

APPENDIX E
A.D. 539 - The Abomination "Set Up"
(Daniel 12:11)

Establishing this important date as the key to the dates in Daniel 12 takes a great deal of research; but the date, while OBSCURE, is certainly SECURE in history.

This date is established by employing the criteria set out by the Apostle Paul in II Thess. 2:3-8. There he indicates that (1) the mystery of iniquity was already at work in his day and (2) its growth was being and would be hindered until (3) that which hinders the growth would be removed.

We understand the hindering power to be Rome. History bears this out. Previous to Constantine, growth of the Abomination (or Man of Sin) was hindered due to persecutions of the church. After Constantine, it was hindered by the control of the Emperor over church leaders and doctrine.

Bro. Russell summarizes all of this in Volume III of **Studies in the Scriptures**. For a closer study, the Lord has provided an eye-witness account of the events around and including A.D. 539 in the writings of Procopius who was a trusted historian in the court of the Emperor Justinian. His writings form a basis for a majority of histories written about this time in history.

As the Roman empire grew in size and its capital was removed to Constantinople, it was too large to be defended by purely Roman armies. Hence, when the Italian peninsula was invaded by the Vandals, the Emperor hired the Ostrogoths to deal with them. The Ostrogoths then ruled the Italian peninsula for Rome. This continued until instability arose due to succession questions. Then rebellion began. At that point Justinian sent his general, Belisarius, to break the Ostrogothic power. This he did and was on the verge of complete victory when he was recalled by the Emperor in A.D. 539. Though Belisarius did not remove himself until A.D. 540, the Ostrogothic power was broken, and the support of the Emperor through the army was withdrawn in 539. Hence, the hindering power was removed, and the Man of Sin was "set up" with complete authority in the region, having earlier received the title of Pontifex Maximus (Chief Religious Ruler) from Justinian. Documentation can be found in the following:

REFERENCES:

The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries by Adolf Harnack

History of the Wars --Books 3-6 by Procopius

History of the Ostrogoths, by Thomas Burns

Barbarians and Romans by Justine Davis Randers-Pehrson

Justinian and His Age by Percy Neville Ure

The Christians as the Romans Saw Them by Robert Wilken