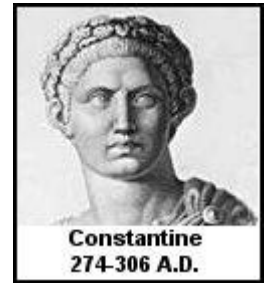


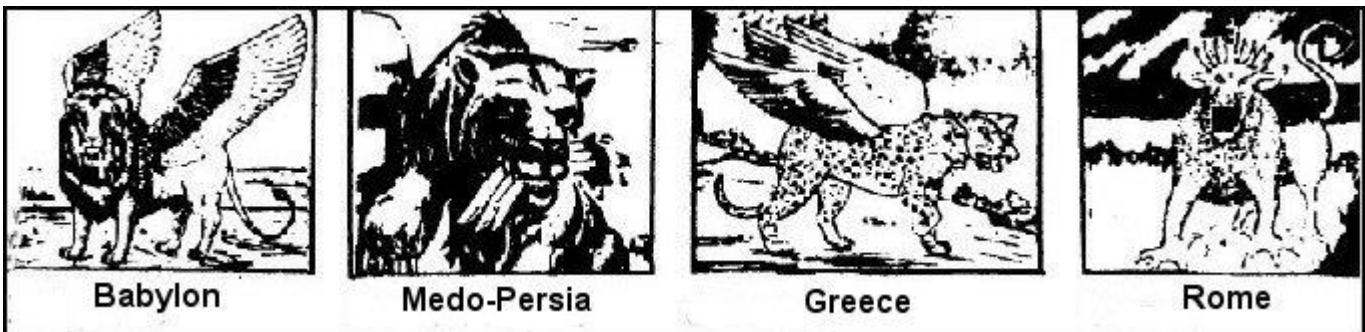
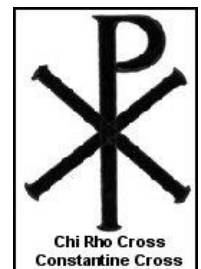
# CONSTANTINE AND THE CROSS

**A**N OUTSTANDING FACTOR THAT contributed to the adoration of the cross image within the Roman church was the famous "vision of the cross" and Constantine's subsequent, though questionable, "conversion."

As Constantine and his soldiers approached Rome, they were about to face what is known as the Battle of Milvian Bridge. According to the custom of the time, the haruspices (those who employed divination by such means as reading the entrails of sacrificial animals) were called to give advice. (The Bible records how the king of Babylon had followed the same practice: *"For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver"*--Ezekiel 21:21). In the case of Constantine, he was told that the gods would not come to his aid, that he would suffer defeat in the battle.



But then in a vision or dream, as he related later, there appeared a cross to him and the words, "In this sign conquer." The next day – October 28, 312 – he advanced behind a standard portraying a cross. He was victorious in that battle, defeated his rival, and professed conversion. It is admitted on all sides, however, that Constantine's vision of the cross may not be historically true. The only authority from whom the story has been gathered by historians is Eusebius. But if Constantine did have such a vision, are we to suppose its author was Jesus Christ? Would the Prince of Peace instruct a **sun worshipping** emperor to make a military banner embodying the cross and to conquer and kill in that sign?



The Roman Empire (of which Constantine became the head) has been described in the Scriptures as a "beast." Daniel saw four great beasts which represented four world empires: Babylon (a lion), Medo-Persia (a bear), Greece (a leopard), and Rome. The fourth beast, the Roman Empire, was so horrible that it was symbolized by a beast unlike any other (Daniel 7:1-8). We see no reason to suppose that Christ would tell Constantine to conquer with the sign of the cross to further the beast system of Rome,

But if the vision was not of God, how can we explain the conversion of Constantine? Actually, his conversion is questionable. Even though he had much to do with the establishment of certain church practices of the time, the facts plainly show that he was not truly converted – not in the Biblical sense of the word. Historians admit that his conversion was "nominal, even by contemporary standards."

Probably the most obvious indication that he was not truly converted may be seen from the fact that after his conversion he committed several murders, including the murder of his own wife and son! According to the Bible *"no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him"* (1 John 3:15).

Constantine's first marriage was to Minervina, by whom he had a son named Crispus. His second wife, Fausta, bore him three daughters and three sons. Crispus became an outstanding soldier and help to his father. Yet in 326, very shortly after directing the Nicene Council, he had his son put to death. The story is that Crispus had made love to Fausta. At least this was the accusation of Fausta. But this may have been her method of getting him out of the way so one of her sons might have claim to the throne! Constantine's mother, however, persuaded him that his wife "had yielded to his son". Constantine had Fausta suffocated to death in an overheated bath. About this same time he had his sister's son flogged to death and her husband strangled, even though he had promised he would spare his life.

These things are summed up in the following words from The Catholic Encyclopedia "Even after his conversion he caused the execution of his brother-in-law Licinius, and of the latter's son, as well as of Crispus his own son by his first marriage, and of his wife Fausta... After reading these cruelties it is hard to believe that the same emperor could at times have mild and tender impulses; but human nature is full of contradictions."



Mithra  
Notice the "Sunburst"

Constantine did show numerous favors toward the Christians, abolished death by crucifixion, and the persecutions which had become so cruel at Rome ceased. But did he make these decisions purely from Christian convictions or did he have political motives? Quoting again from The Catholic Encyclopedia: Some bishops, blinded by the splendor of the court, even went so far as to laud the emperor as an angel of God, as a sacred being, and to prophesy that he would, like the Son of God, reign in heaven. It has consequently been asserted that Constantine favored Christianity **merely from political motives**, and he has been regarded as an enlightened despot **who made use of religion only to advance his policy.**"

Such was the conclusion of the noted historian Durant regarding Constantine. "Was his conversion sincere? Was it an act of religious belief, or a consummate stroke of political wisdom? Probably the latter... He seldom conformed to the ceremonial requirements of Christian worship. His letters to Christian bishops make it clear that he cared little for the theological differences that agitated Christendom, though he was willing to suppress dissent in the interests of **imperial unity**. Throughout his reign he treated the bishops as his political aides: he summoned them, presided over their councils, and agreed to enforce whatever opinion their majority should formulate. A real believer would have been a Christian first and a statesman afterward: with Constantine it was the reverse. **Christianity was to him a means, not an end.**" "The end justifies the means." This maxim is generally attributed to the Jesuits, and while it might not be found in just that many words in their authorized books, yet the identical sentiment is found over and over again in their Latin works, and the Jesuits used this to this day!!

Persecutions had not destroyed the Christian faith. Constantine knew this. Instead of the empire constantly being divided--with **sun worshipers** in conflict with Christians--why not take such steps as might be necessary to mix elements of both religions together, he reasoned, and thereby bring a united force to the empire? There were similarities between the two religious systems. Even the cross symbol was not a divisive factor, for by this time it was in use by Christians, and "to the worshiper of Mithra in Constantine's forces, the cross could give no offense, for they had long fought under a standard bearing a Mithraic cross of light." Like so many gods, Mithra was the light and power behind the sun.

The Christianity of Constantine was a mixture. Though he had his statue removed from **sun worship** temples and renounced the offering of sacrifices to himself, yet people continued to speak of the divinity of the emperor.

As pontifex maximus he continued to watch over the heathen worship and protect its rights. In dedicating Constantinople in 330 a ceremonial that was half **sun worship** and half Christian was used. The chariot of the **sun god** was set in the marketplace and over it the cross. Coins made by Constantine featured the cross, but also representations of **Mars or Apollo**. While professing to be a Christian, he continued to believe in **sun worship** magic formulas for the protection of crops and the healing of disease. All of these things are pointed out in The Catholic Encyclopedia. Yet, the practice of Constantine--the concept of mixture--was clearly the method whereby the Catholic church developed and became rich and increased with goods.



Constantine's mother, Helena, when nearly eighty years of age, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Legend has it that she found three crosses buried there, one the cross of Christ and the other two the ones upon which the thieves were crucified. The cross of Christ was identified because it worked miracles of healing at the suggestion of Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, while the other two did not.

Says an article in The Catholic Encyclopedia, "A portion of the True Cross remained at Jerusalem enclosed in a silver reliquary; the remainder, with the nails, must have been sent to Constantine....One of the nails was fastened to the emperor's helmet, and one to his horse's bridle, bringing to pass, according to many of the Fathers, what had been written by Zacharias the Prophet: *"In that day that which is upon the bridle of the horse shall be holy to the Lord (Zach. 14:20)"*! This same article, while attempting to hold to the general teachings of the church regarding the cross, admits that the stories about the discovery of the cross vary, and the tradition (which actually developed years later) may be largely based on legend.

That Helena did visit Jerusalem in 326 appears to be historically correct. But the story of her discovery of the cross did not appear until 440, about 114 years later! The idea that the original cross would still be at Jerusalem almost 300 years after the crucifixion seems very doubtful. Besides, laws among the Jews required crosses to be burned after being used for crucifixion.

Suppose someone were to find the actual cross. This would be of great interest, of course; but would there be any virtue in that piece of wood? No, for the cross has already served its purpose. We recall that *"Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived"* (Num. 21:9). This was a type of the way Christ was lifted up in death (John 3: 15). But after the brass serpent had served its intended purpose, the Israelites kept it around and made an idol out of it! Thus, centuries later, Hezekiah *"did that which was right in the sight of the Lord... He broke the images and cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it."* (2 Kings 18: 1-4). Hezekiah did "right"--not only by destroying heathen idols but even that which God had ordained, for now it had come to be used in a **superstitious** and **idolatrous** way. On this same basis, if the original cross was still in existence, there would be no reason to set it up as an object of worship. And if there would be no power in the original cross, how much less is there any power in a mere piece of wood in its shape?

Even as the **sun worship** Egyptians had set up obelisks, not only as a symbol of their god, but in some cases the image itself was believed to possess supernatural powers, even so did some come to regard the cross. Had it not helped Constantine in the Battle of Milvian Bridge? Had not the cross worked miracles for Helena? It came to be regarded as an image that could scare away evil spirits. It was worn as a charm. It was placed at the top of church steeples to frighten away lightning--yet because of its high position, **was the very thing that attracted lightning!** The use of the cross in private homes was supposed to ward off trouble and disease. Many pieces of wood--supposedly pieces of the "original" cross--were sold and exchanged as protectors and charms.

**“Signs and symbols rule the Sun Worship world, not words nor laws.”**

Source: <https://www.granddesignexposed.com/indexmystery/7chap/constantine.html>