

THE ANVIL THAT HAS BROKEN A THOUSAND HAMMERS

Emperors and Empires have raised their hammers to destroy the Bible but they are powerless against it. It is as indestructible as God Himself. In chapter 36 God instructed Jeremiah to preserve some of his messages in writing and have them read to the people of Judah.

King Jehoiakim was troubled by the words and ordered the writings seized. As they were being read to him, he cut them to pieces with his knife and threw each piece into the fire.

But God's Word did not burn; only the scroll upon which it was written. God ordered Jeremiah to write it again and he did it and thus we have the Book of Jeremiah in our Bibles to this very day. The ashes of the Bible's burning are the seeds of its reproduction.

For another example of pagan opposition to the word of God, we move forward in history nine hundred years to the days of Diocletian, the diabolical Emperor of Rome in 303 A.D.

Diocletian instituted the final and most violent and merciless persecution of and assault on the Christian faith and the Word of God that the world had ever known. It was his stated ambition to completely destroy the name and the people of God.

He decreed that every person with a Bible must turn it over to his soldiers or be enslaved or executed. After this he ordered his soldiers to look for Bibles and execute every family (laymen and Pastors) who were hiding them. This mandate was so merciless

that in a year or two the persecutors felt they had eradicated the Bible from the earth. Diocletian celebrated this event by erecting a huge column inscribed with these Latin words: "**Extincto nomine Christianorum.**" [Extinct is the name Christian]

Diocletian {like all men weak and strong} died and was replaced by Constantine. He was saved through the prayers of his Christian mother and a vision of the cross in the sky. He declared himself a Christian. He removed the pagan symbols from the standards and shields of the Roman army and in their place put the cross of the Son of God.

He desired to put copies of the Bible in every church in the Empire and when he issued a call for Bibles to be brought forth to be copied, he had "*over fifty in the first twenty-four hours.*" Under threat of death God's people held on to their Bibles.

History is filled with such futile attempts. The mightiest of monarchs from Alexander the Great to the modern rulers of Russia and China have raised their fists against God's Word but their blows have only anchored that Word deeper into the history of man.

The Bible bears witness to its own indestructibility in I Peter 2:23-25 which quotes Isaiah. "**The grass withers, the flower fades: but the Word of our God shall stand (yaqum / rise up) forever.**" The picture is of grass crushed beneath a strong heel yet rising again to stand tall. God's word may be trampled on and crushed, but it shall rise up again and again to abide forever. Jesus said, "**Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away**" (Matt. 24:35).
The Bible wears out every hammer.