



# Regaining Our Lost Esoteric Christianity

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House of Peace  
Summer Lyceum  
With Andrew Linnell

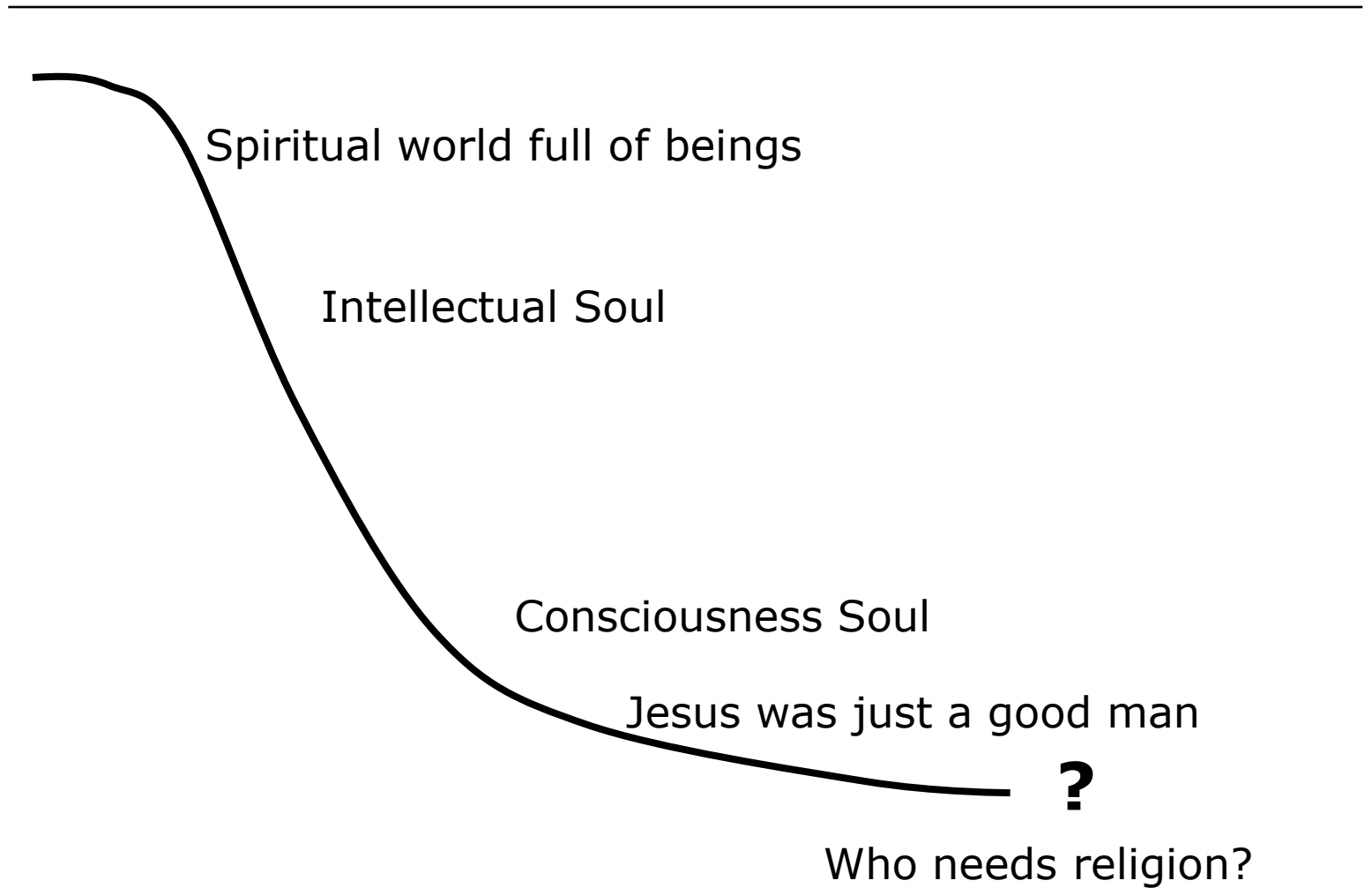
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# Definitions

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- Esoteric: understood or belonging to the select few
  - Greek esterikos: within – inner (depth)
  - Teaching or spiritual practice or path or wisdom tradition that is based on a mystical interpretation of spirituality
- Occult: secret; disclosed or communicated only to the initiated
  - Latin occultus: to hide from view



- What was lost?
- Does it matter?







Fresco at the palace at Knossos, Minoan, island of Crete  
between the 27th and the 15th centuries B.C.E.





Botticelli, Primavera

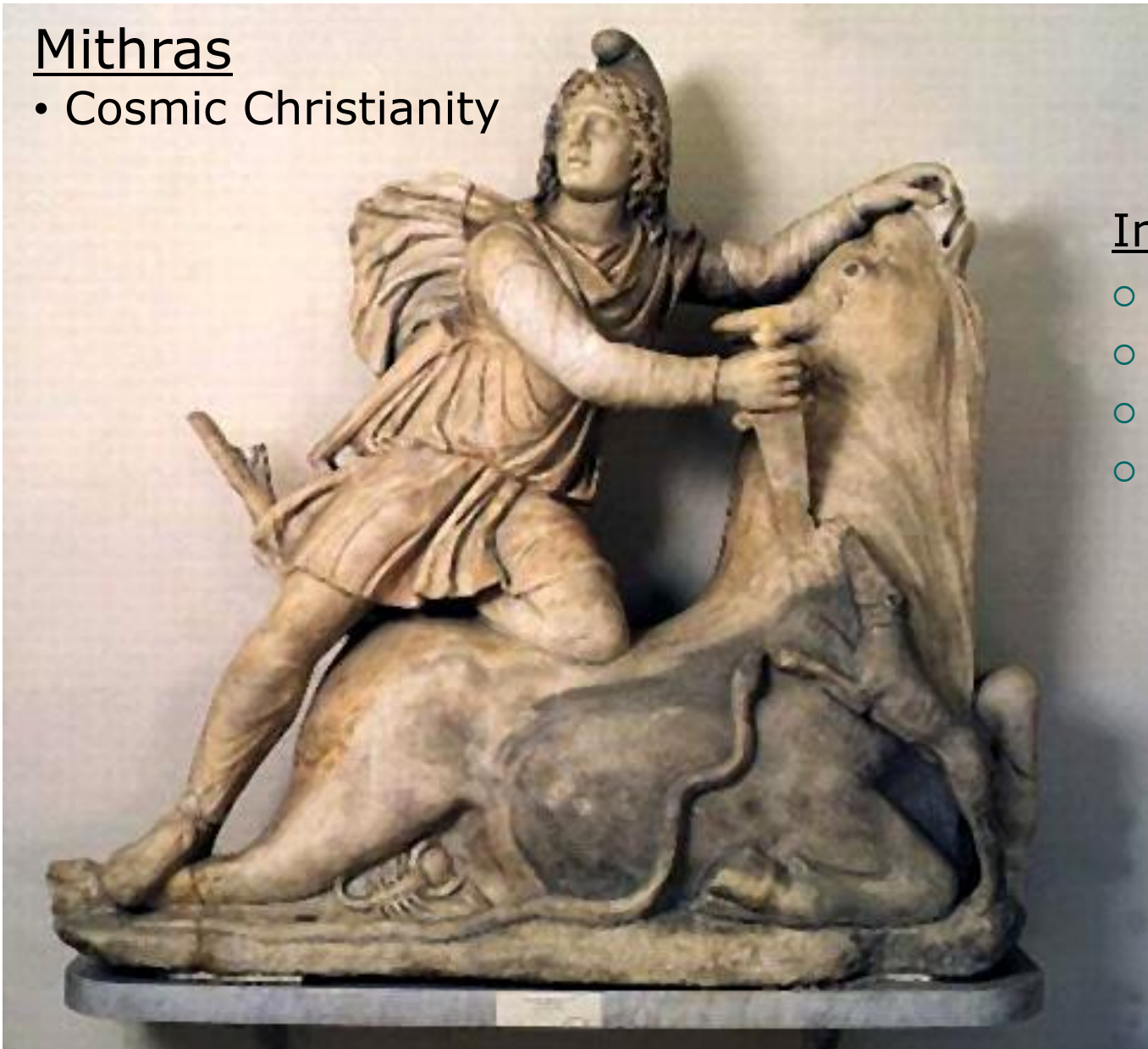


# Ahura Mazdao



# Mithras

- Cosmic Christianity



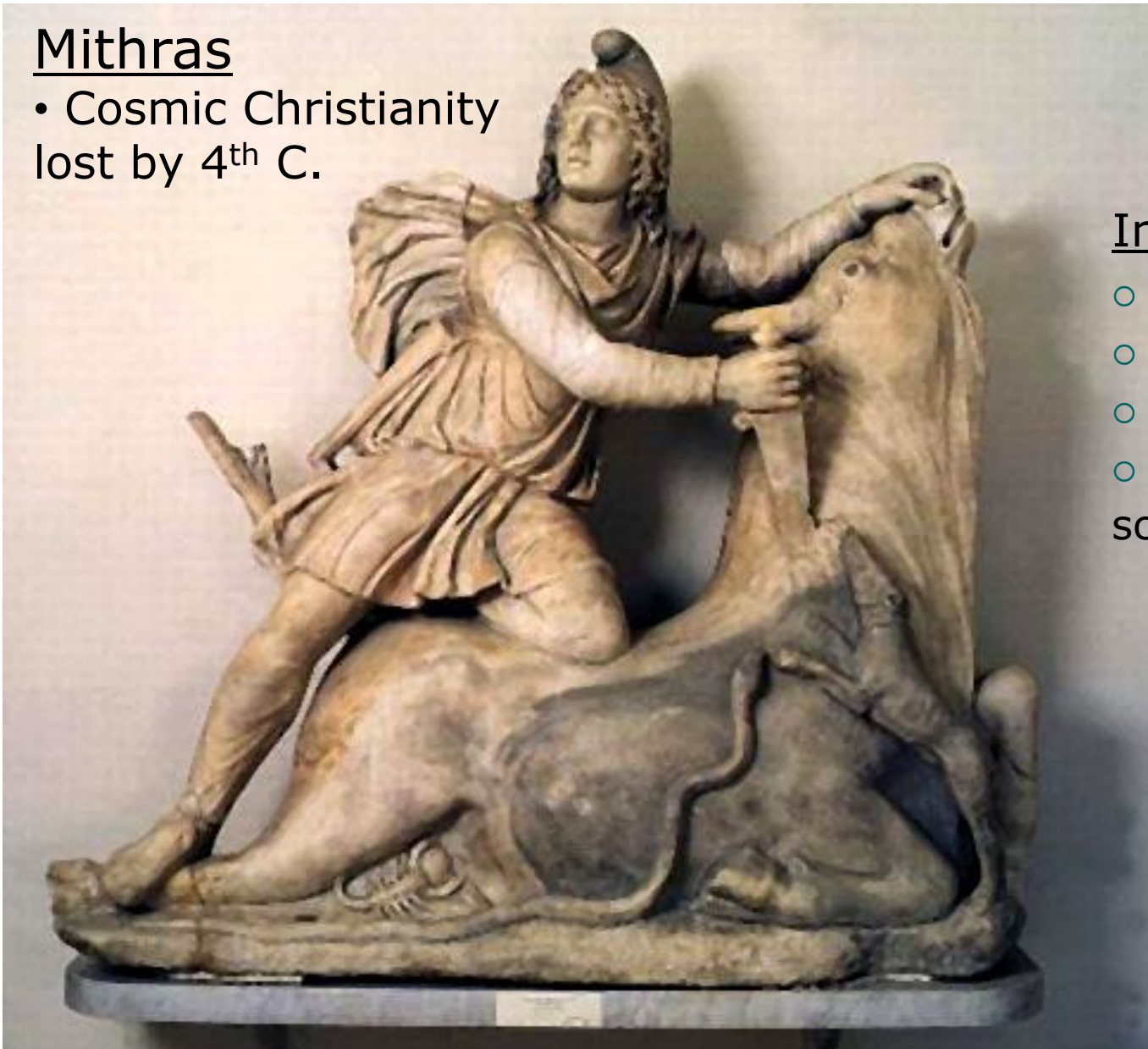
## Images

- Bull
- Serpent
- Hound
- Scorpio



## Mithras

- Cosmic Christianity lost by 4<sup>th</sup> C.

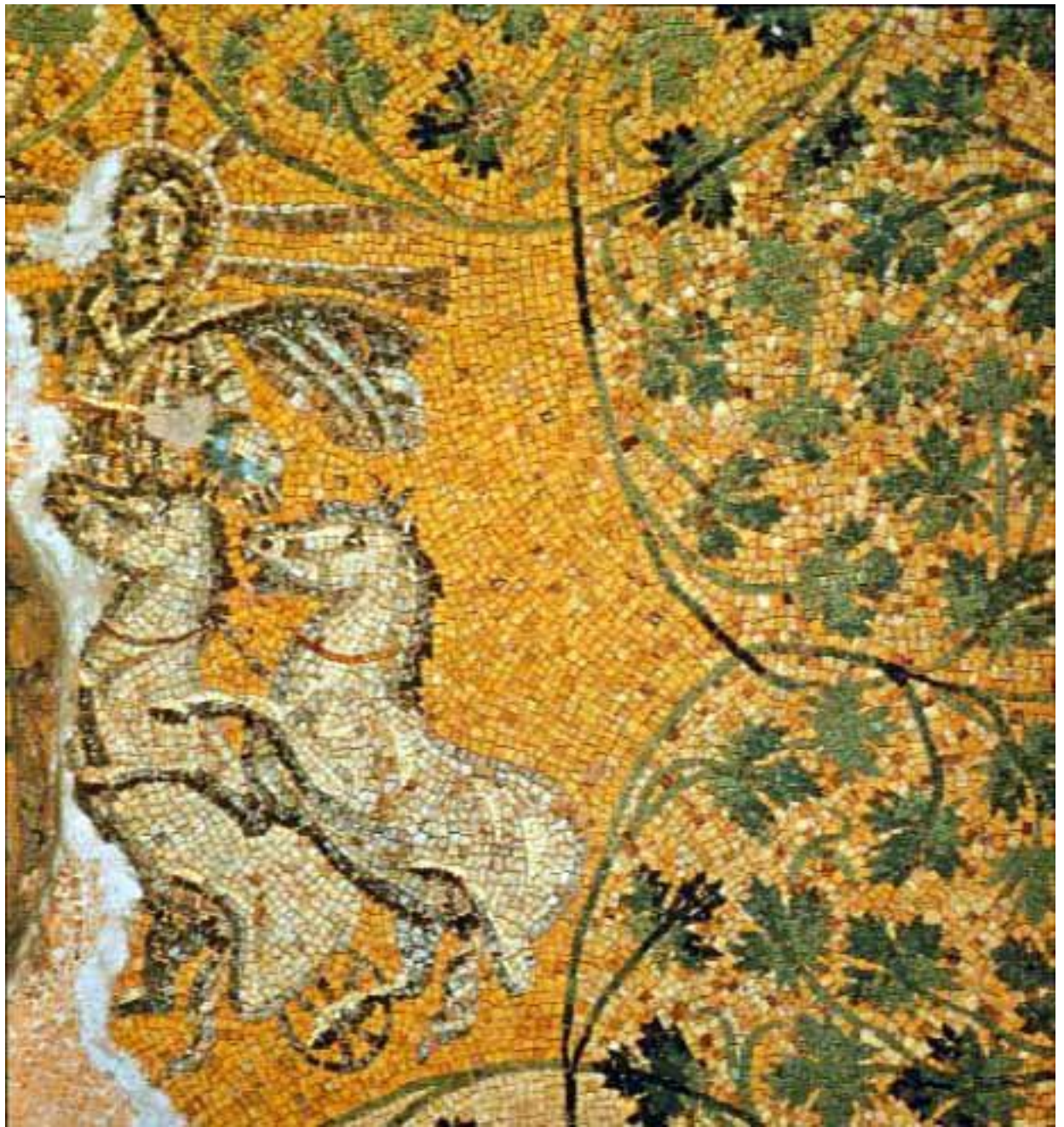


## Images

- Body
  - Lucifer
  - Ahriman
  - Asuras?
- scorpio → eagle

Cosmic  
Christ,  
The Sun God  
Mosaic, St.  
Peters  
Basilica,  
Rome,  
4<sup>th</sup> C.

Where do we  
find Him  
today?







# Establishing a Canon

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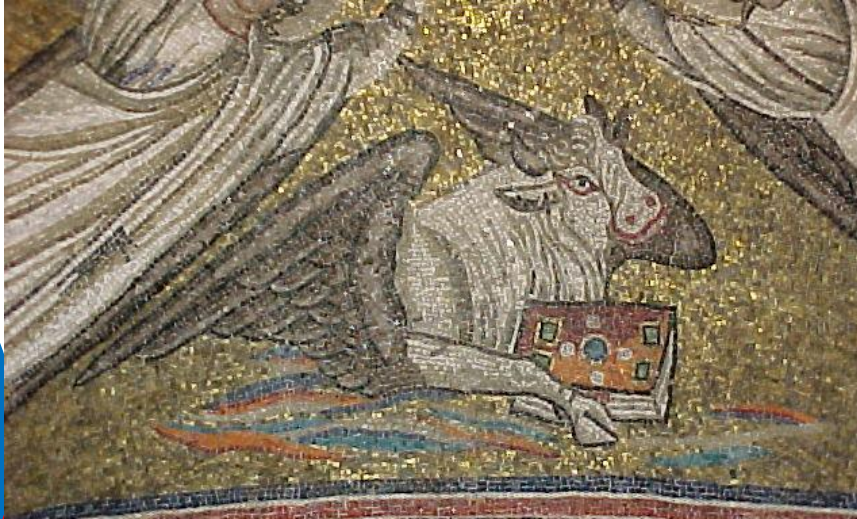
- Slide into materialism underway
- Once the Apostolic Fathers died, there arose the perceived need for a “blessed” set of books
  - On whose authority?
  - Roles of Origen (3<sup>rd</sup> C) and Athanasius (4<sup>th</sup> C)
  - Modifications of some texts to fit one’s Christianity
- Criteria for an accepted book
  - An initiate
  - Inspired writing (truth revealed on multiple levels)
- Several Canons arose
  - The Roman Church won out in selecting the Canon
  - Selected books were modified by the proto-orthodox scribes

As 4 winds, so 4 gospels





**Luke**



**John**

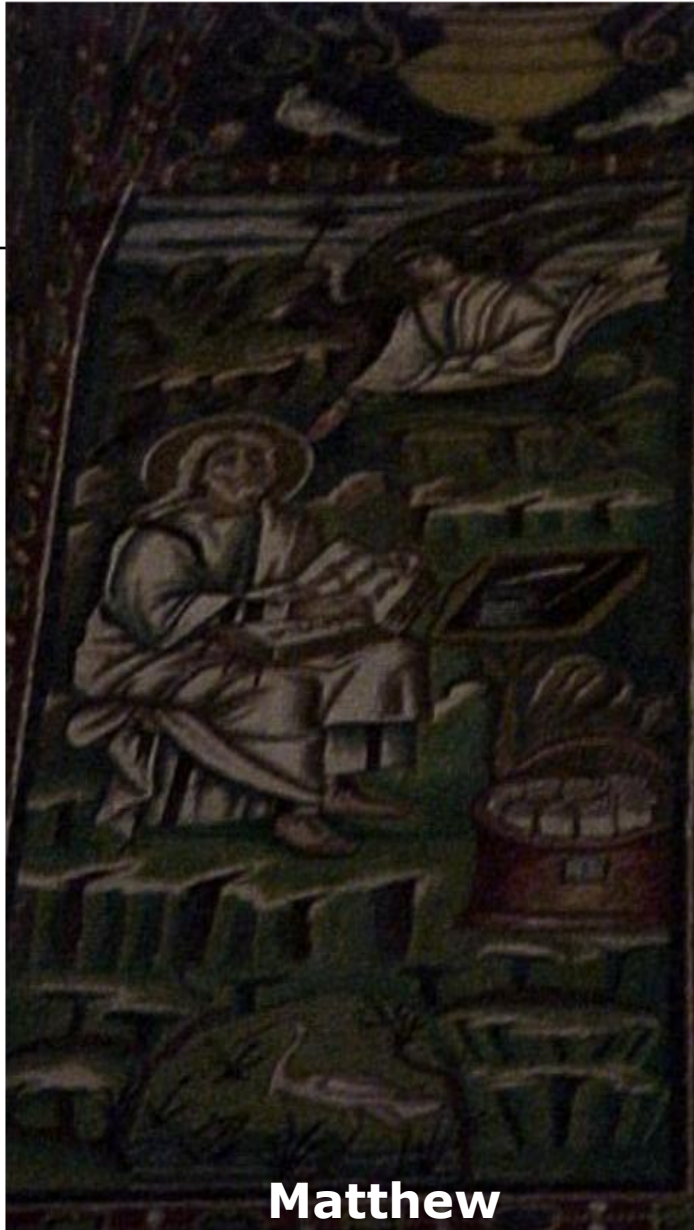


**Matthew**



**Mark**





**Matthew**



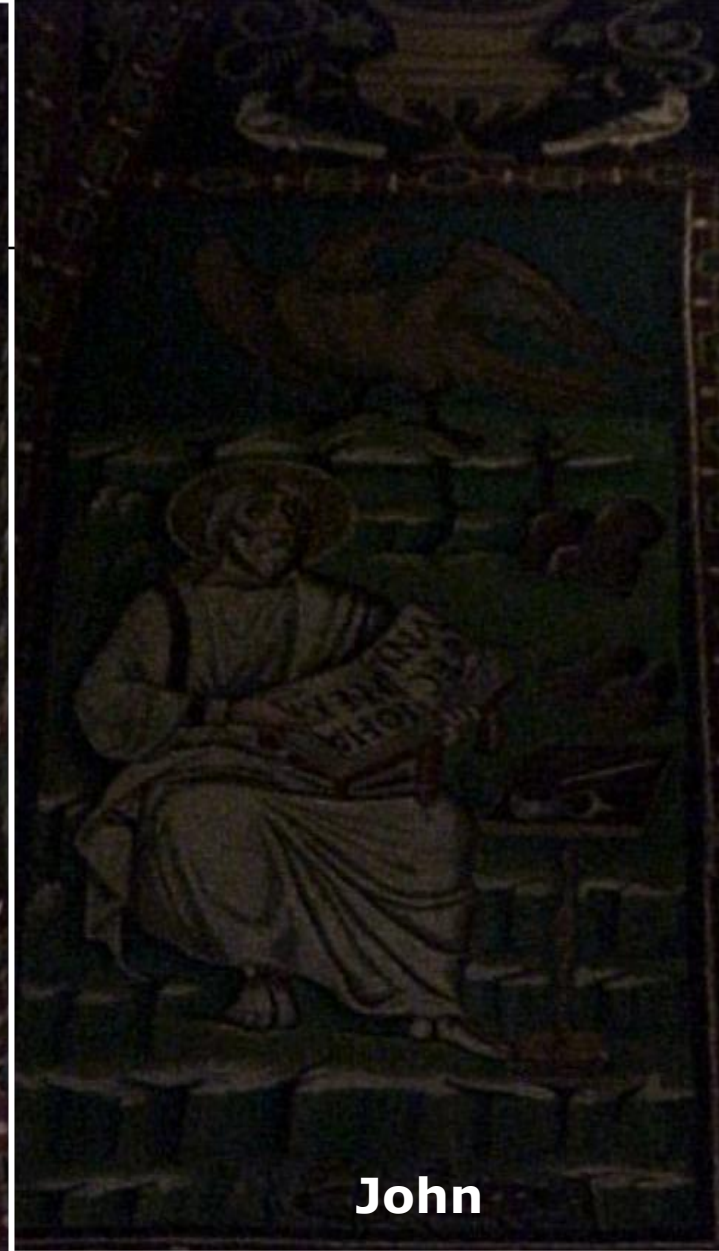
**Mark**

## **The Basilica of San Vitale**





**Luke**



**John**

## **The Basilica of San Vitale**



# The Great Debates

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- Contents of the Canon (New Testament)
- The Two Natures of Christ (Christ's humanity & divinity)
- God the Father same as God the Creator?
- The doctrine of the Trinity (substance)
- The doctrine of Divine grace
- The doctrine of the Church
- Fixing of the date of Easter
- The role of [Jewish] tradition
- What do we do with the Ancient Mysteries?





# History of Secret Mark

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- 1973, professor of ancient history at Columbia University, Morton Smith, (1915 – 1991), found a previously unknown letter of Clement of Alexandria in the monastery of Mar Saba on the West Bank
- The letter was transcribed into the endpapers of a 17<sup>th</sup> century printed edition of the works of Ignatius of Antioch
- The original manuscript has disappeared (should make for a great Dan Brown novel)
- Research has relied upon B&W photographs made by Smith and color by Father Kallistos in 2000



## Clement's Letter: Secret Mark

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- "As for Mark, then, during Peter's stay in Rome he wrote an account of the Lord's doings, not, however, declaring all of them, nor yet hinting at the **secret ones**, but selecting what he thought most useful for increasing the faith of those who were being instructed. But when Peter died a martyr, Mark came over to Alexandria, bringing both his own notes and those of Peter, from which he transferred to his former book the things suitable to whatever makes for **progress toward knowledge**.





## Clement's Letter: Secret Mark

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- Thus he **composed a more spiritual Gospel** for the use of those **who were being perfected**. Nevertheless, he yet did not divulge the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the **hierophantic teaching** of the Lord, but to the stories already written he added yet others and, moreover, brought in certain sayings of which he knew the interpretation would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of that **truth hidden by seven veils**. Thus, in sum, he prepared matters, neither grudgingly nor incautiously, in my opinion, and, dying, he left his composition to the church in 1, verso Alexandria, where it even yet is most carefully guarded, being read **only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries.** "



# Clement's Letter: Secret Mark

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- "Not all true things are to be said to all men".
- For this reason the Wisdom of God, through Solomon, advises, "Answer the fool from his folly", teaching that the light of the truth should be hidden from those who are mentally blind. Again it says, "From him who has not shall be taken away", and "Let the fool walk in darkness". But we are "children of Light", having been illuminated by "the dayspring" of the spirit of the Lord "from on high", and "Where the Spirit of the Lord is", it says, "there is liberty", for "All things are pure to the pure".
- <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/secretmark.html>





# Clement's Letter: Secret Mark

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- 'For example, after "And they were in the road going up to Jerusalem" and what follows, until "After three days he shall arise", the secret Gospel brings the following material word for word:
- "And they come into Bethany. And a certain woman whose brother had died was there. And, coming, she prostrated herself before Jesus and says to him, 'Son of David, have mercy on me.' But the disciples rebuked her. And Jesus, being angered, went off with her into the garden where the tomb was, and straightway a great cry was heard from the tomb. And going near, Jesus rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb. And straightaway, going in where the youth was, he stretched forth his hand and raised him, seizing his hand. But the youth, looking upon him, loved him and began to beseech him that he might be with him. And going out of the tomb, they came into the house of the youth, for he was rich. And after six days Jesus told him what to do, and in the evening the youth comes to him, wearing a linen cloth over his naked body. And he remained with him that night, for Jesus taught him the **mystery of the Kingdom of God**. And thence, arising, he returned to the other side of the Jordan."



# Why Was It So Difficult?

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- Twelve (or more) Christianities + mystery centers
- Prevailing view of reality (e.g. Gnostic):
  - Total separation of Divine and physical worlds
    - Spirit and matter : Reality and illusion : Pure and impure (and there were *unclean spirits*)
    - Human flesh: from darkness/evil, not worthy of divine spirit (*and the Logos became flesh*)
    - Did Christ make them one? Or were they already?
  - Only an initiate could, through raising consciousness, experience & understand the imponderable spiritual world and its beings
- Christian Creed: God as Man suffered, died, and resurrected
  - Was God born as a man or did God become Man?
  - Is the 'substance' of Father, Son, & Holy Spirit, (and Man) the same?



# 12 Apostles: 12 Christianities





# Theological Battle About Christ

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- Christian view: God entered Earth & became a Man
  - Fundamental change to traditional wisdom
- “Heretical” claims (by some):
  - Christ and Jesus were two distinct entities
    - Christ unites with Jesus at baptism but leaves him on the cross
    - Because the Divine is from above, it cannot experience death
  - Christ only appeared to be human, but never had a physical body
  - Christ “descends” only as far as the air element
  - Christ-Jesus had no human soul; the Logos takes its place
- Filioque – from whom proceeds the Holy Spirit?





Two streams

1. Accept
2. Change

Cain → Hiram  
Abiff, spiritualize  
matter, masons  
Abel, Seth,  
priests

How is this  
karma  
redeemed?



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# **“HERETICAL” CHRISTIAN STREAMS**



# Gnostics

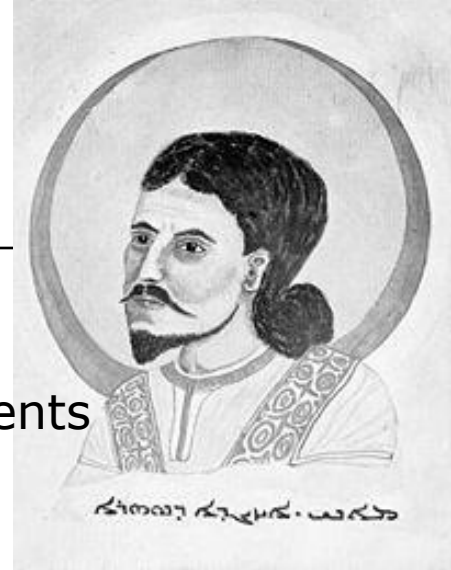
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- The name is derived from the Greek word "gnosis"
  - Literally means "knowledge"
  - Knowledge as the mystical path to God
- Gnosticism is a philosophical and religious movement which started in pre-Christian times
  - Plato consider a Gnostic
- Reported they had a secret knowledge about God, humanity, and the rest of the universe of which the general population was unaware
- An Aeon, Sophia, a virgin, gives birth to an defective, inferior Creator-God, known as the Demiourge
  - Demiourge means "public craftsman" in Greek
  - This God is Jehovah, the God of the Hebrew Scriptures
  - Portrayed as the creator of the earth and its forces and forms
  - Viewed by Gnostics as a jealous God lacking in compassion



# Mani: Son of the Widow

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- 216-277
  - Born Corbicius in **Babylon** to Iranian parents
  - Youth w/Elkasites, a branch of **Essenes**
- Presented as an apostle of Jesus Christ
  - In the 4th century, Manichaean Coptic papyri identify Mani as the promised Paraclete (The Holy Ghost)
  - According to St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315–386):
    - Teacher: Terebinthus the Maitreya **Bodhisattva**
    - Who was taught/initiated by Scythianus of **Alexandria**, author of *Doctrine of Dualities* in **India** in 50 AD
- Mission: to deal with evil
- Unites Christianity with major religions
  - Spreads rapidly west to Spain and east to China

<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/Courses/US310/Manichaeism.html>

# Arius, presbyter of Antioch

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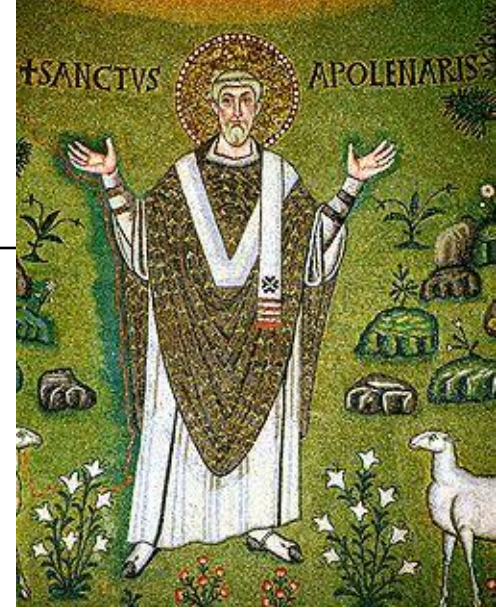
- 256 – 336, born in Libya
- Taught in Alexandria:
  - Divine Logos incarnated into Jesus
  - Son, while divine and like God ("of like substance") was created by God as the agent through whom he created
- Excommunicated
- Later welcomed back by assembly in Constantinople but poisoned on way
- Followers convert "barbarians" to Arian Christianity



# “Heretical” Streams:

## **Appollinaris (d 392)**

- Platonic division of human nature:
  - body, soul, and spirit
- Christ assumed a human body
  - Also a human soul or principle of animal life
  - But not the human spirit
- The Logos can take the place of the human spirit
  - Becomes one’s spiritual centre:
    - Seat of self-consciousness and self-determination
  - “I am the I am”





# Constantine

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- Consolidate Christianities
  - One Universal religion
- Council at Niceae → Nicene Creed
- Center of Roman empire moved
  - EASTward to Constantinople
  - Eventually empire divided for sons
- Sees in Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem and many others
  - Power competition
  - Latin or Greek
  - In 1054, The Great Schism



# “Heretical” Christian Streams:

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## **Nestorius** (d 451) Patriarch of Constantinople

- Human and divine essences of Christ-Jesus
  - The man Jesus
  - The divine Logos – Christ
  - They become one on Golgotha
- Mary was Mother of Jesus, not of God
  - Denied Theotokos
- What was different?
  - New Mysteries
  - Jesus (human) + Christ (god) @ baptism
  - Each person + Christ
- Teachings spread from Syria/Persia to China
  - Mongols who sack Baghdad



# Synods & Councils, Seeking Unity

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- Council of Niceae 325 AD
  - Eusebius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Council in Constantinople in 381 AD
  - The doctrine of the Trinity was finalized
  - Holy Ghost as equal to the Father and the Son
  - Doctrinal debates: e.g. The Filioque, split East & West
- 8<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical council of 869
  - Man was no longer a being of Body, Soul, and Spirit
    - Now only body and soul
    - Today, only body!





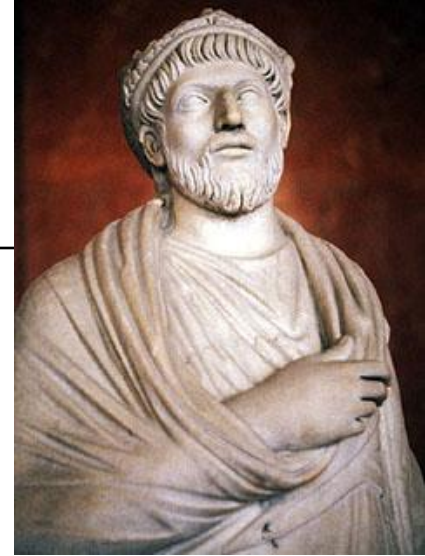


# Demise of the Mystery Centers

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- Julian the Apostate: born: 330 AD, Constantinople.
  - Roman Emperor from 361 to 363, murdered trying to restore the Mithraic and Persian Mysteries within the Empire
- Theodosius I closed the Greek Mystery Centers in 392 AD
- Arian Christians under Gothic King Alaric sack Greece and desecrate its Mystery Centers in 396 AD
- 525 Emperor Justin I allowed intermarriage between social classes allowing Justinian to marry the commoner Theodora
- 527 - 565: Justinian the Byzantine Emperor – destroyed all Mystery Center and pagan remnants
- 553 Second Council of Constantinople: Power. Recognized that the emperor's will and command trumped the Church

# Julian the Apostate



## *Against the Galileans*

- Knowledge of God
  - Is natural; does not come by teaching
  - The account of Creation is inferior to that of Plato
- Idea of a jealous God and a chosen people is unacceptable
- New Testament is full of inconsistencies
  - Matthew and Luke disagree on the genealogy of Jesus
  - Matt. IV, 5, is illogical and in Luke XXII, 42-47, since the disciples were asleep, who could have told him the story of the angel?
- Christians were fanatics and cheerfully massacred heretics
  - By contrast the Greeks were mild and forbearing, they were superior in wisdom and intelligence
- Christianity has achieved little or nothing in the fields of science, astronomy, arithmetic and music
  - The achievements of Plato, Socrates, Aristides, Thales, Lycurgus, the Sibyls, the Delphic Oracle and the pagan Mysteries surpassed anything that Christianity had to offer

# What Did Julian Accomplish?

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- Guarantee of freedom of religion
  - Proclaimed that all the religions were equal before the law,
  - The Empire should not impose any religion on its provinces
- State ensures religious tolerance
  - Reopened pagan temples
  - Offered restitution of confiscated temple properties
  - Welcomed the return from exile of dissident Christian bishops
- During Julian's brief reign from 361-363 CE, his popularity among the people and the army indicated that he might have brought paganism back to the fore of Roman public and private life
  - Keep this point in mind



# What Happened to Julian?



## 363: Julian takes a large army into Persia

- 26 June: Samarra, Julian stabbed by a spear dies 3 days later
- Libanius, "He was assassinated by one of his own soldiers"
- Rudolf Steiner "Julian was brought face to face with the deeper implications of the problem of evil and the relation of Christ Jesus to this problem; he hoped to find an answer through initiation into the Persian Mysteries [Mithraic and Zarathustrian] and to return to Europe with the solution
- Unfortunately he fell by an assassin's hand during the Persian campaign
  - It can be proved historically that this was the work of an adherent of Constantine
- "In the following years the Augustinian principle triumphed
  - [Blind] faith in the Authority of the Church
  - "Ideas that in any way echoed Manichaeism [a Christian sect founded by Mani] were forbidden, i.e. the inclusion of material ideas into spiritual thinking



# What Happened to Julian? – R. Steiner

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- “The West was driving to an abstract mode of thinking and in the course of time this mode of thinking permeated the whole of Western Europe”
- "Julian therefore was engaged in a titanic struggle
- He finally attempted, by reviving Manichaeism, to bring about continuity in the evolution of the pagan Mysteries
- That he was doomed to fail was a necessity of the time
- And we shall not understand the reason for his failure if we belittle his great achievements, if we fail to see him as a titanic figure, fighting for a realistic understanding of the relations between man and the universe
- And it is of **paramount importance today** to recall these great moments in the historical evolution of the West
- For we are living in an age from which we shall not emerge with a healthy outlook **unless we make a fresh assessment of the aims of Julian the Apostate**



# What Becomes of Julian?

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- It was not possible in his time - herein lies his great tragedy - to reconcile the old principle of initiation with the real essence of Christianity
- Today this has become possible and we must not fail to translate the possibility into reality if the world and mankind are not to suffer evolutionary decline
- People must realize the need for regeneration in all spheres of life and above all the crying need to restore communication with the spiritual world
- From Karmic Relationships, Volume 4
  - Julian reincarnates as Herzeleide (Parzifal's mother) ~ 10<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Then reincarnates as Tycho Brahe (1546-1601)





# Make Sure It Never Happens Again

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- Theodosius I closed the Greek Mystery Centers in 392 AD
- Arian Christians under Gothic King Alaric sack Greece and desecrate its Mystery Centers in 396 AD
- 525 Emperor Justin I allowed intermarriage between social classes allowing Justinian to marry the commoner Theodora
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# **GREEK SCHOLARS FLEE**

## ***CULTURAL LIFE GOES WITH THEM***

Rise of Materialism

Desire for relics

Pilgrimages – to be physically there



# Mystery Stream Flows East to Islam

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- Hellenistic philosophers, teachers chased out of Europe – settled in Muslim world – along with the fruits of the Mysteries
- Development of the Intellectual Soul
  - 9<sup>th</sup> Century: Ego centers itself in Intell Soul
  - Islam – Sufism
  - Baghdad the cultural center of the world
  - Also flows west: Cordova, Spain second
    - Al-Jebr (reunion of broken parts) and mathematics
    - Logic
  - Islamic perspective of Aristotle
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council (4<sup>th</sup> Constantinople)



# Spread of Islam

- Muhammad (570 – 632 AD).
  - Visions from 610-632 brought by arch-angel Gabriel
  - Recorded in the Qur'an (Koran)
  - Like Christianity, power struggle: Sunni & Shi'a
  - Mystic sect: Sufi
- Weakened by war
  - Persia
  - Northern Africa
- Century of war
  - 632-732
  - 717: Constantinople
  - 732: Tours-Poitiers



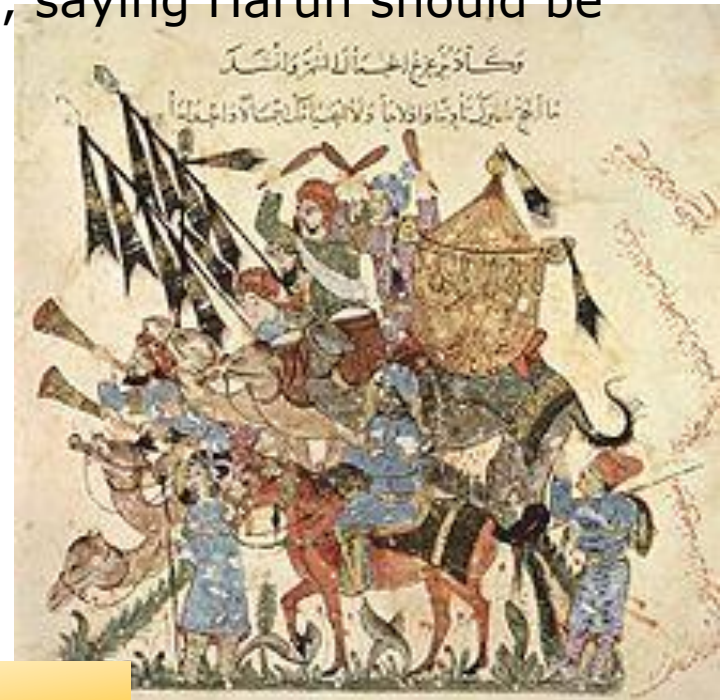
# The Warrior Christ

- 337 Christianization of
  - Germanic tribes
  - By Ulfilas the Initiate
  - Arian
  - Theodoric rules Ravenna
  - Christ as Warrior
    - Arch-angel Michael
    - Concept leads to Grail and Templar knights (?)
- Secret Grail Knights
- 869 AD – 8<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council declared it heresy to speak of a human spirit or a 2<sup>nd</sup> soul
- Rise of Troubadours and Minnesingers - Parzifal
  - Search for the Holy Grail
- Knights Templar
  - No longer my blood, but Christ's in me
- Outer battle becomes inner battle



# Harun al-Rashid, 763-809

- Name means Aaron the Just (or the Upright)
- Baghdad – at the time was the cultural center of the world
- Eastern emperor Leo IV, in retaliation, encourages the emir of Cordova to renounce allegiance to Baghdad
- After Irene (802), emperor Nikephoros I (806-815) refused to pay tribute to Harun, saying Harun should be paying him
- Harun wrote back “In the name of God the most merciful, from Harun al-Rashid, commander of the faithful, to Nikephoros, dog of the Romans, Thou shalt not hear, thou shalt behold my reply”





# Harun al-Rashid and Charlemagne

- Moorish Spain more advanced than Franks
- 799: visits Harun al-Rashid in Ar Raqqa (Syria)
  - Given keys to Christian holy sites
  - Importance of physical relics for faith
  - Start of pilgrimages – path to Crusades
- What happens to Harun al-Rashid and his counselor?
  - Spiritual meeting with Aristotle & Alexander
  - Become Francis Bacon and John Amos Comenius
  - Islamic perspective sweeps 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe





# What Happened to Islam's Golden Years?

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- Internal fighting
  - East (Baghdad) versus West (Cordova)
  - Sunni versus Shi'a
  - Dividing caliphates to give to sons
  - General war-nature of 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> centuries
- Crusaders
- Mongols
  - Hulagu (1217–1265), Nestorian Christian
    - Destroys Baghdad and its cultural riches
- End of cultural advancement
  - Why does this happen?

# Chartres

- Restoration of the Mysteries to Europe
- But with an Islamic flavor to
  - Plato
  - Aristotle
  - others

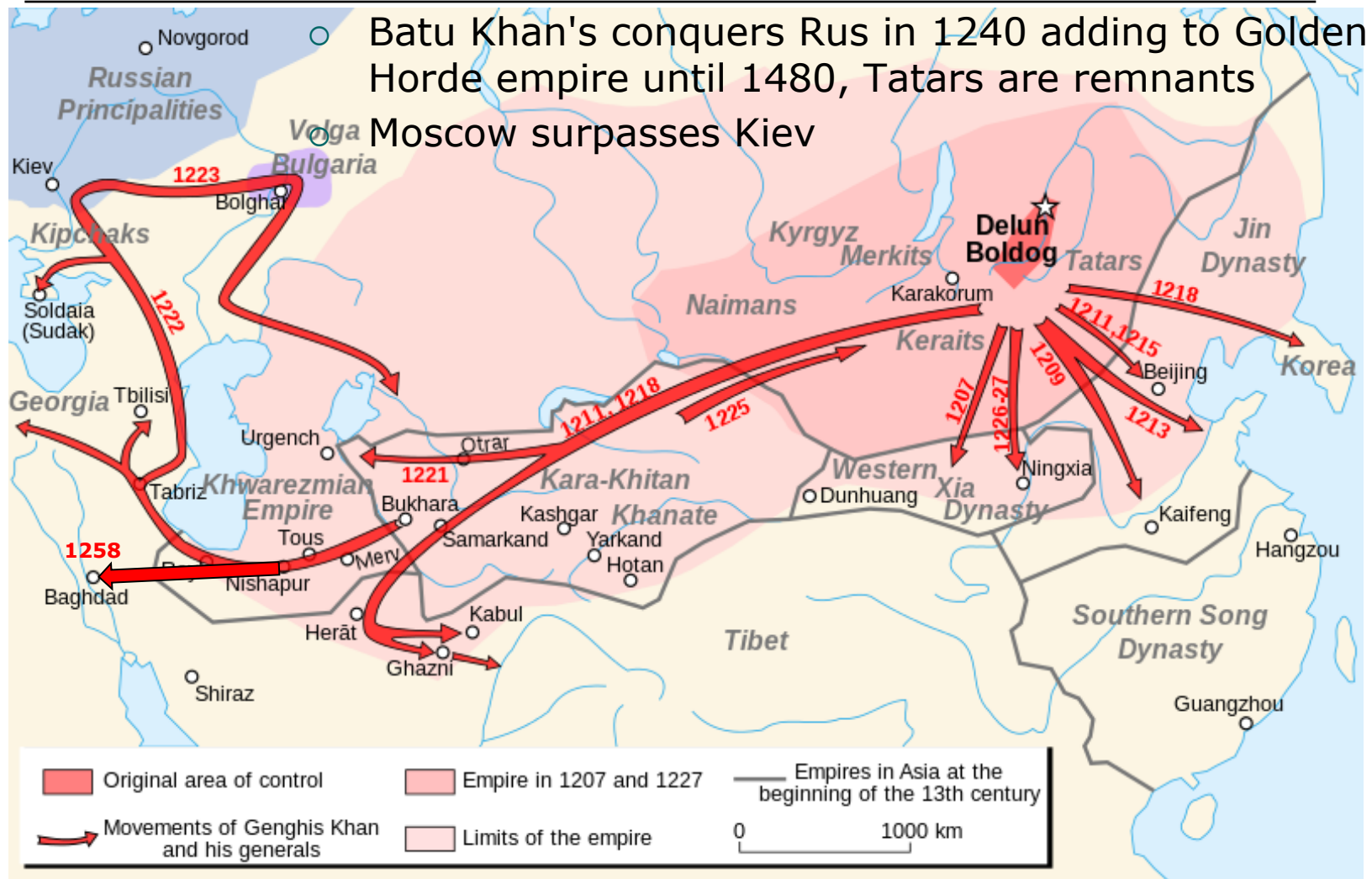




# Daedalus & Labyrinth for Minotaur ?



# The Mongol (Atlantean) Empire





# Mongols sacked Baghdad in 1258



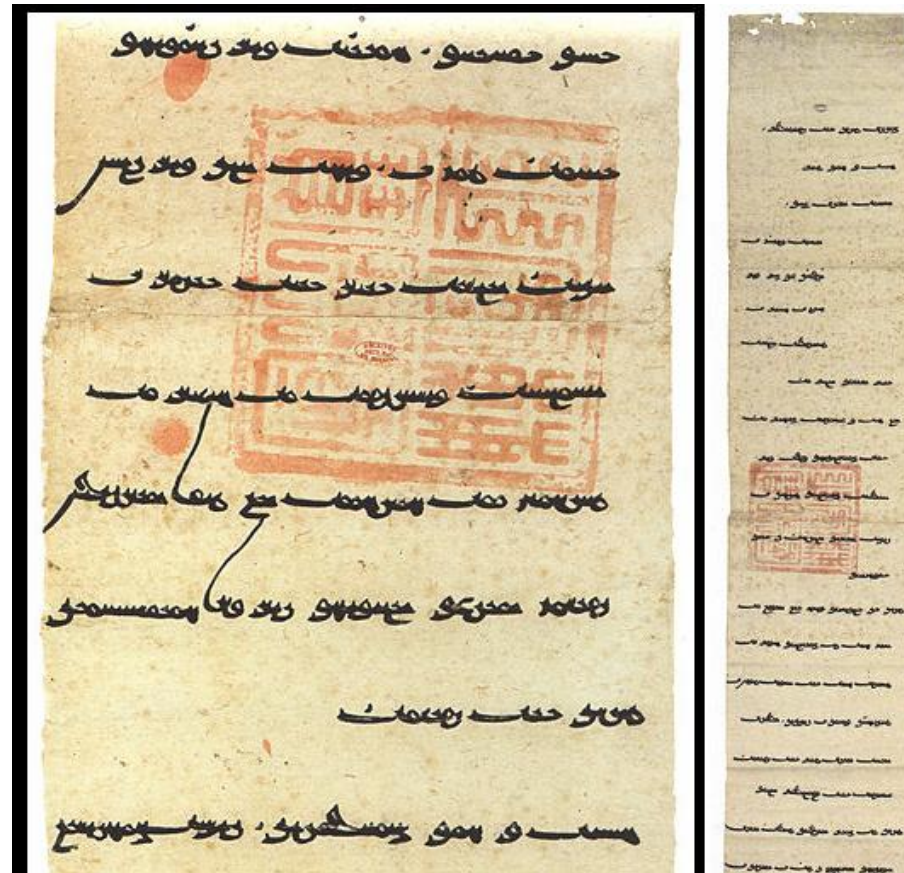
Islamic historians decry (Nestorian) **Christian** cruelty and barbarism: rivers ran black and red

# King Philip and the Mongols

## 1289: Letter from Mongol King Arghun to Philip

"Under the power of the eternal sky, the message of the great king, Arghun, to the king of France..., said: I have accepted the word that you forwarded by the messengers under Saymer Sagura (Bar Sauma), saying that if the warriors of Il Khan invade Egypt you would support them. We would also lend our support by going there at the end of the Tiger year's winter [1290], worshiping the sky, and settle in Damascus in the early spring [1291]. If you send your warriors as promised and conquer Egypt,

worshiping the sky, then I shall give you Jerusalem. If any of our warriors arrive later than arranged, all will be futile and no one will benefit."







# King Philip More Interested in Gold

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- Not till 1298 does Philip agrees to military collaboration with the Mongols through the Knights Templar and their leader Jacques de Molay
- In 1300, Templars raid the Egyptian and Syrian coasts to weaken the enemy's supply lines
- 1302: Templars are defeated at island Ruad
- 1305: New Mongol ruler Oljeitu sent letters to Philip, the Pope, and Edward I of England *again* offering military collaboration but Philip's focus on Templars
  - 1305: Philip's boyhood friend made Pope
- 1307: Jacques de Molay summoned to France
  - Oct. Friday 13<sup>th</sup>: Gestapo-like sweep across former Holy Roman Empire – Knights Templar tortured
  - Famine and plague follow, 70% of Europe will die



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# MYSTERIES RETURN

Renaissance Art

# In the Temple



Ambrogio da Fossano  
Bergognone





# Baptism





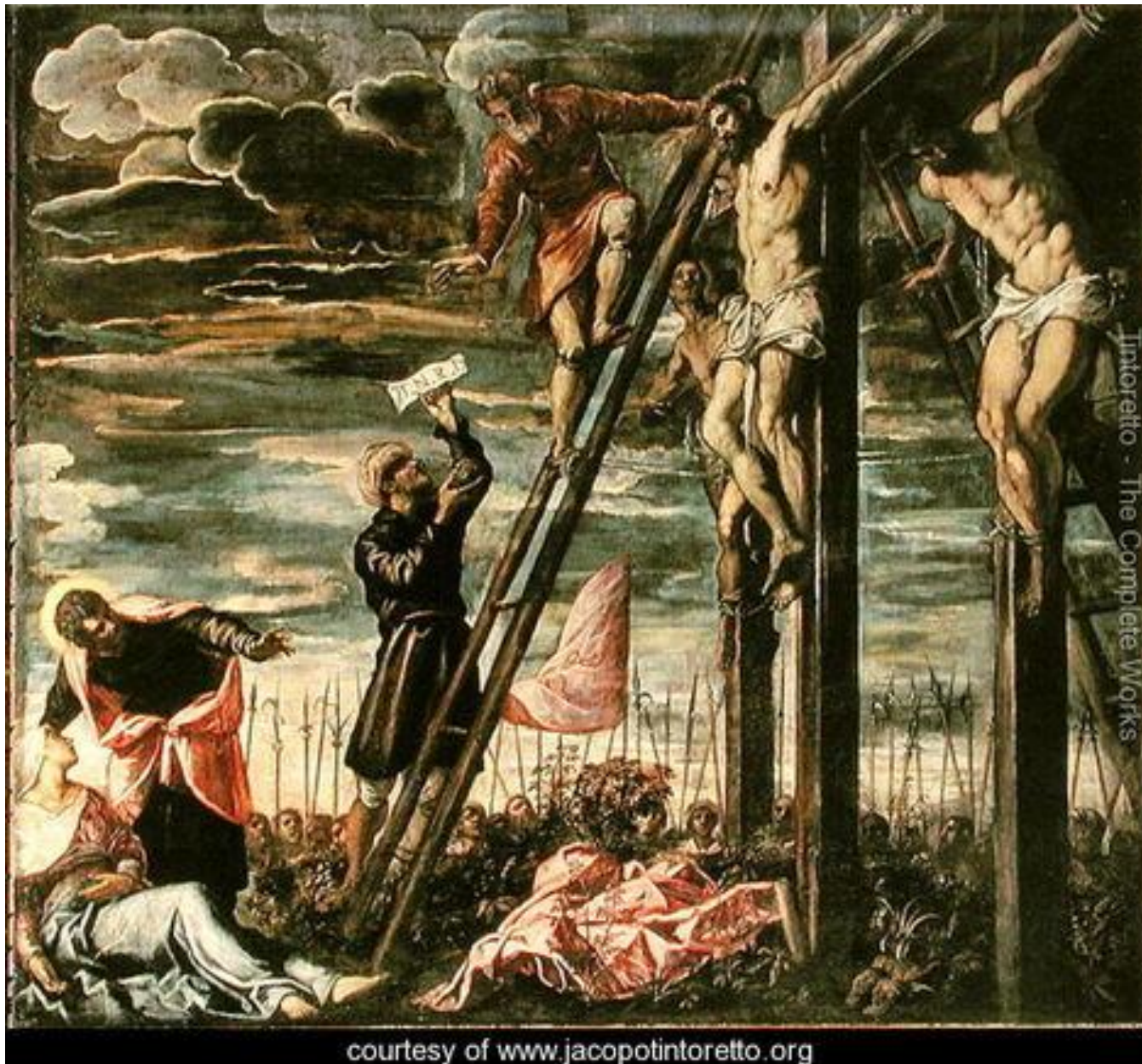


## Scapegoat and Sacrificial Goat



Pilate as  
Initiate

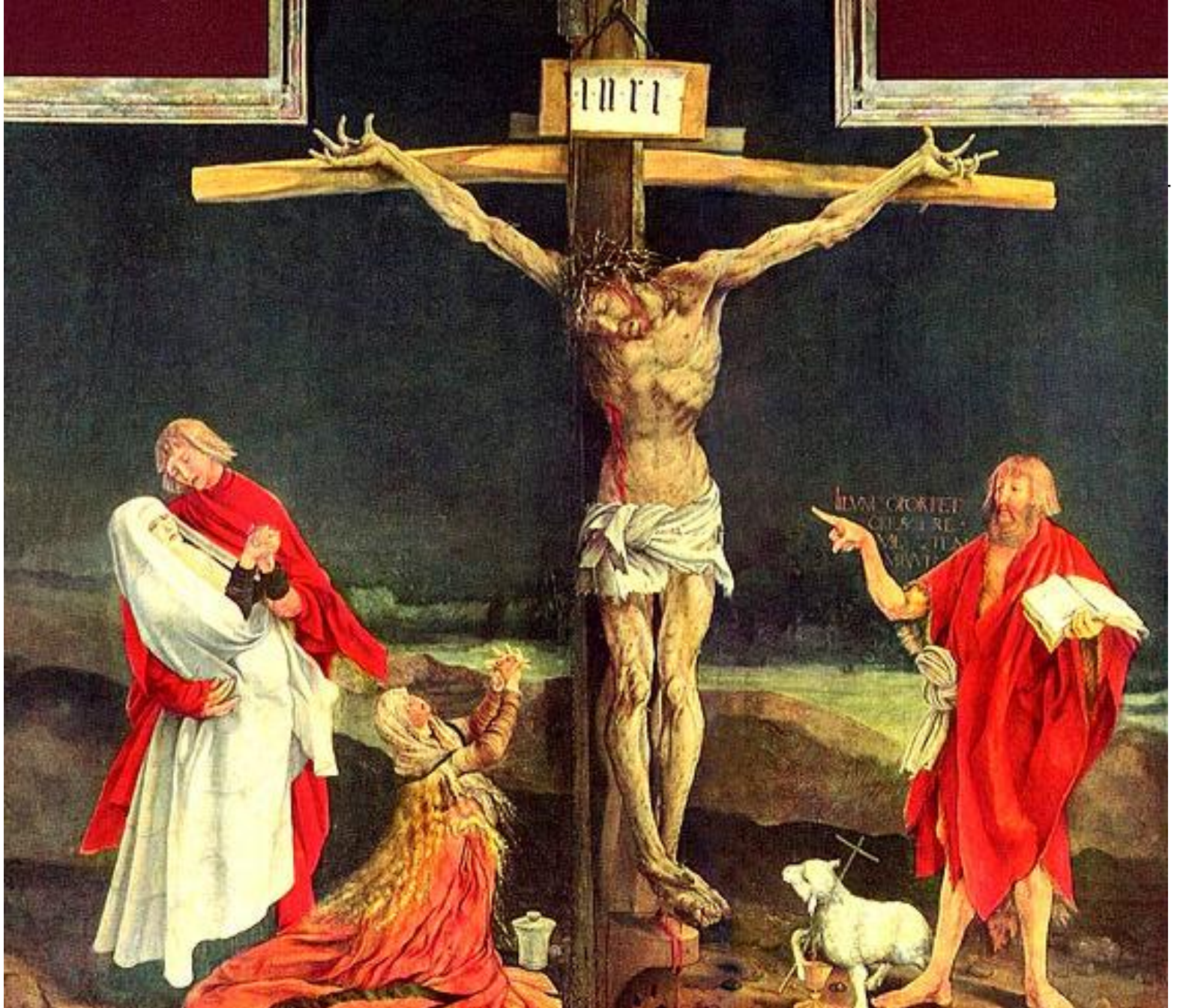




INRI

courtesy of [www.jacopotintoretto.org](http://www.jacopotintoretto.org)









Who is at the  
descent?











At the tomb





Whitsun

# 153 Fish





# Christian Paths

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- Peter

- Denials
- Rock, church
- Congregational love

- John

- What is it to you if I have him wait
- Agape





# The Future is Now

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