



The
CONSTANTINE
CODEX
A NOVEL

From the best-selling author of
A SKELETON IN GOD'S CLOSET



PAULL.
MAIER



PRAISE FOR NOVELS BY PAUL L. MAIER

A SKELETON IN GOD'S CLOSET

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The background of the page is a complex, repeating geometric pattern. It consists of a grid of thin, light-colored lines. Overlaid on this grid are numerous starburst or sunburst patterns. Each starburst is formed by multiple lines radiating from a central point, creating a series of triangles. Some of these starbursts are solid lines, while others are dashed lines. The overall effect is a dense, intricate, and somewhat chaotic geometric design.

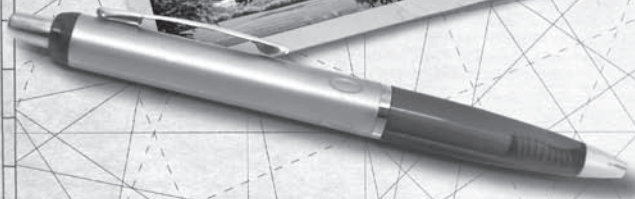
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The
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The Flames of Rome
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*To Vera Thomas
and, in memoriam,
Bill Thomas*

PREFACE

While this is the third in the Skeleton series, these novels may be read in any order since the plotlines are totally different. Most characters in these pages are fictitious, but in the interest of realism, some authentic personalities do appear. So that they might not be thought to endorse everything in this novel, I have not sought permission to use their names. All are famous enough to be in the public domain and will, I trust, find their portrayal in these pages both appropriate and congenial. The reader, however, should know that the dialogue I supply for them is mine and not theirs.

When *A Skeleton in God's Closet* was published in 1994 during the pontificate of John Paul II, I had designated his fictional successor as Benedict XVI, who appears also in *More Than a Skeleton* and in this novel as well. But in April 2005, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger chose this very name for his pontificate—coincidence, rather than any prophecy on my part! The reader is therefore urged to distinguish between the two Benedicts, one fictional, the other authentic.

Special appreciation is due Marion S. Ellis, Maria Perez-Stable, Brian C. Bradford, Dr. Stan Gundry, Wayne Little, MD, Fr. Evangelos S. Pepps, and especially Dr. Timothy R. Furnish for their gracious technical assistance.

Paul L. Maier
Western Michigan University
May 2011

PROLOGUE

Shannon Jennings Weber was enjoying her lunch under the shade of a juniper tree—much as the prophet Elijah had done. She was digging at Pella on the east bank of the Jordan River, about twenty miles south of the Sea of Galilee. This was new territory for the archaeologist, who had had a string of successes with her spade in Israel. She had organized this dig in hopes of finding something—anything—to help fill one of the most crucial gaps in church history: the later first century, when Christians managed to escape the horrifying Roman conquest of Jerusalem in AD 70 by fleeing to Pella before the war started. Here, she thought, in the very capital of the earliest church, there must be clues under the soil, artifacts that would illumine the decades during which Christianity first took hold in the Mediterranean world.

Her husband, Jon, could not have been more pleased, since he too thought Pella an excavation site with huge potential. While teaching at Harvard, he regularly sent Shannon such e-mail queries as *“Have you found the personal memoirs of Jesus*

yet?” or “How about Paul’s missing letter to Corinth?” Even the messages that told of his love and loneliness usually had a playful tagline, such as “Surely you’ve found one of Luke’s paintings of the apostles?” or “If you unearth the bishop’s chair of James, do excavate carefully.”

No sensational discoveries, however, had come to light, and tomorrow the team was scheduled to decamp. Before Shannon’s dig, teams from the University of Sydney and the Jordanian Department of Antiquities had uncovered several Bronze- and Iron-Age Canaanite temples, and the whole site sprouted white marble columns from the Hellenistic era that merely had to be restacked. Unlike the Aussies and Jordanians, Shannon’s team had focused on the fourth-century church of St. James. After clearing its base and discovering some interesting floor mosaics, curious ceramics, and a small cache of second- and third-century coins, they called it a season.

Few digs produced sensational results, and Pella was no exception. Shannon was satisfied with their results, though hardly elated. If only digs would produce treasures on demand! She grimaced, remembering a too-good-to-be-true find she’d been a part of several years previous. It had only proved the adage “If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.”

As she munched on a pear, her eyes came to rest on what was likely the present-day version of the ancient church they were excavating—the Greek Orthodox Church of St. James the Just. There it sat, on a hillock just east of the dig, an aging, whitish gray structure with a blue dome that looked as if it had been plucked from an Aegean seaport. She had passed it daily en route to the dig and thought, playfully, how nice it would be if that

church had kept continuous records across the centuries. It was a fanciful concept, of course, but if a church were, say, on fire, what were the two documents they would try to rescue? The altar Bible and the church records. There might be something worth seeing there before she packed up and headed home.

The next day, she paid a visit to the church and introduced herself to the priest in charge, who spoke surprisingly clear English. He was a spare little man, middle-aged, with a luxurious salt-and-pepper beard as if to compensate for his advancing male-pattern baldness. He had trouble making eye contact with Shannon, and the reason became clear when he said, “Yours is certainly the loveliest face to grace our premises in many months, Mrs. Weber. You must have Greek blood in you, no? Your dark hair, your—”

“I wish I could claim that distinction, Father Athanasius,” she replied. “But no, I’m just an Irish-English hybrid who moved to America. And I love old churches like this one. How long has it been standing here?”

He pointed a pensive finger to his chin. “This building went up in the 1700s, but it was built on . . . on foundations of the church before it.”

“And when was that one built?”

He smiled, shook his head, and said, “Centuries ago. Many centuries.”

Shannon smiled inwardly and wanted badly to surprise the cleric with word that she was excavating what was likely the grandmother church to this one. But that would be premature; first the official dig report had to be published. “Does your church have archives? A library?” she asked.

“Oh yes, of course.”

“I’m fascinated by old books. Might you be kind enough to let me see your collection?”

“But of course. Please to follow me.”

They walked across a sun-drenched courtyard rimmed with trellises of grapevines and entered a library annex. The priest showed Shannon row after row of books until they came to a section whose shelves were bending under the weight of ponderous old volumes, some bound in gray-white parchment skin. Here Athanasius stopped and explained why his church was named for St. James the Just. He picked out an ancient tome. “Here we have Eusebius’s *Historia Ekklesiastica*. You know Eusebius?”

“Of course! He’s the very *father* of church history.”

Athanasius smiled and nodded appreciatively. He laid the volume on a table and opened it to what seemed to be a bookmark of sorts, then translated the Greek that spoke of the martyrdom of James the Just of Jerusalem, Jesus’ half brother—or cousin, as some would argue—and the first bishop of the Christian church.

“Eusebius writes that he got this information from Hegesippus,” the priest continued. “You know Hegesippus?”

“Oh yes. My husband often raves about Hegesippus. He tells his classes that if we had the five lost books of that first-century Jewish-Christian historian, we’d know much, much more about the earliest church.”

Father Athanasius beamed. “Yes, yes—it is as you say.”

While he showed Shannon the text, her eyes quickly shifted to what was serving as a bookmark for the Eusebius passage: several brownish leaves of what seemed to be parchment of some sort. Their darker color showed that they had to be older

than the Eusebius tome—*much* older. The writing in the text, however, was so faded as to be hardly legible.

“Have you read this material, Father Athanasius?” she asked, pointing to the dark leaves. “Have you even been *able* to read it?”

He shook his head. “I read only a few words of the ancient Greek. But it must be old. Very old.”

“Yes, indeed.” Obviously those pages had come from a larger collection—probably a codex, the world’s first book form—and Shannon could only wonder if that codex was somewhere in the stacks surrounding them. She asked, “Do you know where these leaves came from? Do you have more of them?”

Father Athanasius merely shrugged and held out open hands. “I don’t know. The former priest here showed me the old Eusebius book and how I could use it to show people why our church is named for St. James. I never thought to ask him about the pages.”

“You know, we have instruments in America that could easily bring out the text, Father. Anything this old, this ancient, could be important. *Very* important.” She stopped and knew she should not have been so direct, but the words escaped before she could restrain them. “Might it be possible for me to . . . to take these with me to the U.S. for a short time? I’d return them quickly—by international express—along with a clear copy of the restored Greek text.”

Father Athanasius had a wounded look, staring at the bookshelves and saying nothing.

“I would guard them with my very life, good Father. The text may or may not be significant. But if it *is* important, we might gain valuable information about the early church.”

He shook his head slowly and said, “Is it not for Greeks to

translate Greek, Mrs. Weber? I will take these to Athens when I visit the archbishop. Surely he and his staff will be able to . . . to read this.”

Shannon’s heart sank. Who could quarrel with that logic? Well, one last effort. “Perhaps they could decipher the text, Father Athanasius. And perhaps not. The script seems to have vanished at places, and the rest is hardly legible. I fear that only ultraviolet light and other equipment in my husband’s office at Harvard University would be able to restore the text.”

“Your husband teaches at Harvard?” Athanasius stroked his beard. “What is his name, his first name?”

“Jon. Or rather, Jonathan.”

His eyes widened. “Jonathan Weber? Not *the* Jonathan Weber, who wrote *O Iisous apo tin Nazareth*?”

Shannon smiled. “Yes.” Before she married Jon, he’d already become an internationally bestselling author. His book *Jesus of Nazareth* had been translated into nearly thirty languages at last count. Clearly Father Athanasius was numbered among Jon’s worldwide fans.

“And you are his *wife*?”

When she nodded modestly, Athanasius broke into a great smile. “Yes, Mrs. Weber, you may certainly borrow those leaves of manuscript. Your husband’s life of Christ is the best I’ve ever read!” He stopped, a twinkle in his eye, and seemed to reverse himself. “But no, you cannot take them . . . unless you sign my copy of *O Iisous*.”

Shannon was about to object that she could hardly inscribe a book she had not written, but why quibble at the moment of success? Instead, she nodded happily.

Carefully, Athanasius removed the almost tobacco-colored leaves and hurried into his office, where the Greek edition of Jon's book was on the shelf behind his desk. "I've read it three times," the priest said proudly.

Shannon signed the book, then looked up and said, "A final favor, Father Athanasius. If you have time, *please* try to find and save any other ancient manuscript pages here, whether bound or unbound, because of their possible importance."

He nodded instantly. "Oh, indeed, Mrs. Weber."

Shannon gratefully accepted the five brown pages of manuscript, hoping they might shed a bit of new light on earliest church history. She could not know that they would, in fact, ignite a change in church history.

CHAPTER 1



JONATHAN WEBER HAD EXPERIENCED much more than the fifteen minutes of fame often allotted to mortals. The recognition brought about by his bestseller and his archaeological sleuthing in Israel that had “saved Christianity” (according to his fans) had given him entrée at the Vatican, the White House, and even Buckingham Palace. Yet despite a string of extraordinary adventures, Jon would always count the return of his wife from her dig at Pella as one of the summit events in his life. It was not only the joy of seeing Shannon again—that lithe, sapphire-eyed, pert-nosed, Irish pixie who had taken him captive—but what she had brought back with her from Jordan as a little memento of her tour.

A day after she had unpacked, Jon and Shannon took the manuscript leaves to his office at Harvard. In an adjoining room he

had a small but efficient manuscript laboratory with an ultraviolet apparatus as the centerpiece. It had served him well in exploring palimpsests, vellum manuscripts on which the writing had been erased and the vellum reused. The penetrating, purplish rays of the instrument usually showed the original script quite clearly.

Shannon adjusted the window blinds to darken the room, while Jon turned on the UV apparatus. The hum of its fan covered the throb of his almost-audible pulse. “We’re not looking for erasures here, Shannon,” he said, “just the original script underneath those brownish accretions.”

“Obviously. We could hardly make out anything at home last night, even with intense illumination.”

“Okay. We’re ready. Bring the first page over.”

Shannon put on white gloves, opened a large portfolio, and—with care that bordered on a caress—lifted a protective muslin pad and extracted the first of the leaves. With both hands she laid it on the examining field below the instrument.

Jon peered closely at the document, studied it for some time, and then shook his head. “Here, have a look, sweetheart.”

Shannon scrutinized the leaf for several moments. “Oh . . . how disappointing. I can make out a *little* more of the lettering, but . . .”

“I’ll raise the intensity.” Jon turned the gain knob thirty degrees clockwise, but the brighter light, while revealing more of the Greek lettering, failed to liberate enough script for them even to try to reconstruct the text without much guesswork and the insertion of long blanks.

Crestfallen, Shannon sighed. “I . . . I’m sorry, Jon. I certainly had hoped for more than this. What an utter waste of effort!”

“Not necessarily, darling.” Jon kissed her cheek. Was it actually moistened with a tear? “We’ll do it just like they do at Palomar Mountain.”

“By which you mean . . . ?”

“Our eyes can’t store up light versus dark contrast. Film can. That’s why stars that couldn’t possibly be seen otherwise show up on their photo plates.”

“Got it!” She chuckled.

Jon opened his photo cabinet, pulled down a 35mm Nikon, and loaded it with panchromatic film. He mounted it in a camera bracket adjacent to the ultraviolet instrument and focused on the document. The shutter snapped repeatedly as he photographed at various speeds and diaphragm settings.

They achieved no results that day, since from that point on, it was trial and error—overexposure, underexposure, too much contrast, not enough contrast. Finally they hit upon a formula that worked: inside a totally opaque chamber with a very low-intensity UV illumination of the leaves, the Nikon set at $f/16$, time exposure, and precision film development yielded beautifully readable Greek script on almost every line of the five pages of manuscript, when printed out on photo paper.

It took Jon another week to prize out a translation of the leaves. When he had finished, he gave Shannon copies of both the Greek text and his English translation. “You know Greek, honey,” he said. “Please see if I got it right.”

Shannon started reading the translated version immediately.

His own pulse in something of a gallop, Jon watched as her eyes widened and the jaw of his lovely wife sagged open.

She looked up and said, “Jon, there are details here about

the martyrdom of Jesus' brother James—beyond what we have from Eusebius!”

“Exactly.”

“Then do you suppose this is from . . . from Hegesippus?”

“Who else? Some old librarian at that church must have tried to keep the secondary and primary sources together. As a bookmark, no less.”

“Well, this is just *fabulous*, Jon!”

“No, it isn't. You haven't come to the good part yet.” The twinkle in Jon's eye had broadened into a huge expansive smile. “Read on,” he said, “but it'll take a while since it's at the other end of the material.”

Shannon flashed him a quizzical look and returned to Jon's typescript. Some minutes later, she looked up again. “Well, here Hegesippus seems to be talking about what he calls ‘the sacred books.’ Do you suppose he means the Canon?”

“Could be,” he said, again assuming his mischievous grin. Soon Shannon would find the passage, he knew.

And she did, of course. She now dropped the typescript and said, very slowly, “Oh . . . my. This . . . this is just . . . beyond belief.”

“It looks like you discovered more at Pella than you *ever* thought, my dear. But now, we have to keep mum on this until the authentication is complete. We'll have to go to Pella, of course, to see if there are any more leaves—loose or bound—floating around Father Athanasius's library. And we'll definitely have to include Greece on the itinerary, since I want to try to *date* this thing if possible, and I'll need help from some of their best text experts. We fly over at the end of the spring semester, right?”

Shannon nodded slowly, in wonderment. It seemed as if great discoveries were not limited to excavating the good earth. Good libraries, evidently, were also fertile ground.



Must good fortune be balanced off by bad? Jon and Shannon never made the trip.

How could things go wrong so instantly, so emphatically? And why did it have to happen on one of the loveliest days in May? One moment, Jon and Shannon were looking forward to their trip to Jordan and Greece. But the next, Jon heard his own name being shouted by an angry jumble of voices from Harvard Yard below. He hurried over to the open windows of his office to see at least seventy or eighty students gathered in the shape of a crescent below Sever Hall. Many stood with raised fists waving at him in unison.

"Weber? Never! Islam is forever!"

As he listened, the chant grew louder and became a full-throated chorus: *"Weber? Never! Islam is forever!"*

"What the . . . ?" Jon asked himself; then the phone rang.

"This is Captain Rhinehart at Harvard Security, Professor Weber," the voice on the line said. "I should warn you that the Muslim Student Association on campus was granted a demonstration permit, and we just learned that you may be the subject."

"They're already here. Any idea *why* they're after me?"

"Haven't the foggiest. We're sending our men over now. I suggest you lock your office door immediately."

"Right! Thanks."

Outside the window, the mighty mantra continued, as each

leaf fluttering on the ivy-covered walls seemed to waft the message in Jon's direction. Now he saw some of the placards sprouting above the crowd:

**PROF. WEBER WILL PAY
9/11 IS ON ITS WAY!**

**WEBER IS THE CANCER
ISLAM IS THE ANSWER!**

**WEBER'S A PROFESSOR?
WE NEED HIS SUCCESSOR!**

Again the phone rang.

"Dr. Weber? It's George Gabriel of the *Boston Globe*."

"Hey, George. I've been meaning to call and thank you for doing that nice piece on our ICO conference. But just now we've got a big demonstration over here—"

"I'll bet! We just got an AP dispatch from Tehran that the grand ayatollah of Iran is convening a council of Shiite clergy to determine if charges of blasphemy should be lodged against you."

"*What?*"

"It's the new Arabic translation of your *Jesus of Nazareth* bestseller. It seems they're going to urge the faithful to buy up copies at all the bookstores and burn them. Hey, at least that should help sales!"

"But in Iran they speak Farsi, not Arabic," Jon replied, ignoring the levity. "So why would—?"

“Apparently the offending passages were translated into Farsi, and they pounced on them.”

“But *what* offending passages, for goodness’ sake?”

“Don’t know. The only item mentioned in the dispatch was . . . let’s see, here it is. ‘The Iranian clergy feel that the author treated the Prophet Muhammad with great disrespect, if not outright sacrilege.’”

“Impossible!” Jon almost shouted into the phone. “Most of my book covers the *first* century, not the seventh! I mention Muhammad only in the final chapter, which does a quick summary of Christianity since Christ.”

“Yeah, but you know how sensitive Muslims are. Remember the Danish cartoon business or the pope’s comments in Germany?”

“But I can’t think of anything in the book that would be offensive. Anyway, I gotta go; someone’s at the door. I’ll get back to you.”

The knocking persisted as a voice resonated through the wood of the door. “Harvard Security—Captain Rhinehart here, Professor Weber. I have the president of the Muslim Student Association with me, and he’d like to speak with you.”

Jon opened the door to find Captain Rhinehart standing with a tall, bronzed figure dressed in a galabia and a maroon fez. A small crowd of campus police and curious students filled the hallway behind them. The student introduced himself—in excellent English—as Abdoul Housani, an Egyptian graduate student in international studies. Jon invited him into his office, and Rhinehart followed without waiting for an invitation.

“Have a seat, gentlemen,” Jon offered.

“I prefer to stand, Professor Weber,” Housani said.

“As you wish. Perhaps you’d be kind enough to explain *why* this demonstration is taking place?”

“Yes, of course. You are on record as insulting the Prophet Muhammad—may his name be blessed.”

“Why in the world would you ever think that?”

Housani opened the book he was carrying—*Isa al-Nazrani*, the Arabic edition of Jon’s book—and turned to a bookmark he had inserted at page 490. Pointing to the last line of the text, he said, “Here, sir, you have grievously offended all of Islam by what you wrote about the Prophet—may his name be blessed. I shall read your own words back to you as I translate.”

“Please do.”

“On this page, you deal with the great expansion of Islam, and the last line reads, ‘Undoubtedly, Muhammad introduced the greatest evil Christianity ever faced.’ Now that is an outrageous—”

“I never wrote that!” Jon exclaimed as he rose, stood next to Housani, and peered at the page. His Arabic wasn’t exactly conversational, but he had a reading knowledge of the language. Slowly, he read the offending line aloud: “*La yujad shakk, qaddama nabi Muhammad al-radi al-’athim allathi wajahat al-masihiyah.*”

Jon stopped reading and returned to his desk, fighting the impulse to clench his fists. “Unbelievable!” he almost whispered. “That’s exactly what it says!” Then he looked up and said, “You translate well, Mr. Housani.”

The swarthy face of his guest warped into a grim smile of triumph. Captain Rhinehart’s brow corrugated into a facial question mark as he looked on rather helplessly.

“But that’s *not* what I wrote!” Jon fairly bellowed. “It should be *tahaddi*, not *radi*—*challenge*, not *evil*.” He went to one of the bookcases insulating the four walls of his office and pulled off a copy of the American edition of *Jesus of Nazareth*. Quickly thumbing his way to the last chapter, he swooped down to the final line and held the book out for the student. “Now, Mr. Housani, please read what I actually wrote.”

Glowering with suspicion, the student read aloud, “Undoubtedly, Muhammad introduced the greatest . . . challenge . . . Christianity ever faced.”

“*Challenge*, Mr. Housani. *Challenge*, not *evil*!”

The Arab student seemed perplexed and was mute for several seconds. Finally he stammered, “I . . . I don’t understand. . . .”

“It’s really quite simple. Either this was a wretched typographical error, or it’s a translation error. Believe me, I’m going to find out which.”

Slowly, Housani nodded, while Captain Rhinehart stopped wringing his hands and smiled.

Jon didn’t want to overdo the injured innocence bit, but he did have a few questions he wanted answered before this student left his office. “Might I ask, Mr. Housani, why you and the Muslim Student Association didn’t check the original English version of my book first before staging this demonstration? I can’t imagine it would have been difficult to find a copy. I think the Harvard Coop keeps about fifteen in stock at all times.”

“I . . . we . . . find Arabic easier reading than English.”

Jon nodded. “Okay, understandable. But something strange seems to be going on here. How in the world did you and your

demonstrators even learn about all this? The publication date for the Arabic edition isn't until a week from now."

Housani was silent for some moments. Then he answered, "We have a contact in Cairo who mailed us a copy air express in order to help us . . . stay on top of things as much as we can."

"As well you should," Jon replied, now smiling. "I trust you'll explain all this to the Muslim Student Association?"

"Yes. I'll do that, Professor Weber. But please let us know how that terrible error got into the Arabic translation."

"Of course. In fact, the moment you leave this office, I'll be phoning my publisher in Cairo to stop the presses—literally—and make that correction. Then I'll instruct him to recall as many of the faulty first editions as possible."

"Thank you, Professor Weber. And . . . I apologize if any of our people went overboard during the demonstration."

"Accepted. Thank you. By the way, how come you have such a perfect command of English—even our colloquial expressions—and hardly any accent?"

Housani smiled. "Well, as a boy growing up in Bahrain, I listened to *Voice of America* as much as I could, and I tried to imitate American English."

"VOA? Well done, sir. Your association certainly seems to have picked a worthy leader."

They shook hands. The moment Housani and Rhinehart left, Jon reached for the phone. Never mind that it was nearing midnight Cairo time. If his publisher didn't roust himself out of bed and act quickly, much of the Islamic world might erupt into rioting that could make the demonstration in Harvard Yard look like a party in the park.



Jon's second call was to his translator, Osman al-Ghazali, a Christian Arab who was a professor of Islamic studies at Harvard, but he failed to reach him either at the university or at his home in Belmont. The messages Jon left on both answering machines were quite impassioned.

His third immediacy was to compose a written statement for the media on the glaring error in translation and proofreading. His two-page statement concluded:

The offending word in the final sentence of the last chapter of *Jesus of Nazareth* has been correctly translated as “challenge”—not “evil”—in the twenty-nine foreign languages into which the book has been printed, as will become obvious to anyone taking the time to make the search. I deeply regret that the new Arabic edition contained a typographical or translational error that is understandably offensive to Islam. The printing of the first edition has been halted, and the publisher is in the process of recalling as many of the defective copies as possible. Those who have purchased a copy of the faulty first edition may exchange it for the corrected version or receive a full refund. All future editions in Arabic will contain the appropriate correction. Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

“There; that should do it, Marylou,” Jon said to his secretary. “Better run off a hundred copies of this. The media will be hungry.”

“Not ‘will be’—they *are* hungry. Look out the window.”

Below, mobile television trucks were already desecrating the sacred turf of Harvard Yard, and reporters and camera crews were milling through the still-vocal crowd of demonstrators. Jon threw his hands up in frustration. “I haven’t gotten through to al-Ghazali yet, so there’s nothing I can add to that statement. Please just hand it out, and they’ll have to be satisfied with that for now.”

“But won’t you be here too? You look so nice on television,” she trifled.

“No, I’m escaping, and you don’t know where I am. Good luck with the media!”

Jon ducked out of his office just as the staircases and elevators disgorged the first wave of reporters. He used a remote fire escape and was on the road home to suburban Weston before the media even learned that he had left campus.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Paul L. Maier is the Russell H. Seibert Professor of Ancient History at Western Michigan University and a much-published author of both scholarly and popular works. His novels include two historical documentaries—*Pontius Pilate* and *The Flames of Rome*—as well as *A Skeleton in God's Closet*, a theological thriller that became a #1 national bestseller in religious fiction when it first released. A sequel, *More Than a Skeleton*, followed in 2003.

His nonfiction works include *In the Fullness of Time*, a book that correlates sacred with secular evidence from the ancient world impinging on Jesus and early Christianity; *Josephus: The Essential Works*, a new translation/commentary on writings of the first-century Jewish historian; and *Eusebius: The Church History*, a similar book on the first Christian historian. More than five million of Maier's books are now in print in twenty languages, as well as over 250 scholarly articles and reviews in professional journals.

Dr. Maier lectures widely, appears frequently on national radio, television, and newspaper interviews, and has received numerous awards. He has also penned seven children's books and hosted six video seminars dealing with Jesus, St. Paul, the early church, and current Christianity.

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