COMMONITORY—FOR THE ANTIQUITY AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH AGAINST THE PROFANE NOVELTIES OF ALL HERESIES:

“Moreover, in the Catholic Church itself, all possible care must be taken, that we hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all. For that is truly and in the strictest sense “Catholic,” which, as the name itself and the reason of the thing declare, comprehends all universally. This rule we shall observe if we follow universality, antiquity, consent. We shall follow universality if we confess that one faith to be true, which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity, if we in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is manifest were notoriously held by our holy ancestors and fathers; consent, in like manner, if in antiquity itself we adhere to the consentient definitions and determinations of all, or at the least of almost all priests and doctors.”

And According to St. Augustine of Hippo:

"Petilianus said: 'If you declare that you hold the Catholic Church, the word 'catholic' is merely the Greek equivalent for entire or whole. But it is clear that you are not in the whole, because you have gone aside into the part.' Augustine answered: I too indeed have attained to a very slight knowledge of the Greek language, scarcely to be called knowledge at all, yet I am not shameless in saying that I know that means not 'one,'

but 'the whole;' and that means 'according to the whole:' whence the Catholic Church received its name, according to the saying of the Lord, 'It is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth.' Here you have the origin of the name 'Catholic.' ~Augustine, Answer to Letters of Petilian, 2:38 [90] (A.D. 400).

Heresies, were man-inspired doctrines not originating from God (2Peter 2:1-3). They were innovative teachings that took root under individual teachers or church leaders at a certain time and place in history, distorting what had been universally taught throughout the whole, undivided Church from the beginning. If a doctrine was consonant² with what had been taught in all the ancient churches from antiquity, 'according to the whole,' then it was considered catholic and orthodox. Otherwise, lack of agreement with the Apostolic Tradition, rendered the teaching innovative and heretical.

Accordingly, without exclusion, We subject to severest excommunication anyone—be it ourselves or be it another—who would dare to undertake anything new in contradiction to this constituted evangelic Tradition and the purity of the Orthodox Faith and the Christian Religion, or would seek to change anything by his opposing efforts, or would agree with those who undertake such a blasphemous venture. (Liber Diurnus Romanorum Pontificum, Patrologia Latina 1005, S. 54) ~ Pope St. Agatho (678-681)

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS

In this edition, illustrations have been added—many from antique sources—depicting early Christian art found in the catacombs and elsewhere.

² There was flexibility for defining doctrine as in the case of adding 'homoousios' to the Nicene Creed to clarify Christ being of the same essence as God the Father. 'Homoousius' was not a term found in Scripture, which led to heated debate with the Arians. So a certain allowance was made for clarification, while maintaining harmony with the Apostolic Faith and not changing actual doctrine.

The earliest remnants of Christian art can be found from the end of the second century into the beginning of the third. A long-standing argument explaining why Christianity left few traces of art in the first two centuries has been that they would have been faithful to the Old Testament prohibition of depicting anything from heaven or earth as a graven image (carved idol).³ Another explanation, however, could be that Christianity was very hidden and under intense persecution in those first two centuries. In addition, its center began in Jerusalem, which was completely destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Romans, leaving no archaeological trace. There is evidence that Judaism in the third century—the same period in which Christian art becomes more evident—was more open with its own arts, as evidenced by the Synagogue in Dura Europos, Syria, and other synagogues, as well as the Jewish catacombs. Other synagogues that have been found decorated with Jewish art, include Hamman Lif in North Africa, Beth Alpha Synagogue in Galilee, Hammath Tiberias and Sephoris in Israel. Christianity emerged from Judaism and would have been influenced by the Jewish practice and interpretation of Scripture of the same time period.

The oldest known evidence today of Christian fresco art comes from the Roman Catacombs (dated between A.D. 200-400) and from Dura Europos in Syria (a city on the Euphrates River, built in A.D. 245 and destroyed by the Persians in A.D. 256).

Artifacts such as clay oil lamps and gold glass, appeared frequently from early on. Frescos, mosaics and other more sophisticated artwork became more prevalent as this early period progressed. Such artifacts could also be found from within the Jewish and pagan communities. Pagan artwork and artifacts normally depicted mythical figures; Jewish art, images from the Old Testament and Jewish symbols; Christian art, images from the Old Testament, from the life of Christ and

³ See pg. 207 in the appendix for a prayer read during the blessing icons, for the Orthodox Christian theological understanding of the proper use of images.

apostolic saints, as well as uniquely Christian symbols that were developing at that time.

The New Testament as we know it did not exist until after the First and Second Great Ecumenical Councils in the fourth century.⁴ Artists during this early period relied heavily on stories that were spread orally. “*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or by letter from us.*” ~2 Thessalonians 2:15

Early Christian frescoes did reflect a more Classical Roman style in comparison to the later, more restrained Byzantine style which developed following the Edict of Milan.

USING THIS TEXT FOR THE OLDER STUDENT

Neale frequently mentions early church writings throughout this text, and we have added additional references in the footnotes that can be included in an older student’s reading list or used for research and further study on a particular topic. We have added an extensive appendix, including a listing of patristic texts, most of which are in the public domain and can be found on the Internet, from this time period. Supportive resources and topical patristic quotations from this time period covering Orthodox beliefs, can also be found there as a resource for further learning and writing opportunities for the older student.

Ancient source histories that parallel this volume, that some added footnotes may refer to, include:

Antiquities of the Jews, by Flavius Josephus

The Jewish Wars, by Flavius Josephus (written A.D. 93)

The Annals of Imperial Rome, by Tacitus (written around A.D. 115)

Letters between Pliny and Trajan (written between A.D. 111-113)

The History of the Church, by Eusebius (written A.D. 340)

⁴ See *Sources of the Christian Faith: Church–Sacred Tradition–Holy Scripture*, pg. 213.

The Life of Constantine, By Eusebius
The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 340-410)
Ecclesiastical History (Covers 305-439 CE), by Socrates Scholasticus (c.379-440)
Ammianus Marcellinus Roman Antiquities
Ecclesiastical History (Covers 324-440 CE), by Sozomen Hermias (5th Century)
Ecclesiastical History (Covers 322-427 CE), by Theodoret of Cyrillus (d.c. 457)
The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus (Covers A.D. 431-594, written late 6th century)

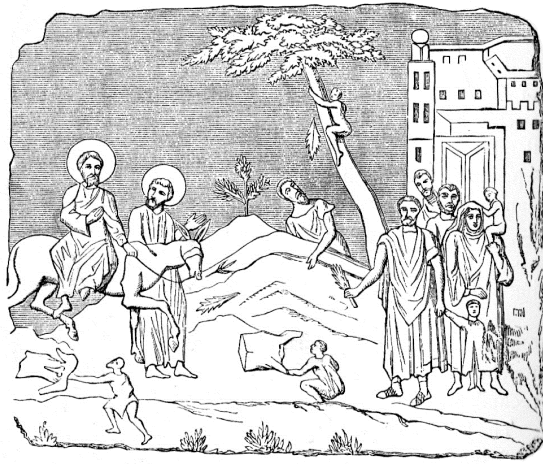
For the middle school student, we recommend Our Young Folks' Josephus also published by Paidea Classics. For the mature student who does not have time to read Josephus' actual lengthy volume of The Jewish Wars, we recommend adding Story of the Last Days of Jerusalem~From Josephus, by Alfred Church, also published by Paidea Classics. In time, it is our hope to publish anthologies of patristic and historical selections to accompany this volume.

HIC CONGESTA IACET QVAERIS SI TVRBA PIORVM
CORPORA SANCTORVM RETINENT VENERANDA SEPVLCBRA
SVBLIMES ANIMAS RAPVIT SIBI REGIA CAELI
HIC COMITES XYSTI PORTANT QVI EX HOSTE TROPAEA
HIC NVMERVS PROCERVVM SERVAT QVI ALTARIA CHRISTI
HIC POSITVS LONGA VIXIT QVI IN PACE SACERDOS
HIC CONFESSORES SANCTI QVOS GRAECIA MISIT
HIC IVVENES PVERIQVE SENES CASTIQVE NEPOTES
QVIS MAGE VIRGINEVM PLACVIT RETINERE PVDOREM
HIC FATEOR DAMASVS VOLVI MEA CONDERE MEMBRA
SED CINERES TIMVI SANCTOS VESARE PIORVM.

Here, if you would know, lie heaped together a whole crowd of holy ones.
These honored sepulchers enclose the bodies of the saints,
Their noble souls the palace of Heaven has taken to itself,
Here lie the companions of Xystus, who bear away the trophies from the
enemy;
Here a number of elders, who guard the altars of Christ;
Here is buried the priest, who long lived in peace;
Here the holy confessors whom Greece sent us;
Here lie youths and boys, old men and their chaste offspring,
Who chose, as the better part, to keep their virgin chastity.
Here I, Damasus, confess I wished to lay my limbs,
But I feared to disturb the holy ashes of the saints.

INSCRIPTION FOUND IN THE CATACOMB OF SIXTUS,⁵ WHERE 11 BISHOPS
AND MANY OTHER MARTYRS OF THE THIRD CENTURY ARE BURIED.

⁵ In Rome.



THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM
DEPICTED IN ONE OF THE ANCIENT CATACOMBS OF ROME.

A CHILDREN'S HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

BOOK I

A.D. 29 ~ A.D. 312

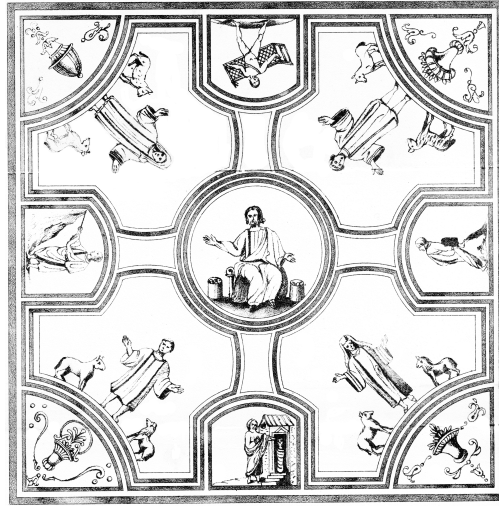
The World Persecutes the Church:

The Church, by its Martyrs, Overcomes the World

The history of the Church properly begins at the Day of Pentecost. For then it was that the Apostles (from whom were to come the long line of all the bishops and priests that ever have been, or ever will be) were filled with the Holy Spirit, that they might go and teach all nations.⁶ But I shall pass quickly over those events, which you may read for yourselves in the Book of Acts.

⁶ See "Early Church Fathers on Apostolic Succession," page 208 in appendix.

It is believed that our Lord commanded His Apostles to remain together in Jerusalem for twelve years. And so we read that, in the persecution, which arose after the death of Stephen, they that believed “*were scattered abroad, except the Apostles.*” The Twelve stayed on in that city, till the time came at which they were to part, never to meet again in this world.⁷



CEILING FRESKO OF ONE OF THE CHAPELS IN THE CATECOMBS OF ST. AGNES (3RD-4TH CENTURY).

The Gospel Preached to the Gentiles

In the Acts you read of the chief things, which happened in these twelve years. St. Stephen, the first Martyr, and St. James the Apostle, glorified God by laying down their lives;

Saul was called from being a blasphemer and persecutor, and injurious, to be Saint Paul, the Great Apostle. And by degrees the Apostles, being led by the Holy Spirit into all truth, learned that the Gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles also,

⁷ It is the tradition of the Eastern Church, supported by early Church documents, that they did indeed, again come together, at the Falling Asleep of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. See *The Account of St. John the Theologian of the Falling Asleep of the Holy Mother of God* (apocryphal text. See definition of apocryphal text on page 171 in the glossary found in the appendix).

A CHILDREN'S HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

and not, as they at first thought, to the Jews only. The first who did this were some disciples of the island of Cyprus, and of Cyrene in Egypt,⁸ when they fled to Antioch, after the martyrdom of St. Stephen. But the first to whom God made manifest His Will in this matter was St. Peter, in the vision of the great sheet let down from Heaven, of which you may read in the tenth chapter of the Acts. Afterwards, indeed, St. Paul became the chief Apostle of the Gentiles, and labored more abundantly than they all; yet not he, but the Grace of God that was with him.⁹

Apostles' Creed, A.D. 41

When the twelve years were ended, the Apostles, before they parted, wrote a Creed, that they might all teach the same faith to those among whom they journeyed; and this, if not in the very same words, yet had the very same meaning, as that which we now call the Apostles' Creed. Then they made St. James, surnamed the Just, Bishop of Jerusalem, where for the present the headquarters of the Church were to be. And afterwards they departed, each his own way. I will here tell you in which countries each of them preached the Gospel.



IMAGE OF SEVEN APOSTLES WITH LOAVES AND FISH FROM ONE OF THE ANCIENT CATACOMBS OF ROME (3RD-4TH CENTURY).

⁸ *Acts* 11:19-20.

⁹ See *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (an early church apocryphal text. See definition of apocryphal text on page 171 in the glossary found in the appendix).



THE GOOD SHEPHERD FROM THE CATACOMB TOMB OF
ST. CALLISTUS IN ROME.

Division of the Apostles

St. Peter was first the Bishop of Antioch: after that he went to Rome, where, as you know, the Emperor then lived, who ruled the greater part of the world. From thence he sent St. Mark into Egypt, where he founded the Church of Alexandria. Of St. Paul's journeys you read in the Acts. St. John went into Asia Minor, and was Bishop of Ephesus. St. Thomas travelled into India; some say to China also.¹⁰ St. Bartholomew labored in Armenia. St. Matthew¹¹ preached in Ethiopia; so also did St. Matthias. St. Simon the Canaanite, and St. Jude, went to Mesopotamia, Persia, and Arabia. St. Philip lived in Phrygia.¹² St. Andrew proclaimed Christ in Russia and Greece.¹³ All of the Apostles, except St. John, finished their lives by martyrdom, and so they entered into the joy of their Lord. There they now are waiting for the day when they shall sit on twelve Thrones, judging kindreds, and nations, and people.

The First Council

You read in the Acts¹⁴ how, when the Gospel was first preached to the gentiles, certain men taught that it was necessary for all Christians to be circumcised, and to

¹⁰ *Acts of the Holy Apostle Thomas* (apocryphal text).

¹¹ *Acts and Martyrdom of St. Matthew the Apostle* (apocryphal text).

¹² See *Of the Journeyings of Philip the Apostle*; *Acts of Saint Philip the Apostle When He Went to Upper Hellas*, (both apocryphal texts).

¹³ See *Acts and Martyrdom of the Holy Apostle Andrew* (Apocryphal text).

¹⁴ See *Acts* chapter 15 and *Galatians* chapter 2.

A CHILDREN'S HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

keep the Law of Moses; for that else they could not be saved. This was at Antioch, where St. Paul and his faithful companion, St. Barnabas,¹⁵ then were. They have left us an example how all disputes that arise in the Church are to be settled. They came up to Jerusalem, where a council was held on the matter. St. James, as being Bishop of Jerusalem, was president: but St. Peter, as the chief of the Apostles, first gave his opinion. Then St. Paul and St. Barnabas told how the Gospel had been preached among the gentiles; and last of all, St. James summed up the whole matter. Afterwards this letter was written:

"The Apostles, and elders, and brethren, send greeting unto the brethren, which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia. Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the Law; to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul; men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who also shall tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."

This was, properly speaking, the first General Council. And here I must stop to say one thing. Christ promised to be with His Church always, even unto the end of the world; and that the gates of hell should never prevail against it. That is, He said that it should never fall away from the truth. One bishop may be deceived; many bishops may go wrong together; particular churches—the Church of Antioch, the Church of Rome, and the Church of England—may err, and have erred. But the whole Church together never has been, and never can be, mistaken: otherwise the promise of God would be made of none effect.¹⁶

¹⁵ See *Acts of Barnabas* (apocryphal text).

¹⁶ Caution should be used when reading this particular passage in that it is influenced by the Anglican doctrine of 'branch theory' regarding the Church. It has been the

But now, how can we tell what the whole Church believes, when any new disputes arise about the truth?

As the Apostles did, so it has always been done since. As many bishops as could have come together from all the world, and thus made a general council; or, as we sometimes call it, an ecumenical council—that is, a council of the whole world. And when this council has met in the name of Christ, and when its decrees have been received¹⁷ by the Church, then we are sure that they are the very truth.

The Gospels, A.D. 54

It was God's good Will that for some time the Church should not suffer any great persecution. Tiberius was the Roman Emperor when our Lord was crucified; but he, and those who came after him, Caligula and Claudius, let the Christians remain in peace. Nero, who succeeded Claudius, and who became a monster of wickedness, left them to themselves for ten years. In the meanwhile, St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, had written their Gospels, and St. Paul, most of his Epistles. By this time also, in Asia Minor, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Greece, and Italy, many bishops had been consecrated by the Apostles; some of them we find mentioned in the New Testament, as Timothy and Titus. But you must not think that these bishops were, in outward circumstances, like those under whom we now are. Those early bishops were settled in every town of any size; each had not, perhaps, above twenty or thirty priests under him, and at first

GOD SYMBOLIZED BY A
HAND REACHING
TOWARDS ABRAHAM



FROM THE CATACOMBS OF
ROME.

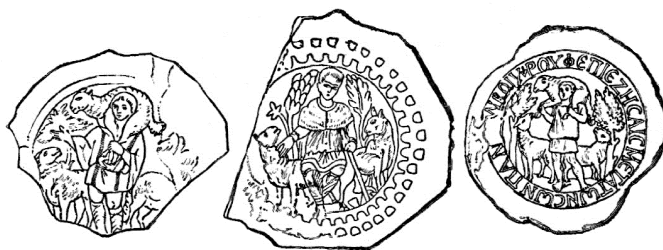
historic understanding from antiquity, that once a bishop or church is anathematized in council, it no longer is a part of the 'One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.'

¹⁷Voluntarily accepted and signed to by all the churches.

A CHILDREN'S HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

all bishops were equal. You will presently see that it was soon found convenient to make different ranks among them.

St. Luke tells us in the Acts how St. Paul appealed to Caesar, that is, to Nero, and so was sent by Festus, the Roman Governor of Judea, to Rome¹⁸. After remaining there more than two years, in his own hired house, he was set at liberty. Then he went into France, where he is said to have consecrated some bishops, by whose preaching and labors the Gospel spread over that country. From France he journeyed into Spain; and some say that he even came to England. After this he returned into the East.



GOLD GLASS ART OF CHRIST, THE GOOD SHEPHERD FROM THE 3RD CENTURY.

*St. James Confesses Christ and Suffers Martyrdom*¹⁹

All this time St. James the Just had been bishop of the Church at Jerusalem. Now there began to be signs that the fearful prayer of the Jews, "*His blood be on us and on our children,*" was about to be fulfilled. At last one Ananus, a Sadducee, was made High Priest; and he filled up the measure of the iniquities of his people. He called together the chief priests and elders, and gave orders that James should be set before them. This was at the time of the Passover, and multitudes of the Jews had come up to keep the feast. "We know," said the High Priest, "*how much the people honor and reverence you: you know also how they err, forsaking the Law of Moses, and following*

¹⁸ *Acts* 29:9-12.

¹⁹ See *Eusebius History of the Church*, Bk. II, ch. 23; Flavius Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. XX, ch. 9.

Jesus, which was called Christ. Wherefore it is fit that you should go up to the top of the Temple, whence you can be heard of the multitude, and tell them how grievously they are in error touching that deceiver." "I will go up there," said St. James, "and will speak to the people." Accordingly, he went up to the top of the Temple; and there, from the height of its terrace, glittering with snow-white marble, he looked down on the vast multitude that rolled here and there below him, and struggled onwards to hear his words. "Tell us, O Just one," cried the Pharisees, "what this people is to think of Jesus of Nazareth, Whom they ignorantly worship?" "Why ask ye me," said St. James, "touching Christ the Son of Man? He now sitteth on the right hand of God, and shall come again with glory, to judge the living and the dead." The multitude cried, as with one voice, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" But the Scribes said, "It was ill done to give this man's testimony concerning Christ. The Just one hath grievously erred." And hurrying to the roof of the Temple, they threw St. James down among the people. Still, however, he lived, and with his remaining strength, kneeling, he said, "Lord God, lay not this sin to their charge." A man of the house of the Rechabites (you will remember God's promise made to them by the Prophet Jeremiah)²⁰ cried, "What do ye? The Just one prays for you." But a fuller²¹, who stood by, struck the holy Apostle on the head with a mallet; and he thus entered into the joy of his Lord. In his place the Church of Jerusalem chose Simeon, the son of Cleophas (and thus a relation of our Lord according to the flesh), to be their bishop.



LID OF A SARCOPHAGUS IN THE LATERAN MUSEUM. CHRIST DIVIDING SHEEP FROM THE GOATS.

²⁰ *Jeremiah* 35:1

²¹ Someone who cleans wool cloth in preparation for making clothing.

Jerusalem, A.D. 65

And now there appeared in the city, at the Feast of Tabernacles, a man named Jesus, the son of Ananus. He stood in the Temple, and cried continually, *"A voice from the east! A voice from the west! A voice from the four winds against Jerusalem! A voice against the Temple and the people! A voice against the bridegroom and the bride!"* He was persecuted, laughed at, imprisoned, scourged till the bones were laid bare, but still he uttered not a syllable save this doleful cry. At last they let him go; and he wandered up and down the streets, perpetually repeating, *"A voice from the east! A voice from the west!"* but oftener, and more sadly, at the time of the principal feasts.²²



JEWISH PRIEST WITH CENSER

There were other dreadful signs. At nine o'clock in the evening, at the Feast of the Passover, the Altar of burnt offerings was surrounded with such a light that the Temple and the Court shone as at mid-day. The great eastern door, which was of brass, and so heavy that it required twenty men to move it, opened of its own accord. In the month of May, at sunset, the sky seemed full of chariots and horses and armies of fire. And at the Feast of Pentecost, when the priests went into the

²² See Jewish Wars, by Josephus, Bk. VI, chapter 5:3; Story of the Last Days of Jerusalem, ch. XII; Our Young Folks' Josephus, ch. 147, pgs. 430-432.

Temple, they heard the sound as of footsteps leaving the place, and then a terrible voice that said, "*Let us depart hence!*"²³

But before I tell you of the destruction of Jerusalem, I must say something of the First Persecution.

The First Persecution, under Nero, A.D. 64

The Emperor Nero, who, as I said, was a monster of wickedness, in the month of July, set fire to the city of Rome. This he did that he might enjoy the sight, and be able to rebuild the city in a more stately manner. Notwithstanding the care he took to keep his secret, he was suspected of being the author of the fire; and so, to turn people's thoughts from himself, he accused the Christians of the crime.²⁴ Of those early Roman and Italian martyrs we read very little. We only know that some were given to the wild beasts, others covered with the skins of deer, and so torn in pieces by dogs; some were smeared over with pitch, and being then fastened to posts in the streets, were set light to, and served as torches.²⁵ In those first years, the Christians, not foreseeing the fiery trial that was to try them for so long a time, were not so careful to preserve the "*Acts of the Martyrs*" as they afterwards were; so that the names of those who suffered under Nero, though long since written in the *Book of Life*, are but little known to us.



NERO

²³ See *Jewish Wars*, by Josephus, Bk. VI, ch. 5:3; *Story of the Last Days of Jerusalem*, ch. XI; *Our Young Folks' Josephus*, ch. 147, pgs. 430-432; *Eusebius History of the Church*, Bk. II, ch. 20.

²⁴ Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, Bk. XV, ch. 44.

²⁵ Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, Bk. XV, ch. 47 (A.D. 64) [during the Great Fire of Rome].

Simon Magus²⁶

But of two glorious confessors we do know. St. Peter seems to have been some time at Rome, and now St. Paul came there also. Both felt that they were soon to finish their course. St. Peter says, "*Knowing that I must shortly put off this my tabernacle; even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.*"²⁷ St. Paul says, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.*"²⁸ They were thrown into the Mamertine prison, a dark, noisome dungeon, which remains to this day; and this was the reason.

Simon the magician—who had bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that he was some great one, and who had afterwards sought to buy the power of working miracles—had all his life long been doing what he could to hurt the Church of God by his false signs. He had come to Rome, and became a favorite of Nero, who was fond of studying magic. He showed the Emperor several great wonders by the power of the devil, and at last promised to fly. The day having come, Nero, and a vast crowd, gathered together to see this strange miracle. Simon came forward, and presently rose towards the sky. The Apostles, Peter and Paul, were there; and they knelt down, and called on the Name of Jesus Christ. At the same moment the



MAMERTINE PRISON

²⁶ *Acts* 8:9-24; *Eusebius History of the Church*, Bk. II, ch. 14.

²⁷ *2Peter* 1:14.

²⁸ *2Timothy* 4:7-8.



ROME

magician fell to the ground, and broke both his legs. He was carried into a house; and there, mad with his pain and shame, he killed himself.

Nero was enraged, and more particularly against St. Paul, who had before this converted one of the Emperor's favorite concubines. The Apostles were therefore, as I said, thrown into the Mamertine prison, where they remained nine months. Here they converted forty-seven prisoners, and besides these the two jailers, Processus and Martinianus, who afterwards became glorious martyrs. At last the Christians persuaded St. Peter to leave the prison and flee. He went forth by night; but as he was going out of the gate of the city, he beheld our Lord, as he had known Him in the flesh, entering in. St. Peter said, "*Lord, where goest Thou?*" And the Lord answered, "*I go to be crucified again in Rome.*" And having so said, He vanished from his sight. This St. Peter understood to be a prophecy of his own martyrdom; and he therefore returned to the prison. Shortly after this, his wife was led to death. He congratulated her on going home first, and said, "Woman, remember the Lord."²⁹

²⁹ See *Stromata*, by St. Clement of Alexandria.

Martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul, A.D. 66³⁰

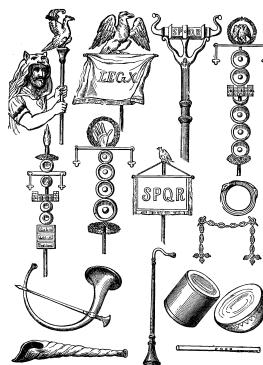
On the 29th of June, the two glorious Apostles were led forth to martyrdom. St. Paul, as being a Roman citizen, was beheaded. It was at a place called Salviennae, three miles from the city, and on his way there he converted three soldiers, who afterwards became martyrs. St. Peter was taken to the Janiculan Hill, the part of Rome where the Jews lived, and there crucified. He prayed that it might be with his head downwards, because, he said, "*I am not worthy to suffer as my Master did.*"



Bronze Metal
S.S. Peter and Paul
Fourth Century

The Jewish War Begins³¹

Leaving these two most blessed Apostles in the glory of their Lord, I must go on to a sad story, and tell you about the Jewish war. Florus was now the governor of Judea, and as he was very cruel, and exacted money by the most unjust means, the Jews at last broke out into open rebellion. Roman forces poured in from all quarters against them; and at length the Governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, led his army to Jerusalem. He might have taken it at once, but he was persuaded that he had not enough soldiers, and therefore retreated. The Jews pursued, and cut off a great number of his men.



ROMAN ENSIGNS, STANDARDS, TRUMPETS, ETC..

Now doubtless God ordered this, that the Christians might have the opportunity of escaping from the miserable city. For when they saw the standards of the Roman army, on which

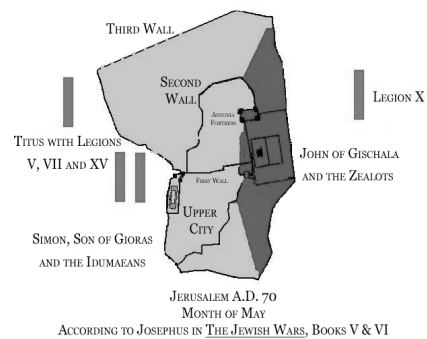
³⁰ See Eusebius History of the Church, Bk. II, ch. 25.

³¹ See Our Young Folks' Josephus and Story of the Last Days of Jerusalem for more detail.

idols were set, arrayed round the walls, they called to mind the words of our Lord, "*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the Holy Place*"³² (*whoso readeth, let him understand*), *then let them which be in Judea flee unto the mountains.*"³³ When, therefore, the army of Cestius Gallus retreated, the Christians, led by St. Simeon, their bishop, left Jerusalem, and fled to Pella, a city in the mountains, and not one of them perished in the war.³⁴

Then followed that siege, which perhaps is the most dreadful thing in history. The Jews were shut up in Jerusalem by Vespasian, the Roman General. But though the enemy was daily attacking the walls, though the machines battered the ramparts, and flung huge rocks into the streets, the miserable Jews were divided into two parties, and daily fighting with each other. The two leaders, both bloodthirsty tyrants, were named John and Simon. One held the upper and one the lower part of the city. So there was war without, and all kind of bloodshed, treachery, and cruelty within. Still the people believed that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, would not forsake His people. They were infatuated to their destruction; and though

the Romans offered them terms of peace, they resolved to hold out to the last. And all this while they were plotting and fighting against each other; and the Temple itself was polluted with murder.³⁵

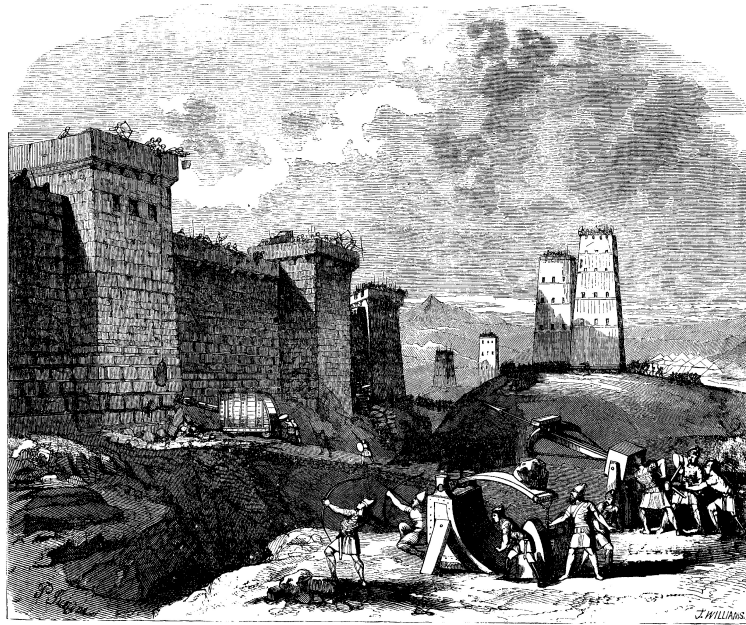


³² *Daniel* 9:27, 11:31.

³³ *Gospel of Matthew*, ch. 24.

³⁴ See *Eusebius History of the Church*, Bk. III, ch. 5, part 3.

³⁵ They were infatuated with the belief that God would save them, to their destruction. Unwilling to repent of their sins, yet believing that God would save them, they refused to make peace with the Romans. See *Ezekiel* 18.



THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

*The Horrible Famine*³⁶

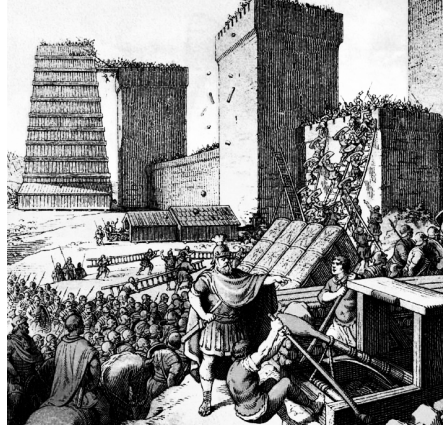
When the siege was formed, it was the time of the Passover. A vast multitude of strangers were therefore shut up in the city. And soon famine—the most dreadful famine we read of—began. Then were fulfilled the curses written in the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy. When provisions failed, men ate, first, horses; then mice, rats, and other vermin; then straps, leather, and skins; then filth of all kinds. Multitudes died daily. Many tried to give themselves up to the Romans; but they were not allowed to come forth. When any, the vilest food was found, men fought for it as for a treasure. At last the most horrible of all things, which Moses had foretold came to pass. A lady, who

³⁶ See *Lamentations* 4:8-12, *Acts* 11:28; *Eusebius History of the Church*, Bk III, ch. 6.

had been well known for her gentleness and beauty, killed her child, roasted it, and devoured a part of it.³⁷

Jerusalem is Taken, A.D. 70

Vespasian, as I shall presently tell you, was now Emperor; but his son Titus, a very gentle prince, carried on the siege, and with tears called God to witness that the Jews, and not he, were the authors of this misery. All this time, Jesus the son of Ananus went round with his doleful cry; but now the words were—“*Woe! Woe to the city!—Woe! Woe to the people!—Woe! Woe to the Temple!*” At last, as he was on the walls, he suddenly cried out—“*Woe! Woe to myself also!*” and almost at the same moment a stone from one of the engines³⁸ slew him.



Every day the famine grew more terrible; every day the Romans advanced further and further; every day murders and fights in the city increased. But still the Jews believed that God would save them. Titus was very anxious to spare the Temple. But in an assault on the tenth of August, the same day on which it had been burnt by Nebuchadnezzar, it was set fire to, and destroyed, and all within it put to the sword.

Titus, having offered sacrifice on the ground where the Temple had stood, now pressed on the siege. Still the Jews fortified themselves on Mount Zion; till on Saturday,

³⁷ *Leviticus* 26: 27-29; *The Jewish Wars*, Bk. VI, ch. 3, part 4; *Story of the Last Days of Jerusalem*, chapter XII; *Our Young Folks' Josephus*, ch. 147, pgs. 430-432.

³⁸ Catapult.

A CHILDREN'S HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

September 8th, the place was taken by assault. The city was all but destroyed, and the ground was ploughed up.

In the siege, eleven hundred thousand Jews perished³⁹; and after it, ninety-seven thousand were sold as captives. And thus the dreadful prayer was fulfilled: "*His Blood be on us, and on our children.*"



Two years before the destruction of Jerusalem, Nero's wickedness had become too great to be borne. A conspiracy was formed against him; he fled from Rome and killed himself. After a short reign of three Emperors—Galba, Otho, and Vitellius—Vespasian, as I told you, was elected Emperor by the soldiers.

After the martyrdom of St. Peter, St. Linus, whom you find mentioned by St. Paul (2 *Timothy* 4:21), became Bishop of Rome: and then St. Clement, of whom the same Apostle tells us, that his "*name is in the Book of Life.*" He was looked on as almost equal to the Apostles: and he wrote an *Epistle to the Corinthians*, which we still have. Another very early writer of these times is St. Hermas, also mentioned by St. Paul: *Romans* 16:14, who wrote a book of visions and allegories, which some day you will read.⁴⁰



THE SPOILS OF THE TEMPLE AS DEPICTED ON THE ARCH OF TITUS

³⁹ This estimate is according to the historian Josephus. Modern estimates are closer to 40,000-50,000.

⁴⁰ *Shepherd of Hermas.*