

delivered him from the intent of his enemies to destroy him and God had enabled him to reach safety where no one could find him but that he would get word to them from time to time of his understanding of the Lord's will for them.

9 And it seems that in earlier days Athanasias had made a trip in the Egyptian desert in that wild barren region where hardly anybody could live on just a little bit of water here and there, and few eating places. During the previous 50 years quite a few people disgusted with the worldliness and luxury of the Roman Empire, and disgusted with the many features of the world they sought, had left it and gone off into the desert and were living as hermits. There they were living and studying the word of God and attempting to give themselves to Bible Study and Prayer; but cutting themselves off entirely from the life of the Roman Empire. Athanasias knew a good many of these people and they rejoiced in his stand for God's truth through all the difficulties and so when he was spirited out of the building while still unconscious, in some way they got him off to one of these hermits and passed him from one to the other. The groups of soldiers who went into the desert in the next few years never found him. So for six years Athanasias became a fugitive in the desert but he was writing various writings and even got out his Easter letters and he kept up his influence throughout the Roman Empire - of course in small way compared to what could be done if they could be circulated freely, but nevertheless his friends got word from him and knew that he was still safe. But the control in the empire was in Constantius hands and Constantius was advancing the Arian bishops and interfering with the others just as much as he possibly could.

c. **Pope Liberius** - you may recall that the word **Pope** was used for any Bishop in those days but particularly for the bishops in positions of great promise like the bishop of Alexandria who were regularly called the Popes of Alexandria and the bishops of Rome. We mentioned Bishop Julius of Rome at an earlier period, who supported Athanasias. Julius had died and been succeeded by a man named Liberius. Liberius was there when Constantius had called this