



Good day Worthy Knights,

In this part 63, Julian the Apostate,

(Wikipedia)

Roman emperor 361-63, born at Constantinople in 331, died 26 June, 363, son of Julius Constantius, the half-brother of Constantine the Great. With his stepbrother Gallus, who was some years older, he escaped the massacre of his kinsfolk at Constantinople after the death of Constantine the Great.

Julian received a Christian training, but the recollection of the murder of his relatives sowed in him a bitter resentment against the authors of that massacre, and he extended this hatred to the Christians in general.

Julian was allowed to study at Constantinople, but his intellectual character aroused attention and caused Constantius to send him in 350 to Nicomedia. Here Julian devoted himself exclusively to neo-Platonic philosophy, mixed with all kinds of magic and mysteries. The neo-Platonist, Maximus of Ephesus, dazzled him by his teachings and prophesied his destined task, the restoration of paganism.

Gaining the sympathy of the Empress Eusebia, he secured permission to visit in 355 the schools of Athens, where Greek philosophy and rhetoric were enjoying their last period of prosperity. Julian now went over completely to the so-called Hellenism, and was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries.

Julian was presented on 6 November, 355, to the army as Caesar, married the emperor's youngest sister Helena, and then sent to Gaul. Here he at once displayed great ability, both as soldier and administrator.

He boldly advanced from his headquarters at Vienne into the territory of the Alamanni on the Upper Rhine, occupying and garrisoning Cologne, which a year before had been taken and sacked by the Franks. The following year, he completely routed over 30,000 Alamanni near Strasburg.

In a later expedition he opened the Rhine again for the passage of ships: in 359 he even made his way into the heart of the territory of the Alamanni (the present Wurtemberg). Julian also displayed an unwearied activity in promoting just taxation and administration of the laws.

In the meantime war had again broken out with Persia, King Shâpûr demanding the cession of Mesopotamia and Armenia. Long jealous of Julian, the emperor now ordered the latter to send a part of his most experienced German auxiliaries, a mutiny broke out, the troops appeared before Julian and enthusiastically proclaimed him Augustus.

To avoid a civil war, Julian sought to come to an agreement with Constantius whom he was ready to acknowledge as supreme emperor. Constantius however, demanded the unconditional surrender of the title of Caesar and of his position as governor of Gaul. Neither the army nor the people would consent to this, and Julian advanced in the spring to Illyricum, taking possession of the capital, Sirmium.

Shapur having disbanded his great Persian army, Constantius now planned to turn his entire fighting strength against his rebellious cousin Julian. While on the march, however, Constantius died, 3 November, 361.

Julian advanced in triumph to Constantinople. Hitherto outwardly a Christian, he now let himself be portrayed as under the protection of Zeus, who in his opinion possessed with Helios the same undivided creative power.

He commanded all towns to reopen the temples for pagan worship, restored animal sacrifices, and assumed the duties of a Pontifex Maximus. The Christians were united in fighting their enemy. Julian issued a decree that all titles to lands, rights and immunities bestowed since the reign of Constantine upon the Galileans, as he contemptuously called the Christians, were abrogated, and that the moneys granted to the Church from the revenues of the State must be repaid.

He forbade the appointment of Christians as teachers of rhetoric and grammar. Still, he copied the organization of the Christian Church; he created, for example, a form of hierarchy, the head of which was the imperial Pontifex Maximus, and urged pagans to imitate such Christian virtues as charity and mercy.

Yet Julian's changes failed to bring him any appreciable success. In May, 362, Julian left Constantinople for Asia and made active preparations at Antioch for a great war with Persia. While at Antioch in the winter of 362-63, he wrote his books against the Christians. In March, 363, he advanced from Antioch into Mesopotamia, successfully crossed the Tigris, and fought a successful battle with the Persians. Burning his supply fleet, he now marched into the interior of Persia, but soon found himself obliged by lack of provisions to begin a retreat, during which he was beset by the Persian cavalry.

On 26 June, 363, he was wounded in the side by an arrow in a small cavalry skirmish, and died during the night. Various reports concerning the circumstances of his death have come down to us. Both Christians and pagans believed the rumour that he cried out when dying: *Nenikekas Galilaie* (Thou hast conquered, O Galilean).

With Julian the dynasty of Constantine came to an end. He was rather a philosophical litterateur of a somewhat visionary character, than a great ruler whose actions were the dictates of strong will and principles. The good beginnings of a just government which he showed in Gaul were not maintained when he was sole ruler. Although his personal life was unostentatious, he was passionate, arbitrary, vain, and prejudiced, blindly submissive to the rhetoricians and magicians. Some of Julian's many controversial writings, orations, and letters have been preserved, showing his discordant, subjective character.

