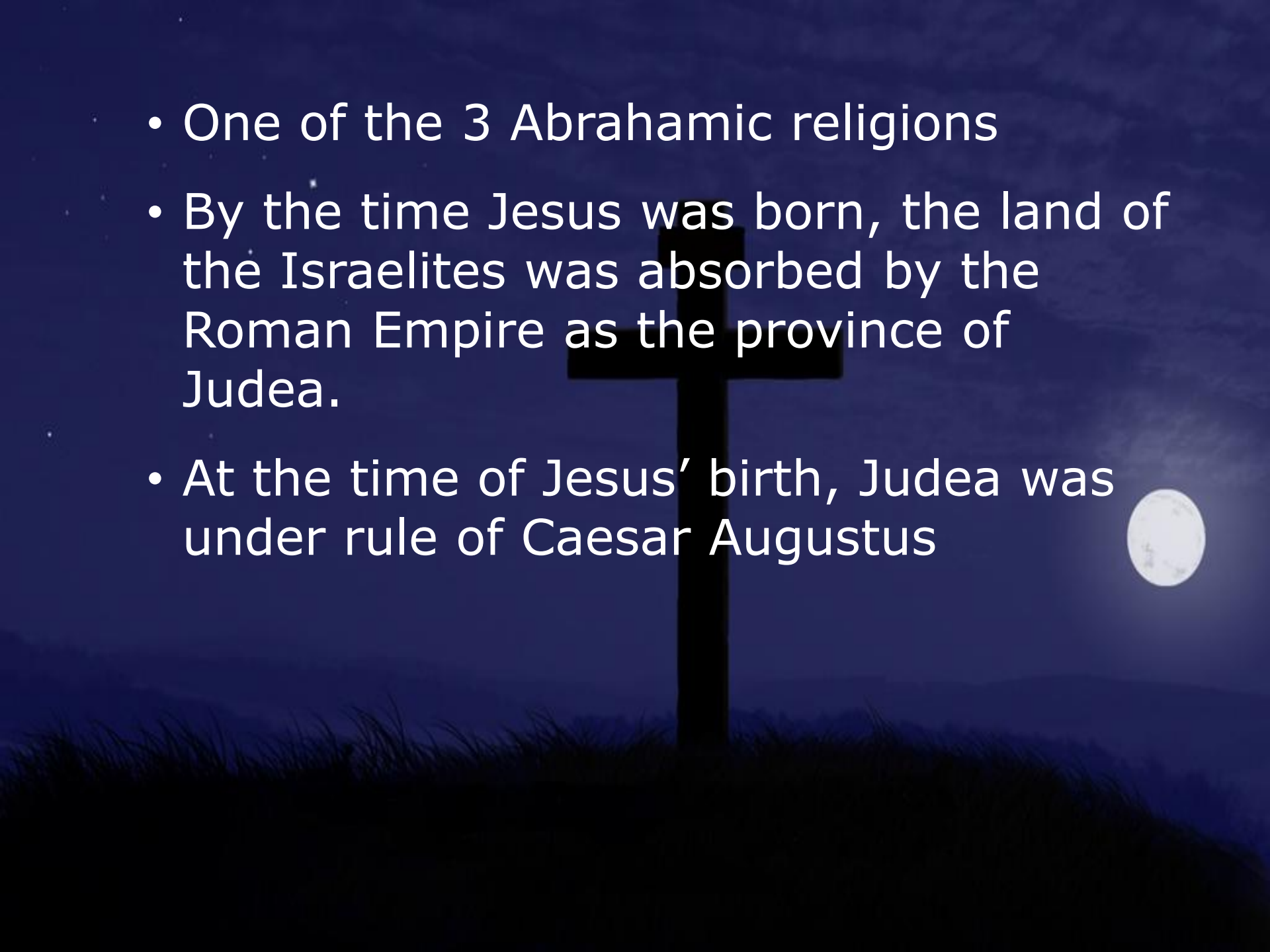
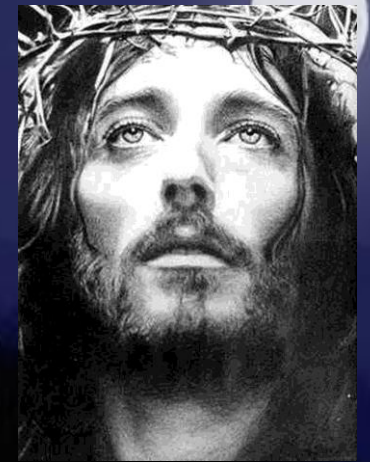
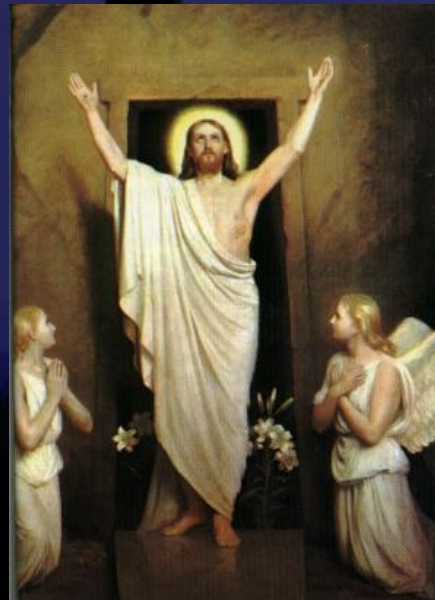
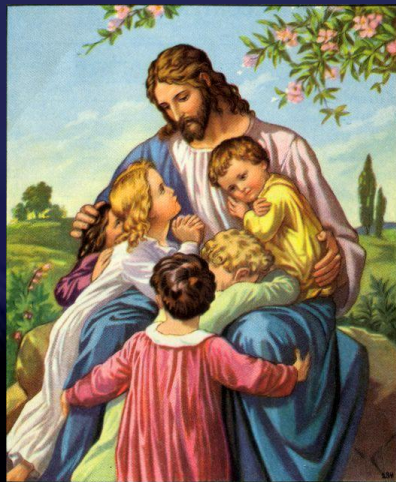
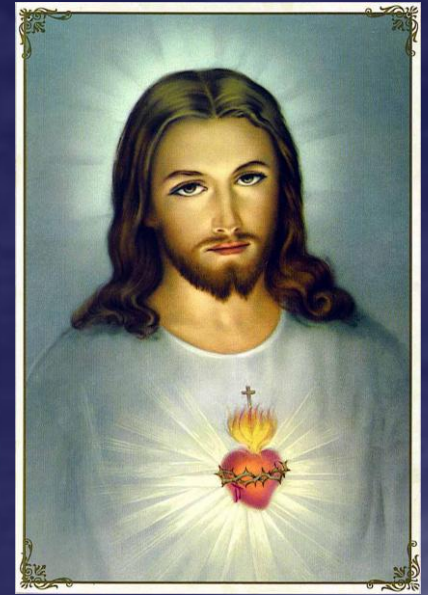
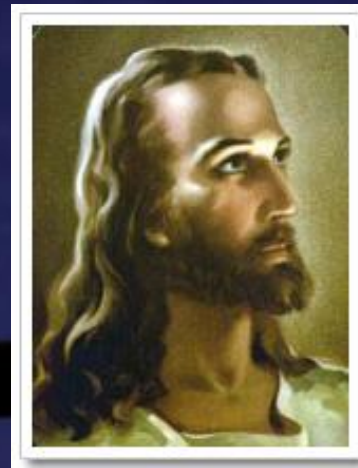
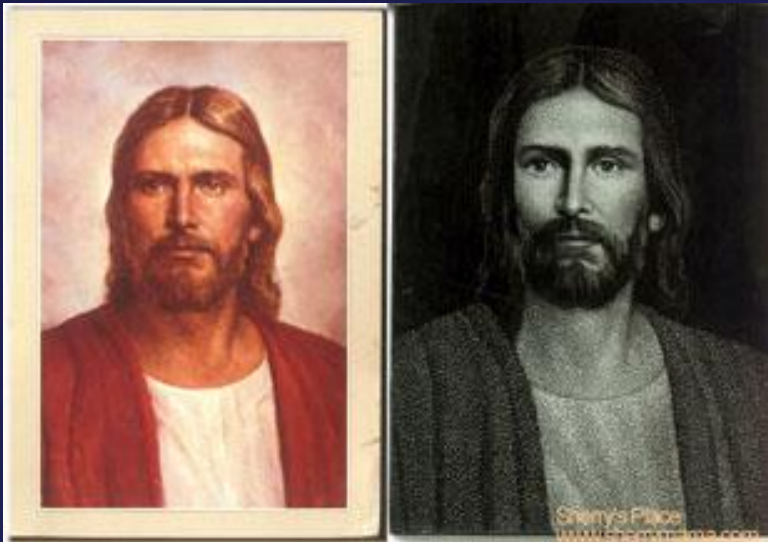




The Rise of Christianity

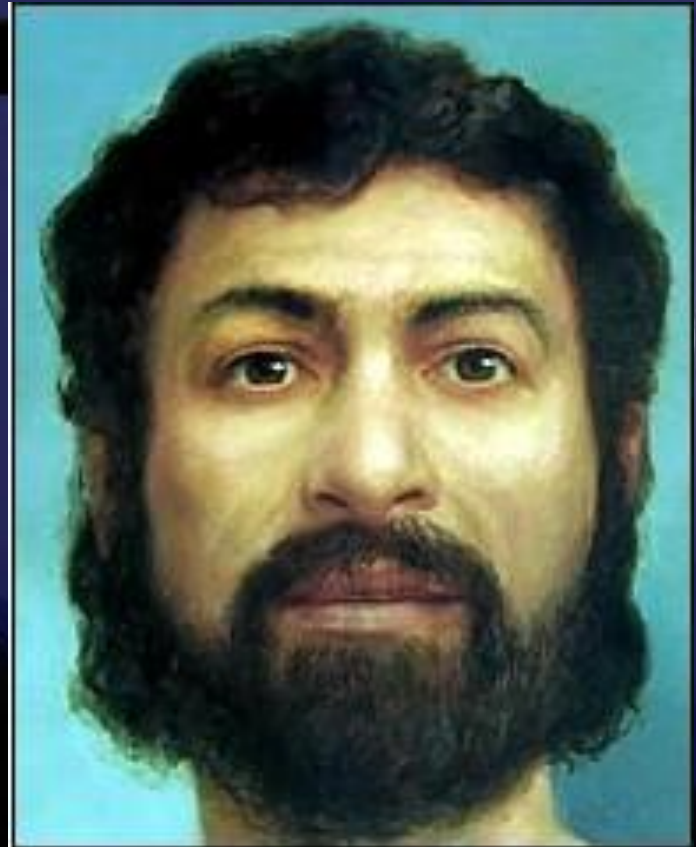
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- A dark silhouette of a cross stands in the center of the frame against a deep blue night sky. A full moon is visible on the right side. The foreground shows the dark, silhouetted tops of grass.
- One of the 3 Abrahamic religions
 - By the time Jesus was born, the land of the Israelites was absorbed by the Roman Empire as the province of Judea.
 - At the time of Jesus' birth, Judea was under rule of Caesar Augustus



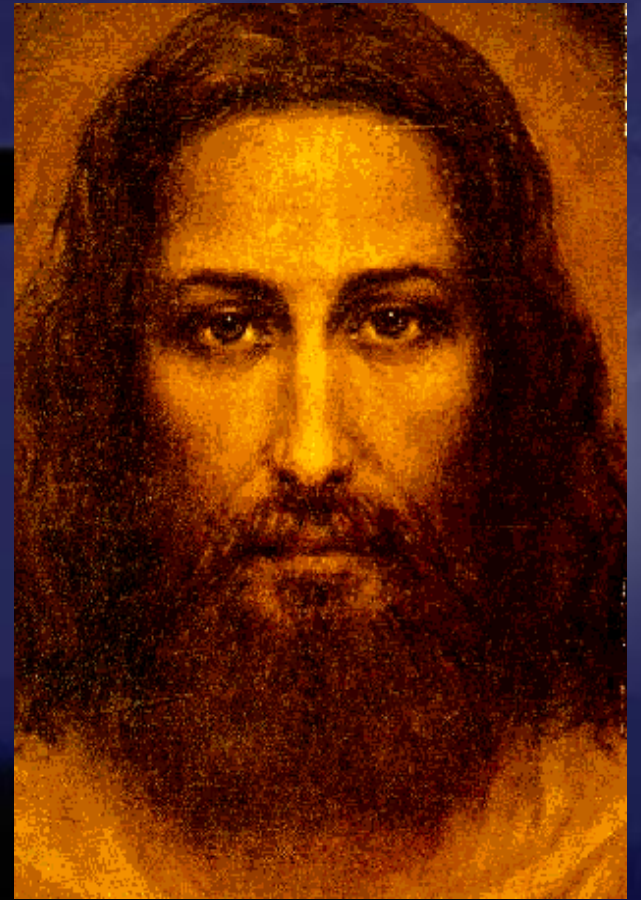
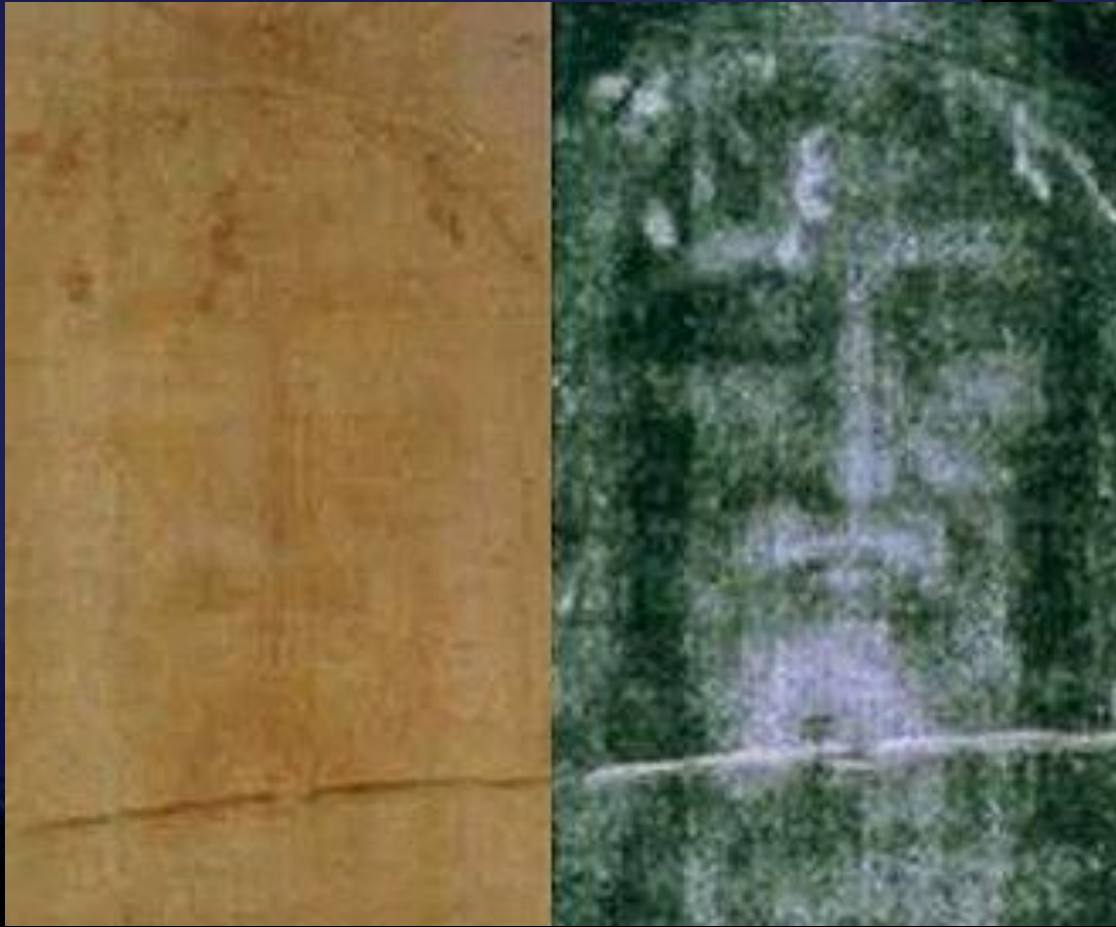


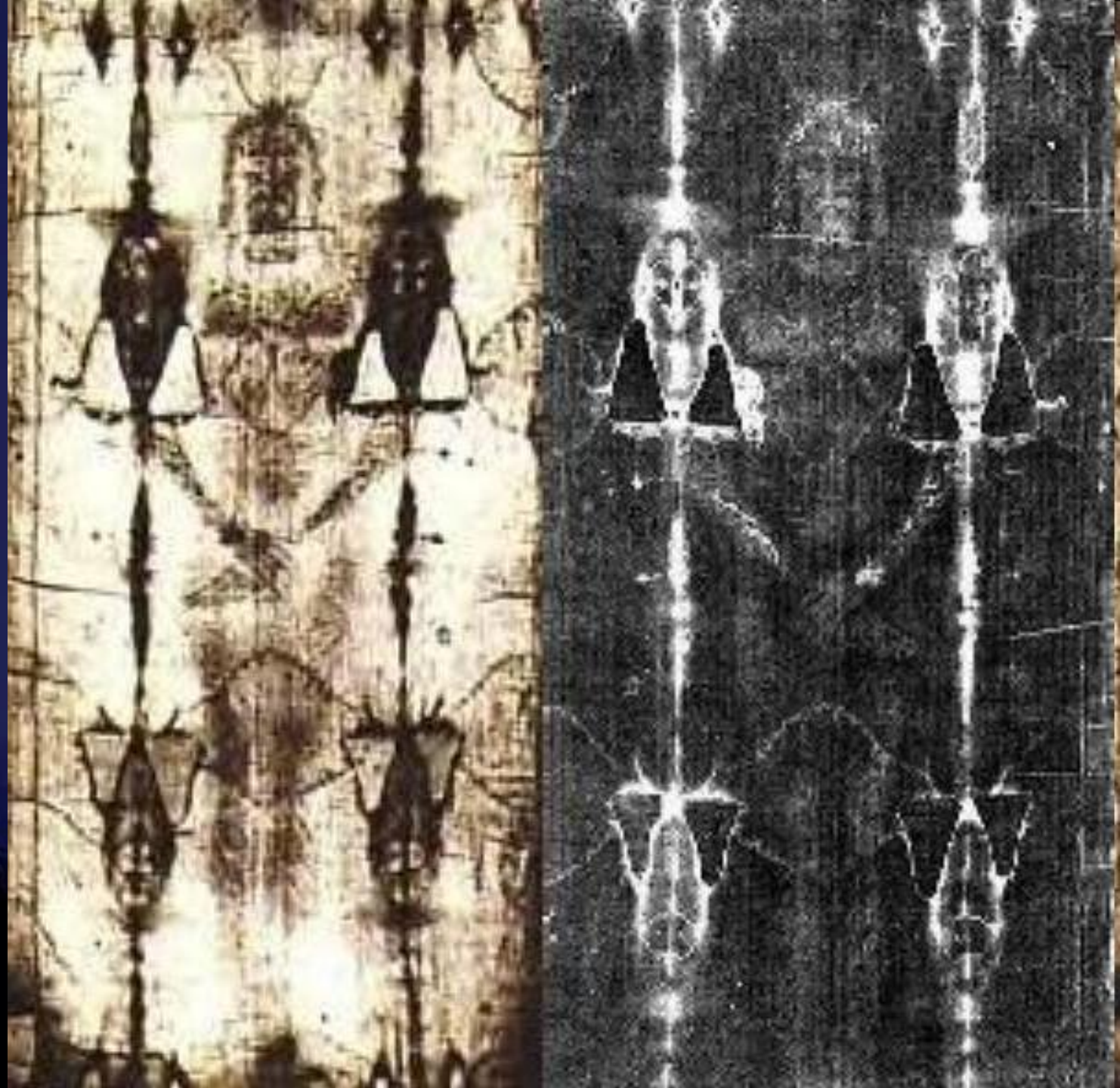
Being a Semitic man from the 1st century, he likely looked something like this.

These are facial reconstructions from a skull from that time period.

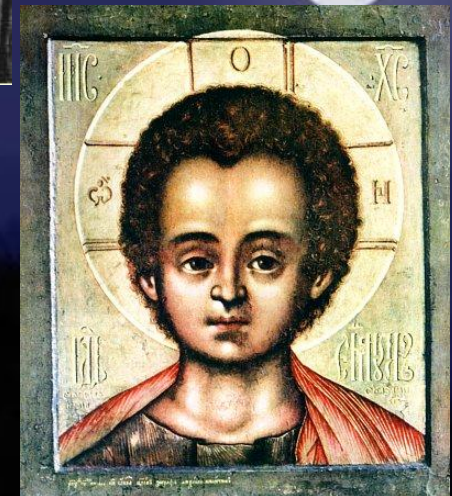
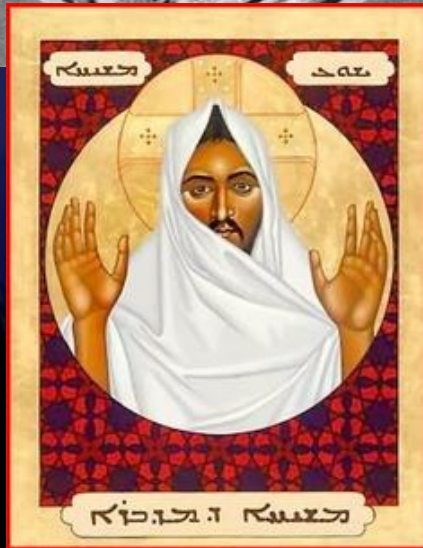
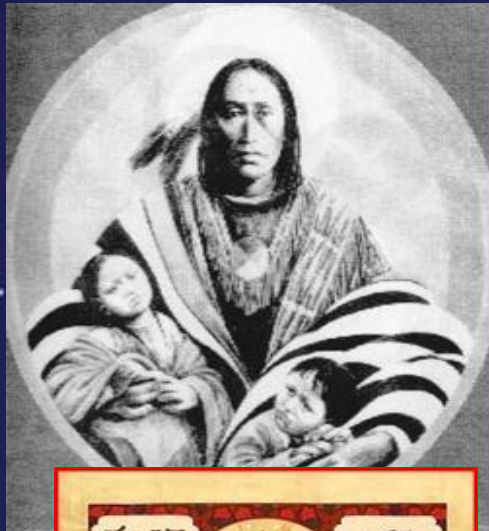


This is based on the image from the Shroud of Turin





Interestingly, just as the West portrays Jesus as white, other cultures portray him in their own ethnicity: Arab, African, etc.



Jesus was a preacher who spread messages of peace, love and justice across Judea.

Neither the Romans nor the Jewish authorities were too comfortable with Jesus' popularity and his anti-authoritarian stance.

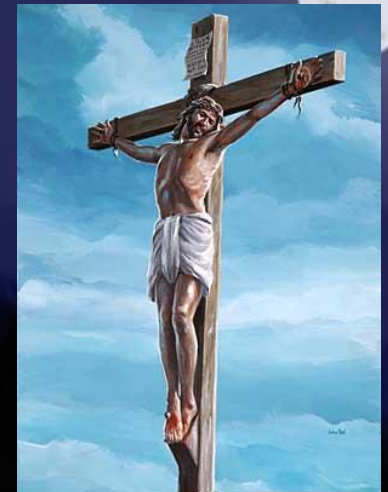
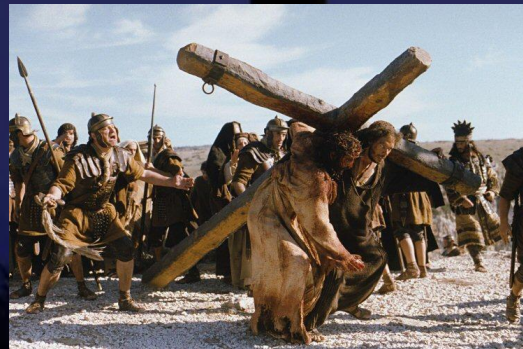
The Romans and Jews didn't like the idea of somebody gaining power and prestige. They felt threatened.

It didn't help that people were thinking of him as the messiah.

Why would they believe Jesus was the Messiah?

- Jews had a long tradition of believing that the saviour would come to them in a time of trouble
- Certain prophecies explain that when the Messiah comes he would be misunderstood, disrespected and rejected by men at first
- Prophecies also explained that when the Messiah came there would be an everlasting kingdom = enticing to the Jews who had their autonomy taken away from them
- Many religious Jews saw Jesus in these prophecies and at some point came to believe that he was the Messiah

The Jews, with the help of the Romans, had Jesus arrested, tried, and executed



How did this religion become so widespread?

- The Romans continued to make things bad for the Jews - temples continued to be destroyed, Jews continued to be expelled (Diaspora)
- Without a temple or geographic unity, the Jews had to solidify what it meant to be a Jew
- This forced the followers of Jesus to make a decision - *Were they going to continue being Jews following strict laws set forth by rabbis or were they going to be something else?*
- Opening up this religion to non Jews is the central reason why Christianity became an official religion and not just a sect of Judaism

- Saul, originally against Christianity, received a vision from God, and converted to Christianity
- Changed his name to Paul
- Began visiting and sending letters to Jesus' followers and churches throughout the Mediterranean
- Paul was a Roman citizen therefore he was allowed to travel freely throughout the Roman empire = able to reach many different people and facilitated the geographic spread of Christianity

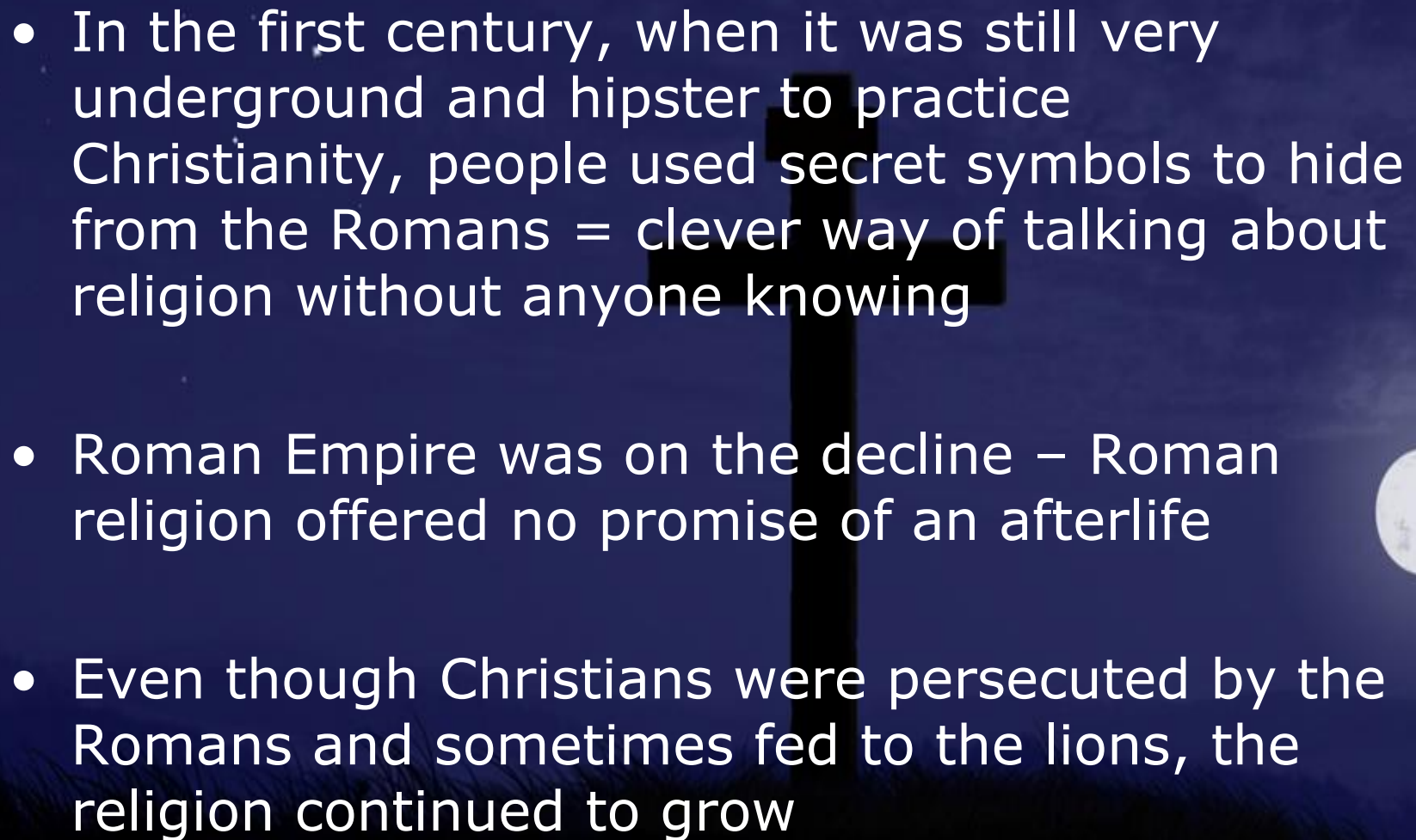


Paul visited a number of locations, starting churches in different cities.



- It was Paul who declared that Jesus' followers did not have to be Jews, did not have to be circumcised or keep any of the Jewish laws = opened the floodgates for thousands of people to convert to this new religion
- Paul was eventually martyred - beheaded

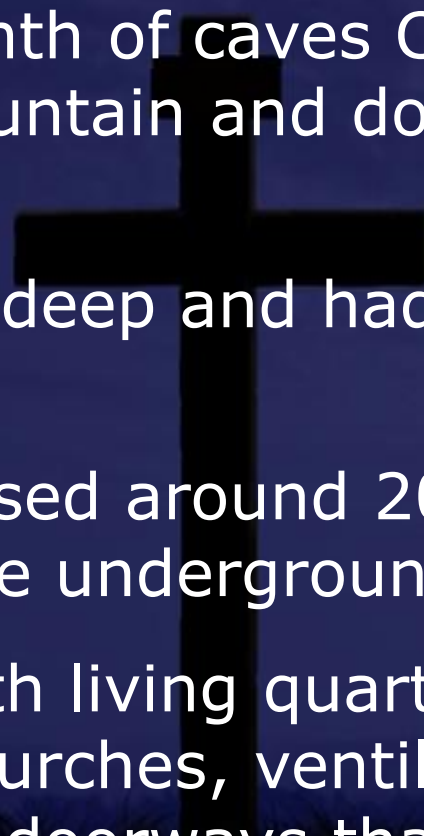


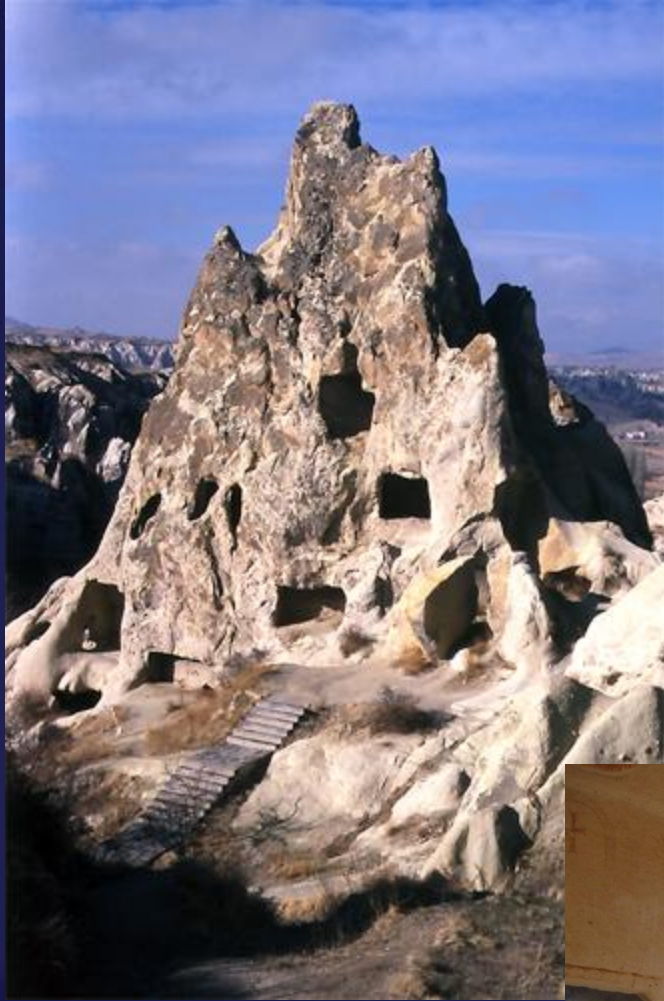
- 
- In the first century, when it was still very underground and hipster to practice Christianity, people used secret symbols to hide from the Romans = clever way of talking about religion without anyone knowing
 - Roman Empire was on the decline – Roman religion offered no promise of an afterlife
 - Even though Christians were persecuted by the Romans and sometimes fed to the lions, the religion continued to grow

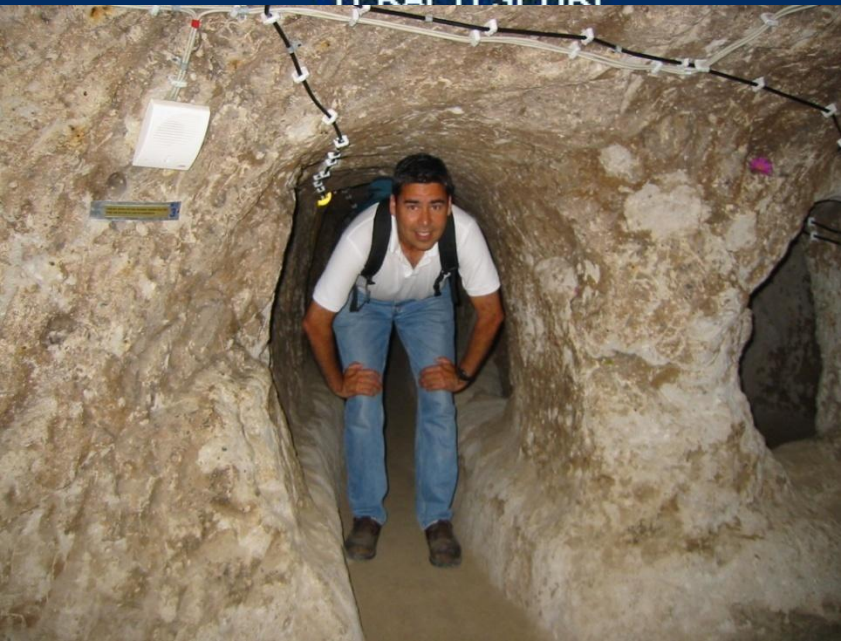


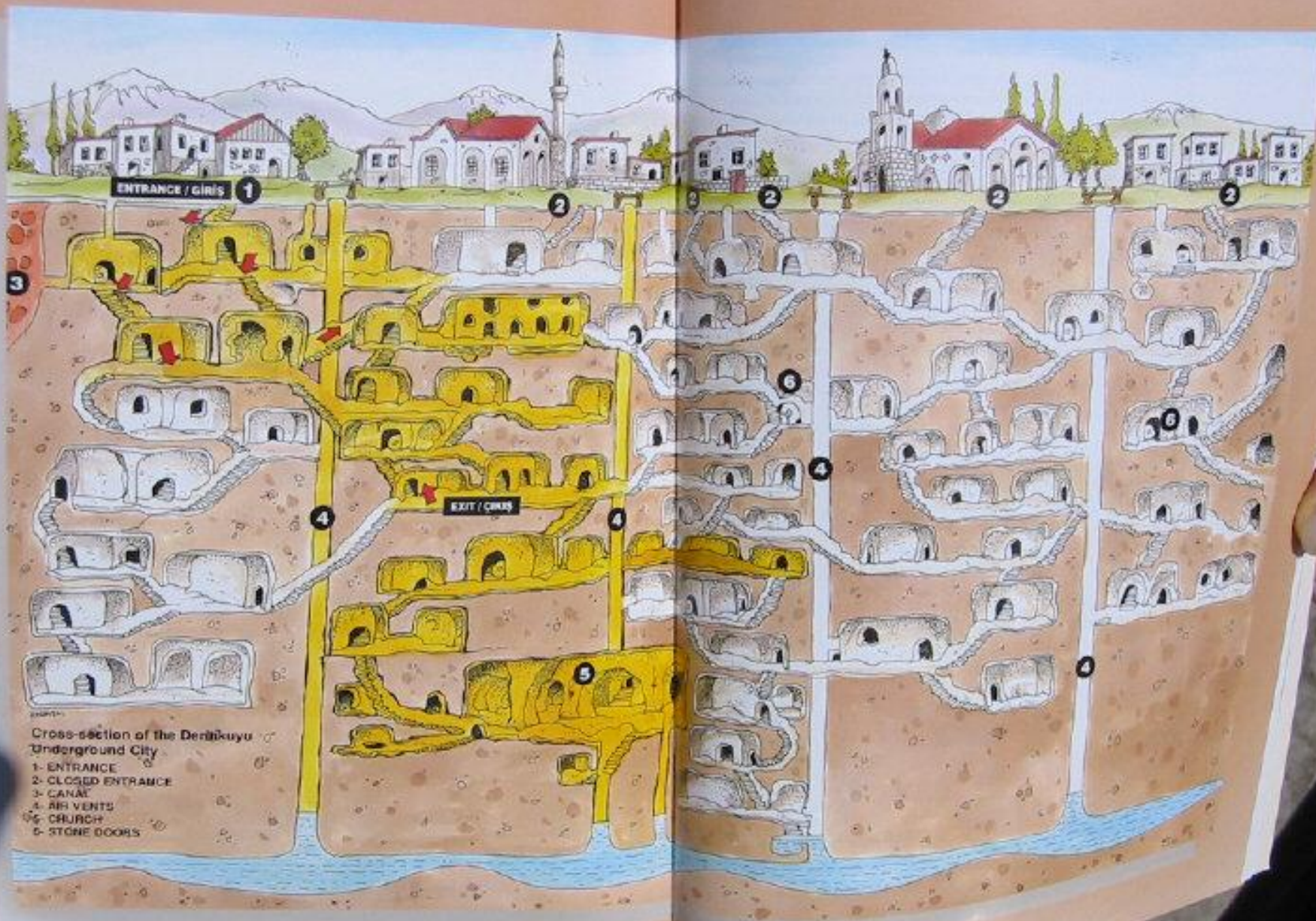


- Some Christians went to extreme lengths to avoid persecution, such as at Cappadocia.
 - This was a labyrinth of caves Christians carved into a mountain and down into the ground.
 - It was 18 stories deep and had miles of tunnels.
 - The complex housed around 20,000 people who rarely left the underground system.
 - Was complete with living quarters, grape juicing rooms, churches, ventilation shafts, wells, and secret doorways that closed tight from the inside.









Cross-section of the Derinkuyu Underground City

- 1- ENTRANCE
- 2- CLOSED ENTRANCE
- 3- CANAL
- 4- AIR VENTS
- 5- CHURCH
- 6- STONE DOORS

Despite the Roman attempts to use brute force to stamp out the Christians, the religion continued to spread.

In 313 AD Emperor Constantine ended persecution against Christians and allowed the worship of Jesus and eventually converted to Christianity himself = official religion.

Even though the Roman Empire wasn't what it used to be, people still wanted to be like the emperor.



Other factors that led to the spread of Christianity:

1. Embraced all people – men, women, slaves, poor, nobles.
2. Gave hope to the powerless
3. Appealed to those who were repelled by Roman extravagance.
4. Offered personal relationship with a loving God.
5. Promised eternal life after death.

