

# Secular Attacks on Our Judeo-Christian Heritage: The enemy of my enemy is my friend.

Part 1: Creation to AD 1800s

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From an unpublished draft (19 Dec 2009) that contains  
notes of things that need to be changed or added

## 1. Introduction

The pilgrims and other early colonists of the USA came here from England because they wanted religious liberty. Most were Protestants who had been persecuted or restricted by state religious such as the Catholic Church and the Church of England. They accepted both the *Jewish* Old Testament and the *Christian* New Testament as scripture. For this reason, U.S. has a Judeo-Christian heritage. Early American agreed on what was written in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible but disagreed on interpretation and emphasis. They loved God and neighbor. Their laws were based on the Ten Commandments. They believed their rights to life, liberty, and property came from God not from government. Preachers and others quoted the Bible in their pamphlets resisting England's efforts to restrict their freedoms. They believed that God helped them win the revolutionary war. They believed God inspired the Constitution which limited the power of the federal government to infringe on their personal liberties. The basic principles of religious liberty became part of the first amendment of the Constitution.

Chapters two and three review what is written in the Bible. Chapter seven summarizes the basic beliefs and differences of early American Christians around AD 1800.

## Church and State

Before the Constitution was ratified in 1789, religious liberty had been suppressed for almost 1700 years. For about 200 years after the apostles, Christians were frequently persecuted and killed by Jews and Romans. Jews considered Christians to be heretics, while Romans punished them for not worshipping their gods and the Emperor. While Constantine was Emperor (AD 306–337), there was a “marriage of church and state” and Christianity became the established or state religion of the Roman Empire. State funds paid for church buildings, food for the poor, and salaries for the clergy. Constantine and other emperors called councils of bishops to determine the official doctrines or creeds of the Catholic Church. Force was then used silence dissent and heretics who did not assent to the creeds. Now “orthodox” Christians were persecuting “non-orthodox” Christians. It wasn't long before 90% of the citizens were Christian. During the middle ages, the Catholic Church was the state religion of most European countries and kings needed the support of the Pope. These kings and the Catholic Church used force to fund the Church, to silence dissent and to kill heretics who publicly questioned Catholic traditions.

Early Christians were able to read and hear the scriptures in their own languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Jerome translated the scriptures into everyday spoken Latin. After the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Latin was no longer the common language of the people. However, the Roman Catholic Church continued to use Latin. Until the 1500s, only priests and a few others had copies of the Bible. They were copied by hand and were written in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew that most people could not read. The Catholic Church continued using Jerome's Latin

Vulgate Bible. In early 1500s, Martin Luther and others began translating the Bible from Greek and Hebrew into German, English, and other common languages. The recent invention of the Gutenberg press made it possible for many people to have a Bible in a language they could read. Many people began to protest against Catholic traditions and practices that they felt were contrary to the teachings of the Bible.

The Catholic Church attempted to ban or burn early translations of the Bible and other books that questioned Catholic traditions. The Catholic Church condemned as heretics those who translated the Bible into common languages and when possible these heretics were tortured or killed. After translating much of the Bible into English and protesting against the Catholic Church, William Tyndale was tortured and killed as a heretic in 1536. “Nearly 84 percent of the New Testament and close to 76 percent of the portions of the Old Testament that Tyndale translated have been transmitted to the KJV just as he left them.”<sup>1</sup>

In some countries, protestant leaders such as Luther were protected by local governments from Catholic attempts to kill them. This resulted in religious wars in which Catholic countries fought against Protestant countries. When King Henry VIII could not get the Pope's approval to divorce his barren wife, he rejected the authority of the Pope and the Church of England became the state religion. For the most part, it kept the traditions and practices of the Catholic Church. The Church of England also used force to silence dissent. The government made laws restricting the freedoms of Puritans and other Protestants who criticized the Church of England.

When Protestants settled in North America, they finally had the freedom to practice their religions as they wished. However, they also established their religion in their states and used the power of state government to fund the church and to silence dissent. When the Constitution was ratified in 1788, six of the thirteen states still had state religions. The Bill of Rights prevented the federal government from establishing a U.S. religion and from making laws that restricted (a) the religious liberties of citizens or (b) the rights of states to have a state religion.

Chapter four discusses what happened in early Christianity for a few centuries after the apostles. Chapter 6 goes into more detail on Church and State.

## Church and Academics

During the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, Athens was the intellectual center of Greece. Plato's school (the Academy) and Aristotle's school (the Lyceum) “attracted philosophers and scientists from all over Greece.”<sup>2</sup> Alexandria became the intellectual center of Egypt when a research institution (the Library and Museum) was set up in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.<sup>3</sup> Greek was the language of the Roman Empire which included both Athens and Alexandria. Later, many Jews and early Christians lived in Alexandria and were educated in Greek schools. Educated Greeks frequently criticized Jewish and Christian scriptures that did not agree with the ideas of the Greek philosophers. Jewish and Christian intellectuals began reinterpreting their scriptures to be academically-correct. A later chapter will describe how these efforts led to the “marriage of Christianity and Greek philosophy” in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

The invention of the printing press (c. AD 1450) facilitated the Protestant reformation and the publication of the Bible in many languages. The Protestants criticized Catholic traditions and practices that were not supported by the Bible. The printing press also facilitated the growth of modern science, philosophy, and

universities. From 1600–1800, there was a “growing secularization of West European society, culture, and thought. ... The fragmentation of the universal church into competing churches, and weariness with religious warfare, hastened on the secularization process.”<sup>4</sup> Secular relates to ideas and practices that are not religious or supernatural. Secularism may be defined as “the idea that religion should not interfere with or be integrated into the public affairs of a society... [and that] religion and supernatural beliefs are not seen as the key to understanding the world. ...”<sup>5</sup>

Secular scholars began criticizing the Bible and religious beliefs that were not supported by the academically-correct science and philosophy. Many university professors and students became atheists or agnostics because they could not reconcile the Bible and popular religious teachings with the academically-correct ideas of the universities.

Chapter five goes into more detail on Christianity and Greek Philosophy. The last part of chapter six discusses secular attacks from AD 1600–1800. Chapter eight reviews later secular strategies and efforts to replace the KJV, to discredit the Bible, and to establish new authorities (e.g., scientists, philosophers, scholars, and experts) as the modern prophets. Chapter nine discusses where and how the secular gospel is currently taught.

### Replace the King James Bible

In 1611, the KJV was first published. In the 1800s, two Cambridge University professors, Westcott and Hort, had a committee set up to “revise” the KJV [get quote]. Going way beyond the charge, they replaced the Greek text used by the KJV translators with their own academically-correct Greek text. Many traditional KJV passages were removed or questioned in marginal notes. The translators did more than just revise outdated words. For example, the word “miracle” was replaced with “sign.” In 1881, the Revised Standard Version (RSV) was first published.

### Theological Seminaries

In the early 1800s, several universities established theological seminaries to train ministers. During the 1900s, Bible criticism and other academically-correct ideas were taught in many theological seminaries. Many churches require their ministers to have a degree from a theological seminary. Below is a story of three ministers and how they were affected by theological seminaries.

In 1948, Charlie Templeton invited his good friend Billy Graham to go with him to Princeton Theological Seminary but Billy declined. During Charlie’s first year, Billy visited him several times at school. Charlie challenged Billy’s traditional beliefs which were not academically correct. Billy could not counter Charlie’s arguments based on higher criticism, science, anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Flustered Billy said, “The finest minds in the world have... come down on both sides of these questions. I don’t have the time, [or] the inclination... to pursue them. I have found that if I say, ‘The Bible says’ and ‘God says,’ I get results. I have decided I am not going to wrestle with these questions any longer.” Later at Forrest Home, Billy and Charlie had another discussion. Charlie said, “Billy, you’re fifty years out of date. People no longer accept the Bible as being inspired the way you do. Your faith is too simple. Your language is out of date. You’re going to have to learn the new jargon if you’re going to be successful in your ministry.”<sup>6</sup> In fresh turmoil, Billy went for a walk in the pine forest and then sat for a long time on a large rock. In prayer, Billy said, “Oh God, I cannot prove certain things. I cannot answer some of the questions Chuck

is raising... but I accept this Book by faith as the Word of God.”<sup>7</sup> “When I got up from my knees, ... my eyes stung with tears. I sensed the presence and power of God as I had not sensed it in months. Not all my questions were answered, but a major bridge had been crossed. ... I knew a spiritual battle in my soul had been fought and won.”<sup>8</sup> “After completing his studies at Princeton and serving for a time as a successful evangelist... Templeton recognized he was no longer a believer in any... orthodox sense and that it was intellectually dishonest to pretend otherwise. Shortly afterward he left the ministry. ... In sharp contrast, Graham’s conscious resolution... galvanized his faith, and... ‘gave power and authority to my preaching that has never left me. ...’”<sup>9</sup>

In his book, *Farewell to God: My Reasons for Rejecting the Christian Faith*, Charlie Templeton said he was an agnostic not an atheist. An atheist believes there is no God while an agnostic believes one cannot know, based on the available evidence, if there is a God or not.<sup>10</sup> However, he clearly rejected the Bible because the accepted academic experts (e.g., physicists, anthropologists, geneticists, and geologists) could not find evidence that supported his interpretation of creation, Adam and Eve, Noah, and Jesus.<sup>11</sup> For him, the Christian God was omniscient and loving, but in the Genesis account of creation God was inept, without foresight, unjust, vindictive, gender-biased, not omniscient, and subject to fatigue.<sup>12</sup> For Templeton, “it is obvious that there cannot be a loving God” because of natural disasters, disease, suffering, death, and evil in this world.<sup>13</sup>

John Shelby Spong was a contemporary of Templeton who immersed himself “in contemporary biblical scholarship at... Union Theological Seminary..., Yale Divinity School, Harvard Divinity School and the storied universities in Edinburgh, Oxford and Cambridge.”<sup>14</sup> Instead of leaving the ministry like Templeton, Spong wanted to change Christianity from within. As an Episcopalian bishop for 45 years, he preached many sermons and wrote many books such as *Why Christianity Must Either Change or Die*. When he retired, Spong was invited to give publishable public lectures and to teach at Harvard Divinity School. Each year for the last five years, Spong has given more than 200 public lectures.

In one of his books, Spong wrote “I am a Christian. ... Yet I do not define God as a supernatural being. I do not believe in a deity who can help a nation win a war, intervene to cure a loved one’s sickness, ... or affect the weather for anyone’s benefit. ... Since I do not see God as a being, I cannot interpret Jesus as the earthly incarnation of this supernatural deity, nor can I with credulity assume that he possessed sufficient Godlike power to do such miraculous things as stilling the storm, banishing demons, walking on water, or expanding five loaves... to feed five thousand men, plus women and children. ... I do not believe that this Jesus could or did in any literal way raise the dead, overcome a medically diagnosed paralysis, or restore sight to a person born blind. ... I do not believe that Jesus entered this world by the miracle of a virgin birth. ... I do not believe that Jesus was born in Bethlehem or that he fled to Egypt to escape the wrath of King Herod. ... I do not believe... [in] the physical resuscitation of the three-days-dead body of Jesus, nor do I believe that anyone literally talked with Jesus after the resurrection moment, gave him food, touched his resurrected flesh, or walked in any physical manner with his risen body. ... I do not believe that Jesus’ resurrection was marked in a literal way by an earthquake, an angelic pronouncement, or an empty tomb. ... I do not believe that Jesus... returned to God by ascending in any literal sense into

a heaven located somewhere above the sky. ... I do not believe that this Jesus founded a church or that he established an ecclesiastical hierarchy beginning with the twelve apostles. ... I do not believe that the Bible is the 'word of God' in any literal sense. ... I do not believe that God dictated it or even inspired its production in its entirety. I see the Bible as a human book mixing the profound wisdom of the sages... with the limitations of human perceptions of reality at a particular time in human history."<sup>15</sup>  
"The theory of evolution made Adam and Eve legendary at best. ... We were not created in God's image in any literal way. We simply evolved out of lower forms of life. ..."<sup>16</sup>

Regarding the Ten Commandments, Spong wrote: "This mythology of a divine source of ethics enforced by the all-seeing God, however, has been revealed by the ancient codes themselves to be nonsense. A careful study of these codes reveals nothing less than the tribal prejudices, stereotypes, and limited knowledge of the people who created them. That is certainly true of the Torah and... the Ten Commandments. Within that familiar and honored code are found elements and attitudes that would be dismissed by most people today as unworthy of obedience."<sup>17</sup> "No heavenly parent figure sets down and enforces the rules by which life is governed. No divine and eternal law has ever been written... on tablets of stone. The God who once was perceived as undergirding these primitive assumptions has been taken from us and destroyed by both the march of time and the explosion of knowledge."<sup>18</sup>

"Templeton, Spong, and Graham all realized that the conflict between the naturalistic worldview and the Christian supernaturalistic worldview goes all the way down. It cannot be papered over by superficial compromises. ... It cannot be mitigated by reading the Bible figuratively rather than literally. From a modernist perspective, biblical Christianity is just as wrong figuratively as it is literally. The story of salvation by the cross makes no sense against a background of evolutionary naturalism. The evolutionary story is a story of humanity's climb from animal beginnings to rationality, not a story of a fall from perfection. It is a story about recognizing gods as illusions, not a story about recognizing God as the ultimate reality. ... It is a story about learning to rely entirely on human intelligence, not a story of the helplessness of that intelligence in the face of the inescapable fact of sin."<sup>19</sup>

Both Spong and Templeton believed the academically-correct ideas taught in the seminaries. Templeton left the ministry an agnostic, while Spong remained with the intent of changing Christianity. Congregations are more likely than their ministers to believe what is written in the Bible.

## Conclusion

During the last 200 years, our Judeo-Christian heritage has been under secular attack. Academically-correct scholars use Bible criticism to weaken our faith in God and the Bible. The media mocks and criticizes Judeo-Christian beliefs while promoting immorality and other secular ideals. The public schools teach only secular subjects and theories (e.g., evolution). The courts are being used to remove anything religious (e.g., prayer, Bible, Ten Commandments) from public schools, buildings, and events. Once again our religious liberty is being restricted in the name of academic- and political-correctness. ...

## 2. Old Testament (Hebrew Bible)

As American Christians in the 1600–1800s read and studied the KJV Bible, they learned about the following events and noticed some patterns. The different Protestant denominations

agreed on what was written in the KJV but disagreed on interpretation and emphasis. Below is a summary of what is written in the KJV Bible. Later, a summary of basic beliefs and some differences in interpretation will be given. (Note: In the KJV Old Testament, LORD means the Hebrew word was YHWH, Yahweh, or Jehovah.)

### Creation

"In the beginning, God created the heaven and earth"<sup>20</sup> with plants and animals. "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image... male and female created he them."<sup>21</sup> The Hebrew word (*bara*) for created means "shape, fashion, create."<sup>22</sup>

### Fall of Adam

In the Garden of Eden, God said to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."<sup>23</sup> After Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, "they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden. ..."<sup>24</sup> The LORD asked what each had done, and then explained what would happen. The LORD God made "coats of skins and clothed them."<sup>25</sup> Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden and death, pain, and hard work became the lot of all mankind. Soon Adam's family began to offer sacrifice. The LORD had a two-way conversation with Cain after one of his sacrifices and after Cain had killed Abel.

### Revelation

In the Bible, we find many examples of how God communicates directly and indirectly with prophets and others. In these examples we see that God cares about his people and what they do. We also see a God who is willing and able to help his people in times of need.

**Direct** 🗨️: In the Bible, God has direct two-way conversations Adam, Eve, Cain, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), Moses, and others. Sometimes, God gives commandments or covenants. Other times, God discusses consequences of obedience or disobedience. Most of the recorded conversations are between God and his prophets. In some, God gives *personal* commandments to save the prophet's family (e.g., build an ark, leave Sodom, where to find food and water during a drought). In others, God gives *general* commandments for others (e.g., the Ten Commandments, messages to give to others).

**Indirect** 🗨️: Frequently, God communicates indirectly with people through angels, "the spirit of the LORD," "the Holy Ghost," prophets, and apostles. Sometimes these messengers announce present and future events (e.g., a child will be born, what to name the child, a child has been born). Sometimes, these messengers warn the people to repent or else. Sometimes, they give God's commandments or covenants to individuals or nations (e.g., go wash in the river Jordan, the Ten Commandments, how to be healed or delivered).

**Ordinances, Types, and Names** 🗨️: These help people remember what God has done or will do. A religious *ordinance* is "a practice or usage authoritatively ... prescribed, especially a religious or ceremonial observance, as the sacraments, etc."<sup>26</sup> For example, the feast of Passover was an ordinance which reminded the people of how the LORD delivered the Israelites from bondage to the Egyptians. "A *type* is a person, object, or event that symbolizes or represents something that is to come at a later date.

For example, the Passover lamb was a type of Jesus; the tabernacle was a type of heaven.”<sup>27</sup> In Hebrew, *names* for people and places also had meanings often intended to remind people of past events or to foretell future events. For example, Abraham means “father of a multitude.”<sup>28</sup> Immanuel, a name for the messiah, means “with us is God.”<sup>29</sup> Shear-jashub, a son of Isaiah, means “the remnant shall return.” Bethlehem means “house of bread.”

??? In this paper, ☞ will identify examples of direct communication, ☞ will identify examples of indirect communication, and ☞ will identify ordinances, types, or names that point the mind backward or forward.

## Prophets

God communicated with Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), Moses, and other prophets through two-way conversations, visions, dreams, angels, and the spirit of prophecy. Through prophets, God gave commandments, covenants, prophecies, and warnings to repent. Sometimes God gave *personal* commandments to save the prophet’s family (e.g., build an ark, leave Sodom, instructions to find food and water during a drought). At other times, God gave *general* commandments for others (e.g., the Ten Commandments, messages to give to others). Malachi (ca 400 BC) was the last prophet of the Old Testament.

## The God of the Prophets

“God created man in his own image.”<sup>30</sup> “God created man, in the likeness of God made he him.”<sup>31</sup> Jacob said, “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”<sup>32</sup> “Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel... saw the God of Israel: and *there was* under his feet. ...”<sup>33</sup> The Ten Commandments “written with the finger of God.”<sup>34</sup> “The LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.”<sup>35</sup> “I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.”<sup>36</sup> “If there be a prophet among you, *I* the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, *and* will speak unto him in a dream. ... With [Moses] will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, ... and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold.”<sup>37</sup> “Enoch walked with God...”<sup>38</sup>

“The *anger* of the LORD was kindled against Moses. ...”<sup>39</sup> “Ye shall not go after other gods, ... (For the LORD thy God is a *jealous* God among you) lest the *anger* of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee. ...”<sup>40</sup> The Lord shows “*mercy* unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.”<sup>41</sup> “The LORD thy God is a *merciful* God.”<sup>42</sup> “The LORD *loved* you, and... brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you ... from the hand of Pharaoh. ... Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the *faithful* God, which keepeth covenant and *mercy* with them that love him and keep his commandments...”<sup>43</sup>

“Anthropomorphism (from Greek *άνθρωπος* — “man” and *μορφή*—“form”), the attribution to God of human physical form or psychological characteristics. ... An obviously anthropomorphic expression is found in Genesis: *zelem Elohim* (‘the image of God’) and there are references to actually ‘seeing’ God (Ex. 24:10–12; Num. 12:8). ... divine providence is referred to as ‘the eyes of the Lord’ and ‘the ears of the Lord’ (very common in Prophets and Psalms); ‘the mouth of the Lord’ speaks to the prophets...; the heavens are the work of His fingers (Ps. 8:4), and the tablets of the covenant are written by the finger of God (Ex. 31:18). Striking figurative expressions are *af* (‘nose’; i.e., ‘the wrath of the Lord’), ‘His countenance’ (which He causes to shine or, alternatively, hides), *yad*, (‘hand,’ ‘His right hand,’

‘His arm,’ ‘His sword’). At times the personification is startlingly extreme: God (or His voice) ‘walks about in the garden’ (Gen 3:8); He ‘goes down’ in order to see what is being done on the earth (Gen. 11:5; 18:21) or in order to reveal Himself there (Ex. 19:18; 34:5), and He ‘goes up again’ (Gen. 17:22; 35:13); He goes through the land of Egypt and passes over the houses of the Israelites (Ex. 12:12–13); He sits on a throne (Is. 6:1), causes His voice to be heard among the cherubim who are over the ark of the tabernacle (Num. 7:89), dwells in Zion and in Jerusalem (Ps. 132:13; 135:21); the hair of His head is as wool (Dan. 7:9); Moses sees ‘His back’ (Ex. 33:23). Anthropomorphic expressions abound in the song at the Red Sea (Ex. 15) and in the song of David (II Sam. 22; Ps. 18). ...

“More important from a theological perspective are the anthropomorphisms, or psychical personifications of the Deity. Scripture attributes to God love and hate, joy and delight, regret and sadness, pity and compassion, disgust, anger, revenge, and other feelings.” (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, p. 51–52)

## Commandments

From the beginning God gave *commandments* to men and women and told them what would happen if they broke the commandments. He then *tested* them by giving them opportunities to obey or disobey the commandments. It was easy for Adam and Eve to pick the forbidden fruit and the serpent was allowed to entice them. Noah was commanded to build an ark while others mocked him. Abraham was commanded to sacrifice his son. Moses told the Israelites, “the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.”<sup>44</sup> In the land of Israel, the LORD left heathen or gentile people in the land “to prove Israel by them, ... to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.”<sup>45</sup>

**Sacrifice:** Animal sacrifice appears to be an early commandment that was practiced during the time of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus.<sup>46</sup> “The Hebrew term for sacrifice, *korban*, is from a root meaning ‘to draw near,’ and originally denoted that which was brought near, or offered, to God. It is also possible that the term signified ‘that which brings man near to God’ and, indeed, a late aggadic source interprets sacrifices in this sense.”<sup>47</sup>

**Other Commandments:** “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”<sup>48</sup> “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I *am* the LORD.”<sup>49</sup> In addition, the LORD gave the Ten Commandments, dietary laws regarding clean and unclean animals, and other commandments as part of the Law of Moses. Jewish rabbis counted 613 general commandments in the Old Testament that apply to Jews.

## Covenants

God also made *covenants* with his prophets and his people. In some covenants, God promised blessings to Noah, Abraham, and David because they obeyed his commandments even if it was difficult to do so. Continued obedience was expected. In other covenants, God through his prophet (e.g., Moses) gave commandments, and specified the consequences of obedience (blessings) and disobedience (curses). Then the people were invited to accept this covenant. As a hen gathers her chicks under her wings to protect them from storms and danger, God invited his people to come under the protection of his covenants.



**Signs:** Each new covenant had a sign or reminder of the covenant. For example, sacrifice (Adam); rainbow (Noah); circumcision (Abraham); Ark of the Covenant, tabernacle or temple (Moses); and baptism and Lord's Supper (Jesus).

### Covenant Cycle

After God gives a commandment or covenant, the people obey and receive blessings and begin to forget the covenant. After some time, they or their children disobey and experience the consequences which remind them of the covenant. They repent and the cycle begins again. In the table below, this cycle is illustrated and common Bible words are shown for the various phases.

	<b>Blessings:</b> (reward: peace, prosper, deliver)	
<b>Remember:</b> (return, repent, obey, keep)	<b>Covenants Commandments</b>	<b>Forget:</b> (forsake, fall away, disobey, break)
	<b>Curses:</b> (punish: famine, war, pestilence, captivity)	God sends prophets to warn of covenant curses if people do not return to the LORD.

In the Bible, remembering a commandment or covenant also implied keeping it. After breaking a covenant, a person can repent and begin to keep it again. In Hebrew, repentance (*shwb*) literally means 'return,' and signifies a return or turning back to the LORD (YHWH). "This root combines in itself both requisites of repentance: to turn from the evil and to turn to the good. The motion of turning implies that sin is not an ineradicable stain but a straying from the right path. ..."<sup>50</sup> Repentance in Greek is known as *metanoia*, which means "a change of mind."

During times of peace and prosperity, people begin to forget God and break his commandments. God sends prophets to remind them and warn them of the consequences. If they continue to rebel and reject his prophets, they will experience covenant curses (e.g., famine, pestilence, war, captivity).

In the Bible, we see the following pattern repeated several times: (a) the Israelites break the covenant, (b) they experience covenant curses, (c) they repent and keep the covenant, and (d) the LORD delivers them and they receive covenant blessings. As you read, you will see these symbols to help identify the pattern.

### Dispensations

A dispensation began with a prophet and a new covenant between God and His people. The dispensation of *Adam* began with a commandment in the Garden and ended with the flood. The dispensation of *Noah* began with a covenant after the flood and ended with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The dispensation of *Abraham* began with a covenant and ended with bondage in Egypt. The dispensation of *Moses* began with a covenant on Mount Sinai and ended when many Jews were exiled to Babylon (587 BC), ruled by other countries after their return, and saw their temple and Jerusalem destroyed (AD 70). The dispensation of Christ began with a new covenant which some believe ended with the death of the apostles (AD 100) while others believe it still continues.

### Miracles

In the Bible, God uses miracles to keep his covenant to bless the righteous and to condemn or curse the wicked.

God commanded Moses to use miracles or plagues to free the Israelites from bondage and to kill many of the Egyptians. God used miracles to provide food and water for the Israelites wandering in the wilderness. For Joshua, the walls of Jericho came tumbling down.

Elijah raised a boy from the dead, was fed by ravens and by a widow whose oil and flour never went dry during a drought, and called down fire from heaven to burn up a sacrifice. Naaman was healed of leprosy by dipping himself seven times in the river Jordan as the prophet Elisha had instructed him.

[Relate to covenant cycle. Miracles are noticed and needed most during bad times (e.g., bondage, sickness, ...)]

### Messiah

Both Jews and Christians believed in Bible prophecies regarding the Messiah (Hebrew meaning "the anointed one"). Jews believed he will come to deliver Israel and that war will end.<sup>51</sup> Christians believed that Christ (Greek meaning "the anointed one") was the promised Messiah who did come to deliver mankind from death and sin,<sup>52</sup> and that when he comes again, war will end.

### 3. New Testament

- REVELATION:** For the first time in about 400 years, God began to communicate with people through angels, dreams, visions, etc. An angel came to Zechariah to announce that he would have a son named John. An angel told Mary that she would have a son named Jesus. Angels appeared to shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus. Joseph was warned in a dream to flee to Egypt. Moses and Elijah appeared on the mount of Transfiguration. After the baptism of Jesus, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."<sup>53</sup>
- SON OF GOD:** Jesus Christ was the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary.
- TEACHINGS OF JESUS:** These include: love God and love neighbor, keep the Ten Commandments, live the golden rule, going the second mile, forgiving others, help the poor, prayer, sex only within marriage, and so on.
- MIRACLES:** Jesus healed the blind, lame, lepers, issue of blood, raised the dead. He walked on water, turned water into wine, fed the 5000, calmed the storm, ... The miracles of Jesus blessed the believers and condemned the religious leaders of the Jews who denied them or said they were of the devil. However, in Nazareth, Jesus "did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."<sup>54</sup>
- JESUS REJECTS RELIGIOUS LEADERS:** Jesus rejected the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees. He healed on the Sabbath and ate with publicans and sinners. He called them hypocrites, blind guides, and fools. Jesus said to them, "Ye hypocrites, well did [Isaiah] prophesy of you, saying, his people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."<sup>55</sup>
- RELIGIOUS LEADERS REJECT JESUS:** Jesus did many things that the religious leaders (scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees) did not like! Many of the people followed him instead of them. He called them hypocrites and rejected their traditions. They

felt that many his teachings were contrary to the Torah (law of Moses). Understandably they fought back. Unable to deny that Jesus cast out devils, they accused him of casting out devils by the power of Satan<sup>56</sup> They asked Jesus questions tempting him to give answers contrary to the Law of Moses, Roman law, or popular beliefs so they could accuse him. They asked him if a woman caught in adultery should be stoned according to the Law of Moses.<sup>57</sup> They asked if divorce was lawful as Moses had said.<sup>58</sup> They asked if it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar knowing that a “yes” would anger the people and “no” would be considered rebellion.<sup>59</sup> The Sadducees ridiculed the belief in resurrection by asking which of seven husbands she would have in the resurrection.<sup>60</sup> A Pharisee and lawyer tempted or tested him by asking “which is the great commandment in the law [Torah]”.<sup>61</sup> After that no man dared “ask him any more questions.”<sup>62</sup>

After Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, “the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.”<sup>63</sup> Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt<sup>64</sup> fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah: “thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon... a colt the foal of an ass.”<sup>65</sup> “And the multitudes... cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David. ...”<sup>66</sup> Jesus drove the money changers off the temple mount.<sup>67</sup> “And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, ... Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased. ...”<sup>68</sup> “The chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?”<sup>69</sup> When Jesus told them a parable of wicked husbandmen, “they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.”<sup>70</sup>

The religious leaders “consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.”<sup>71</sup> “Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.”<sup>72</sup>

7. **LAST SUPPER:** Jesus gave his apostles bread and said “this is my body... this do in remembrance of me.”<sup>73</sup> He then gave them a cup of wine and said “this is my blood of the new testament [or covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”<sup>74</sup> Christians call this the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper.
8. **RESURRECTION:** Jesus was condemned by Jewish religious leaders, and crucified by Romans. He “died for our sins” and was buried. On the third day, he rose again with a body of flesh and bone.<sup>75</sup> He was seen by his apostles and others. There shall be a literal resurrection of the body.<sup>76</sup>
9. **BAPTISM:** After his resurrection, Jesus taught his apostles for forty days. Jesus told his apostles to “preach the gospel... [and] He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. ...”<sup>77</sup>
10. **APOSTLES AND SEVENTY:** Jesus chose twelve disciples “whom also he named apostles”<sup>78</sup> and said “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit...”<sup>79</sup> Jesus also “appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city... whither he himself would come.”<sup>80</sup>

Likewise, Moses had *twelve* princes of Israel and *seventy* elders of Israel to help him govern the people. Moses also had rulers of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens.<sup>81</sup>

11. **ASCENSION:** Jesus ascended into heaven where he sits on the right hand of the Father.
12. **JUDGMENT:** Jesus shall come again to judge the living and the dead.<sup>82</sup>

## Apostles

After his resurrection, Jesus taught the apostles for forty days. After his ascension, Christ gave commandments to his apostles through the *Holy Ghost*.<sup>83</sup>

**BAPTISM:** Peter preached to about 3,000 and said “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the *Holy Ghost*.”<sup>84</sup>

**NEW APOSTLES:** After Judas killed himself, the apostles met to choose a new apostle to “be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.” After selecting Barsabas and Matthew, they prayed that the Lord would show which one he had chosen. Matthew became the next apostle.<sup>85</sup> After Herod killed the apostle James<sup>86</sup>, Paul and Barnabas are referred to as apostles.<sup>87</sup> The other apostles were killed in many different countries (e.g., India, Ethiopia, Italy, Britian). It is unlikely that they would have known when an apostle was killed or have been able to meet together to ordain another apostle.

**DISPUTES:** Jewish Christians insisted that Gentile Christians be circumcised and do the works of the Law of Moses to be saved. Paul disagreed. After the apostles had met and considered the matter, they sent their decision by letter saying “it seemed good to the *Holy Ghost*, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.”<sup>88</sup> Many of Paul’s epistles relate to this dispute and emphasize that salvation comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and not by the works of the Law of Moses.<sup>89</sup>

**REVELATION:** ☩ A gentile named Cornelius “saw in a vision... an angel of God...” who told him to send men to Joppa for Peter. ☩ In a vision, Peter was told to kill and eat unclean animals. “While Peter thought on the vision, the ☩ Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise... and go with them. ...” After teaching Cornelius, “the HOLY GHOST fell on all them... And he commanded them to be BAPTIZED in the name of the Lord.”<sup>90</sup>

Stephen, “being full of the ☩ Holy Ghost, ... said, Behold, ☩ I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.”

Paul said “suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I... ☩ heard a voice saying unto me. ... I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.”<sup>91</sup> The Lord “in a vision” told Ananias to restore Paul’s sight and baptize him. While Paul and Timothy were traveling, they “were forbidden of the ☩ Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia.” Also “the ☩ Spirit suffered them not” to go to Bithynia. Then “a ☩ vision appeared to Paul in the night” and they were told to go to Macedona.

**MIRACLES:** As Peter preached to 3,000 men, they each heard it in his own language. “Many signs and wonders were done by the apostles.” Peter healed a lame man by the temple. An angel freed the apostles from prison. Peter ☩ healed a man who sick of the palsy and raised a woman from the dead.<sup>92</sup> Paul raised a

young man from the dead.<sup>93</sup> Paul did not die from the bite of a poisonous serpent.

**APOSTOLIC CHURCH:** Christ is the head of the church<sup>94</sup>

After his resurrection and ascension, Jesus “through the Holy Ghost [gave] commandments unto the apostles...”<sup>95</sup> Thus, the resurrected Jesus continued to direct his apostles in the New Testament just as Yahweh directed his prophets in the Old Testament. Paul taught that the church was “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone...*”<sup>96</sup> and also included evangelists, pastors, and teachers “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”<sup>97</sup>

New Testament *prophets* are mentioned several times.<sup>98</sup> The Greek word for *evangelist* means “preacher of the gospel.” Several of the seventy were called evangelists and accompanied Paul as he traveled to preach the gospel. The Greek word for *pastor* is also translated as shepherd. This may refer to shepherds or leaders of congregations which could include bishops, deacons,<sup>99</sup> and elders.<sup>100</sup> In Greek, the word for *bishop* is “episkopos” which means overseer and the word for elder is “presbyteros.” Episcopalian and Presbyterian are derived from these words. The Greek word for *deacon* (“diakonos”) is translated as deacon, minister, and servant. Members of the Church were called *saints*<sup>101</sup> which meant “dedicated to God.”

**FORCE USED TO SILENCE CHRISTIAN HERESY:** Jewish religious leaders attempted to use force to silence dissent and heretics. Christians were falsely accused, put in prison, killed, or run out of town. Paul and other religious leaders thought they were doing God a favor by defending true Judaism from heretics. Businessmen and idol makers stirred up people against Christian missionaries who were destroying their craft (business). King Herod killed the apostle James and put Peter in prison. Paul was put in prison, driven out of cities, persecuted. Paul and Timothy were accused of teaching unlawful customs, beaten, and put in prison. Jews attempted to kill Paul.

**PROPHECIES OF APOSTASY OR A FALLING AWAY:** When the disciples had asked Jesus for the sign of his coming, Jesus said “there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”<sup>102</sup> Likewise, Peter prophesied that “there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord. ... And many shall follow their pernicious ways. ...”<sup>103</sup>

Paul prophesied that Christ would not return “except there come a falling away first.”<sup>104</sup> (Here the Greek word “apostasia” was translated as “falling away.”) “In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy;... Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats...”<sup>105</sup> “In the last days perilous times shall come. ... Traitors... Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ... Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”<sup>106</sup> “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”<sup>107</sup>

**EVIDENCES OF APOSTASY IN NEW TESTAMENT:** Peter wrote “there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.”<sup>108</sup> In Paul’s epistles “are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, ... beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.”<sup>109</sup>

**John** wrote: “even now are there many antichrists. ... They went out from us, but they were not of us. ... He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”<sup>110</sup> “Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”<sup>111</sup> “I wrote unto the church: but Diotrefes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. ... I will remember his deeds..., prating against us with malicious words: and... neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.”<sup>112</sup>

**Jude** wrote “there are certain men crept in unawares, ... ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. ... These filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. ... But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.”<sup>113</sup>

**Paul** frequently wrote of divisions, contentions, heresies, and wickedness in the apostolic church. “Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they ... serve ... their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”<sup>114</sup> “There are contentions among you. Now ... every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”<sup>115</sup> “I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”<sup>116</sup> “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness. ...”<sup>117</sup> “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ... If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”<sup>118</sup> “Hymenæus and Philetus... have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.”<sup>119</sup> “But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.”<sup>120</sup>

“Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.”<sup>121</sup>

## 4. Early Christianity

In addition to the Bible, influential Protestants had access to other ancient writings about Christianity during and after New Testament times. From these writings, they learned about early Christian heresies, the persecution of early Christians, and the history of the Catholic Church.

### Apostolic Fathers

“Christian writers of the first and second centuries who are known, or are considered, to have had personal relations with some of the Apostles, or to have been so influenced by them that their writings may be held as echoes of genuine Apostolic teaching. ... Chief in importance are the three first-century Bishops: St. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius of Antioch, and St. Polycarp of Smyrna, of whose intimate personal relations with the Apostles there is no doubt.”<sup>122</sup>

Clement (c. AD 30–100) wrote 1 Clement (c. 97). Ignatius (c. 30?–98 or 50–117) wrote seven Epistles of Ignatius (c. 110–117). Polycarp (c. 69–155) wrote the Epistle of Polycarp (c. 110–120). Other early writings considered to be written by Apostolic Fathers include: 2 Clement, Didache (80–100), Epistle of Barnabas (c. 120), Shepherd of Hermas (c. 100–150), Epistle to Diognetus (c. 130), and Epistle about Polycarp's Martyrdom (c. 155). Didache is also known as the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.

The Shepherd of Hermas “was one of the most popular books, if not the most popular book, in the Christian Church during the second, third, and fourth centuries. ... Irenaeus quotes it as Scripture, Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of it as making its statements ‘divinely;’ and Origen... unquestionably... [considers it] ‘divinely inspired.’”<sup>123</sup> The Shepherd of Hermas and the Epistle of Barnabas were included as scripture in Codex Sinaiticus (4<sup>th</sup> century) and Codex Claromontanus (6<sup>th</sup> century). Codex Alexandrinus included 1 and 2 Clement.<sup>124</sup>

### Persecution

“The early Christians did not believe that they were following a new religion. They were Jews... [who] were convinced that the Messiah had come. ...” Jewish religious leaders considered Christianity to be a heretical sect of Judaism that was “tempting good Jews to become heretics.” Christians were considered heretics because they *accepted new scripture, believed in new revelations, and rejected Jewish creeds, traditions, and authority*. Jewish religious leaders attempted to use *force* to silence dissent and heretics. Christians were put in prison, killed, or run out of town.<sup>125</sup>

About AD 60, the Roman emperor, Nero, had Christians persecuted, tortured, and killed.<sup>126</sup> During the second century (100–200), we have records of the arrest, trial, and death of Christian martyrs. Ignatius and Polycarp were both among the martyrs. “Christians... who openly refused to worship the gods and the emperor had to be punished. ... Throughout the second century, and part of the third, it was imperial policy not to seek out Christians, but still to punish them when they were brought before the authorities.”<sup>127</sup>

### Baptism

Justin Martyr (c. AD 100–165) wrote, “Those who are convinced that what we teach is true and who desire to live accordingly are instructed to fast and to pray to God for the remission of all their past sins. ... Then we bring them to a place where there is water. ... They then receive the washing with water in the name of God... and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the

Holy Spirit. For Christ said, ‘unless you are born again, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven’”<sup>128</sup>

“The rite of baptism by which they were admitted to the Church was both a commemoration of the moment at the river Jordan when Jesus was filled with the Spirit... and a... *renunciation of evil*, which St Paul... described as ‘being buried with Christ’.”<sup>129</sup>

Tertullian (115–225) described a pre-baptism vow or covenant based on tradition not scripture. “When we are going to enter the water, but a little before, in the presence of the congregation and under the hand of the president, *we solemnly profess that we disown the devil*, and his pomp, and his angels. Hereupon we are thrice immersed. ...”<sup>130</sup> He also writes that “without pomp, ... any considerable... preparation, ... [or] expense, a man is dipped in water, and amid the utterance of some few words, is sprinkled, and then rises again...”<sup>131</sup> After baptism, “the hand is laid on us, invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit through benediction.”<sup>132</sup>

Basil (329–379) writes that those who “deny the faith” have “violated the covenant of their salvation” made at baptism “when they renounced the devil and his angels.” And one “who denies the Spirit... has broken his covenant with God.”<sup>133</sup>

### Lord's Supper

Pliny, the Roman governor of Bithynia, wrote about AD 112, “they [the Christians] were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and *bound themselves by a solemn oath*, not to any wicked deeds, but *never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust* when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food—but food of an ordinary and innocent kind.”<sup>134</sup>

Early Christians “called each other ‘brother’ or ‘sister’. ... Each Sunday they met for their ‘thanksgiving’ in which the baptized ate bread and drank wine in a sacred meal. ... A serious moral fault entailed exclusion from sharing in the meal, either permanently or for a time. ...”<sup>135</sup> “They gathered in celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. Those early communion services did not center on the Lord’s passion, but rather on his victory by which a new age had dawned. It was much later—centuries later—that the focus of Christian worship shifted towards the death of Jesus. In the earliest Christian community, the breaking of the bread took place ‘with glad and generous hearts’ (Acts 2:46)”<sup>136</sup>

### Temple Traditions

“From the very beginning, Christians had adopted and preserved the ways of the original temple [which was destroyed about 600 BC]. Many priests joined the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:7). A secret, priestly tradition, passed down unwritten, was known in the early church, and it concerned certain practices in the liturgy and temple customs. The temple tradition... is clear in the Gospels themselves. ... The two temple rituals originally exclusive to the high priests were carrying blood into the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement and eating the most holy Shewbread on the Sabbath. These were combined to become the Christian Eucharist. ... Images and practices that most Christians take for granted such as priesthood, the shape of a traditional church building, or the imagery of sacrifice and atonement are all obviously derived from the temple. By reconstructing the world of the older faith it can be shown that Invocation of the divine Presence, Incarnation, Resurrection, Theosis (the human becoming divine), the Mother of God and the self-offering of the



Son of God were also drawn from the temple. The gospel as it was first preached by Jesus, and as it was developed and lived by the early Church, concerned the restoration of the true temple.”<sup>137</sup>

## Covenants or Sacraments

A covenant is “a solemn promise made binding by an oath, which may be either a verbal formula or a symbolic action. ...” “The early Christians did regard themselves as a community bound together by covenant. ... In the narratives of the Last Supper... the blood is very specifically stated to be related to the (new) covenant. ... [Drinking the wine] was intended as the formal rite which established a covenant relationship.”<sup>138</sup> In early Christianity, both baptism and the Lord’s Supper involved an oath or covenant to renounce evil, to keep the commandments, to keep the new commandment to love one another, and to become followers or disciples of Christ. In marriage, a Catholic sacrament, husband and wife covenant to be loyal to each other and to fulfill marital obligations.

Catholics and most Protestants refer to baptism and the Lord’s Supper as sacraments. Sacrament comes from the Latin word *sacramentum* which meant an oath ratified by a rite. *Sacramentum* referred to the Roman military oath of allegiance made by new soldiers. Disloyalty and disobedience to military commands were punished as violations of this oath or covenant. In the Latin Bible, *sacramentum* was used to translate the Greek word *μυστήριον* (mystery) which referred to mystery rites of initiation that “often entailed an oath.”<sup>139</sup>

“The covenant for Judaism meant the Mosaic law and for the Roman Empire a covenant meant an illegal society. This two-sided conflict made it nearly impossible for early Christianity to use the term meaningfully.” This conflict “soon produced a structure of religious thought and life in which the old covenant patterns were not really useful as a means of communication and may have been dangerous in view of the Roman prohibition of secret societies.”<sup>140</sup> Sometime before the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, Christian writers began changing the meaning of sacraments (e.g., baptism and the Lord’s Supper) from covenantal rites into rites performed by a priest that imparted grace to the recipient without covenant. Catholics came to believe in seven sacraments that imparted grace to the recipient. Many years later, Protestants accepted only two sacraments as commanded in the New Testament and denied that sacraments imparted grace.

## Church Buildings, Officers, and Practices

**Churches.** “The earliest churches were simply private houses, gradually converted inside as the congregations grew.”<sup>141</sup>

**Unpaid Officers.** “At first those who filled officers in the Church continued to depend upon their former trades and occupations for the support of themselves and their families.”<sup>142</sup>

**Charity and Work.** “Everybody was expected to earn his living. Everybody’s work was expected to produce enough to allow his love to help others in want. All had to work, for all had to make offerings... that all might live. It followed that the Church had to provide jobs for any who really wanted to work. ... Whoever was not willing to do the work he was capable of... was not tolerated in the communities...”<sup>143</sup>

**Morality.** Christians put “into practice strict monogamy, absolute faithfulness in marriage, and chastity before marriage.”<sup>144</sup>

## Divisions, Heresies

While the apostles were alive, they settled disputes about doctrines and practices. The apostle Peter wrote to James about

false teachers, saying “These men, professing... to know my mind, undertake to explain my words... more intelligently than I who spoke them, telling their catechumens that this is my meaning, which indeed I never thought of. But if, while I am still alive, they dare thus to misrepresent me, how much more will those who shall come after me dare to do so!”<sup>145</sup>

When the apostles were gone, false teachers were able to misrepresent the apostles and their writings. Hegesippus (c. AD 110–180) wrote “When the... apostles became extinct, and the generation of those that had been privileged to hear their inspired wisdom, had passed away, then also the combinations of impious error arose by the fraud and delusion of false teachers. These also, as there was none of the apostles left, henceforth attempted, without shame, to preach their false doctrine against the gospel of truth.”<sup>146</sup>

**Christian Gnostics** claimed to possess “a special, mystical knowledge... [that] was the secret to salvation.” For them, “all matter is evil” and each human is really an eternal spirit imprisoned in an evil body. Many Gnostic teachings were “a denial of several crucial Christian doctrines, such as creation, incarnation, and resurrection.” “Many Gnostic teachers claimed that the heavenly messenger [Christ] had trusted his secret knowledge to a particular disciple. ... Thus various groups had a book that claimed to present the true teachings of Jesus.”<sup>147</sup>

**Ignatius**, bishop of Antioch who was martyred before AD 117, encouraged early Christians to beware of these heretics. He said, “I know that He was possessed of a body not only in His being born and crucified, but I also know that He was so after His resurrection, and believe that He is so now. When, for instance, He came to those who were with Peter, He said to them, ‘Lay hold, handle Me, and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit.’ ‘For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have.’ ... After He had shown Himself to them, that He had risen indeed, and not in appearance only, He both ate and drank with them during forty entire days.”<sup>148</sup>

**Clement of Alexandria** (c. AD 150?–215) made a statement “on account of those who set marriage aside. ‘And will they,’ says he [Clement], ‘reject even the apostles! Peter and Philip, indeed, had children, Philip, also gave his daughters in marriage to husbands, and Paul does not demur in a certain epistle to mention his own wife, whom he did not take about with him, in order to expedite his ministry the better.’”<sup>149</sup> Clement is apparently referring to Philip. 4:3 where Paul says “I intreat thee also, true yokefellow [σύζυγος], help those women which laboured with me in the gospel. ...” The Greek word (σύζυγος) translated as ‘yokefellow’ can also mean ‘wife.’<sup>150</sup>

**Marcion** (AD 110–160) taught that Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament, was a god of justice and not the Supreme God of love and mercy. Thus, “the Old Testament was the word of an inferior good.” “Marcion... rejected of radically reinterpreted the doctrines of creation, incarnation, and resurrection. ... [He] organized a church with its own bishops and its own scripture.”<sup>151</sup> Marcion accepted only the gospel of Luke and 10 epistles of Paul after removing “all passages which implied that Christ regarded the God of the Old Testament as His Father. ...”<sup>152</sup>

**Corrupted or False Scripture:** “One of the hindrances with which Christianity had to contend from within, was the publication of Spurious Gospels and pretended Apostolic Canons. Many of these writings are believed to have been fabricated by heretical sects and parties in the Church, for the purpose of supporting their views of doctrine and practice.”<sup>153</sup>

“The worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated within a hundred years after it was composed”<sup>154</sup> “The sacred Scriptures... have been boldly perverted by [the followers of Artemon]; the rule of the ancient faith they have set aside, Christ they have renounced. ... They fearlessly lay their hands upon the holy Scriptures, saying that they have corrected them. ... Should any one collect and compare their copies one with another, he would find them greatly at variance among themselves. ... Copies of many... [are] altered by the eagerness of their disciples to insert each one his own corrections. ...”<sup>155</sup>

**Response of Bishops.** Irenaeus (AD 132–202) and other bishops argued against such heresies. They defined the core of the New Testament, developed the Apostles’ Creed, and taught that bishops were the successors of the apostles.<sup>156</sup>

**Accepted Scripture.** The book of Revelation was not written as the last chapter of one book called the Bible. It was one of many books that were considered for inclusion in the Christian scripture library which would be called the Bible. By AD 200, the church accepted the Gospels, Acts, and the epistles of Paul. It wasn’t until about AD 400 that Revelation and the shorter books of James, Peter, John, and Jude were generally accepted.<sup>157</sup>

However, Saint Gregory (d. 389) near the end of his life made a list that did not include Revelation. Gregory’s list was approved at the Trullan Synod (692)<sup>158</sup> which the “Orthodox Church accepts as an ecumenical part of the Third Council of Constantinople. ...”<sup>159</sup>

By AD 400 the Syrian Christian Church’s Bible (i.e., Peshitta) was formed. It did not contain Revelation and the shorter books of James, Peter, John, and Jude.<sup>160</sup> Codex D, a 6<sup>th</sup> century manuscript, contains a canon list for both the Old and New Testaments. This canon omits Philipians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Hebrews. However, it includes the Epistle of Barnabas, the Shepherd (of Hermas), the Acts of Paul, and the Apocalypse of Peter.<sup>161</sup> In our current NT and the Latin Vulgate, the epistles of Paul follow the book of Acts. However, in the Peshitta and several Old Greek manuscripts, the epistles of Paul appear just before the last book (Revelation).

**Apostles’ Creed.** “The basic text was put together... around the year 150... [to] distinguish true believers” from heretics who denied many parts of the creed. Before baptism, candidates were asked if they accepted this creed.<sup>162</sup> The Old Roman Form (AD 340 and 390) is as follows:

I believe in GOD THE FATHER Almighty.

And in JESUS CHRIST, his only Son, our Lord; Who was born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; Was crucified under Pontius Pilate and was buried; The third day he rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven; and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

And in the HOLY GHOST; The Holy Church; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body (flesh).<sup>163</sup>

**Apostolic Succession.** Which Christian groups were the heretics? “All agreed that the true message was the one taught by Jesus. The Gnostics claimed... some secret access to that original message, through a succession of secret teachers. Marcion claimed access... through the writings of Paul and Luke... purged of what did not agree with Marcion’s views. ...” The “catholic” church claimed that Jesus would have given all correct and any secret teachings to the apostles who would have passed them on to the leaders of the church, the bishops, who claimed direct apostolic succession. The “catholic” church accepted the witness

of all of the apostles while the “heretics” accepted the witness of only a few apostles.<sup>164</sup>

**Heretics.** For these early catholic bishops and their successors, a heretic was one who (a) rejected any part of the Old and New Testament as defined by them, (b) accepted other writings as scripture, (c) believed in new revelation, or (d) rejected their creeds, traditions, and authority.

Like Christ and the apostles, bishops and “heretics” used *persuasion* to keep and gain followers. No Christian group could use *force* to silence dissent or heretics during the first 300 years.

**“Orthodox Christianity”.** “Bauer argued that the early Christian church in fact did not comprise a single orthodoxy from which emerged a variety of competing heretical minorities. Instead, early Christianity embodied a number of divergent forms, no one of which represented the clear and powerful majority of believers against all others. In some regions, what was later to be termed ‘heresy’ was in fact the original and only form of Christianity. In some regions, views later deemed heretical coexisted with views that would come to be embraced by the church as a whole. ... To this extent, ‘orthodoxy’... did not exist in the second and third centuries. ... Beliefs that were, at later times, embraced as orthodoxy and condemned as heresy were in fact competing interpretations of Christianity, one of which eventually (but not initially) acquired domination because of singular historical and social forces. Only when one social group had exerted itself sufficiently over the rest of Christendom did a ‘majority’ opinion emerge; only then did the ‘right belief’ represent the view of the Christian church at large.”<sup>165</sup>

The winners of these debates wrote, interpreted, and kept the records of early Christianity.

## 5. Greek Philosophy

“Athens became the chief intellectual centre of Greece. ... From the generation of Socrates [470–399 BC] onwards more and more of the important thinkers either were born at Athens or spent a considerable part of their lives there, and in the fourth century this development was accentuated when first Plato and then Aristotle founded schools—the Academy [c. 380 BC] and the Lyceum [335 BC]—that attracted philosophers and scientists from all over Greece.”<sup>166</sup> In these schools, students learned the academically correct ideas of the time.

In 332 BC, Alexander the Great founded the city of Alexandria, Egypt, which became another intellectual center. “Alexandria was, for more than six centuries, the second city of the ancient world, surpassed only by Rome, and later by Constantinople, in importance. ... It was primarily a trading community, and as such, attracted numbers of Greek and Jews. Its intellectual life was no less remarkable. Its library was the most famous in the empire. ... There Greek philosophy entered into association, or competed in rivalry, with Judaism. ... There the Old Testament was translated into Greek. ... There the various philosophical systems had their ‘schools,’ where instruction could be obtained by all inquirers, and it was but natural that Christian teachers should imitate this good example. ...”<sup>167</sup>

In both Athens and Alexandria, Greek philosophy included religion and what we now call science. “Greek education, and even more Latin, while it included grammar, arithmetic, music and astronomy, laid great emphasis on rhetoric, the art of presenting a case, of praising or criticizing, of accusing and defending. Such skills were essential for anyone engaged in public life, and constantly shaped the forms of expression available. This was why, in spite of the polytheistic beliefs

implied, Christians had their children educated in the classics, and continued to function as teachers of this traditional material. ... Most Christian theologians were well trained in rhetoric. This often accounts for the way they interpret biblical texts, and for the forms their arguments take; it certainly accounts for the uncharitable vituperation they use about their opponents, which was a skill taught to schoolboys.”<sup>168</sup>

Greeks frequently criticized Jewish and Christian beliefs that were not academically correct according to Plato and the other Greek philosophers. Celsus (ca. AD 185), a Greek philosopher and critic of the Christian church, made fun of the God of the Prophets found in the Old Testament. “The Christians say that God has hands, a mouth, and a voice; they are always proclaiming that ‘God said this’ or ‘God spoke.’ ‘The heavens declare the work of his hands,’ they say. I can only comment that such a God is no god at all, for *God has neither hands, mouth, nor voice, nor any characteristics of which we know.* And they say that God made man in his own image, failing to realize that God is not at all like a man, nor vice versa; God resembles no form known to us. They say that God has form, namely the form of the Logos, who became flesh in Jesus Christ. But we know that God is without shape, without color. They say that God moved above the waters he created—but we know that it is contrary to the nature of God to move. Their absurd doctrines even contain reference to God walking about in the garden he created for man; and they speak of him being angry, jealous, moved to repentance, sorry, sleepy—in short, as being in every respect more a man than a God. They have not read Plato, who teaches us in the *Republic* that God (the Good) does not even participate in being. It is true that all things are derived from the Good, as Plato says; but it is also clear that God made nothing mortal. *This God of the philosophers is himself the underivable, the unnameable; he cannot be reached by reason. ... He cannot be comprehended in terms of attributes or human experience,* contrary to what the Christians teach; moreover, he is outside any emotional experience.”<sup>169</sup>

Celsus accused Christians of changing their scriptural writings that were not academically correct. “It is clear to me that the writings of the Christians are a lie, and that your fables have not been well enough constructed to conceal this monstrous fiction. I have even heard that some of your interpreters, as if they had just come out of a tavern, are onto the inconsistencies and, pen in hand, alter the original writings three, four, and several more times over in order to be able to deny the contradictions in the face of criticism.”<sup>170</sup>

Clement said Barnabas “expounded with simplicity, and without any craft of speech, such things as he *had heard* from the Son of God, or *had seen*. For he did not confirm his assertions by *the force of arguments*, but produced... *many witnesses of the sayings and marvels* which he related. ... *Those who thought themselves learned or philosophic began to laugh at the man, and to flout him, and to throw out for him the grappling-hooks of syllogisms, like strong arms.* ... [Barnabas responded] ‘We... declare to you the words and the wondrous works of Him who hath sent us, and... confirm the truth of what we speak, *not by artfully devised arguments, but by witnesses produced from amongst yourselves...* [who] have heard... the things which we have heard, and... seen what we have seen. ...’ When he had thus spoken, all... with rude voice raised a shout of derision, to put him to shame, and to silence him, crying out that he was a barbarian and a madman. ... I... cried out..., ‘*Because their speech makes no show of knowledge of the grammatical art, but in simple and unpolished language they set before you the divine*

*commands, so that all who hear may be able to follow and to understand the things that are spoken, you deride the ministers... not knowing that it is the condemnation of you who think yourselves skilful and eloquent. ... Ye think that truth dwells not in simple, but in ingenious and subtle words, and produce countless thousands of words which are not to be rated at the worth of one word. ...*”<sup>171</sup>

## Judaism

Many Jews fled to Egypt around 600 BC to avoid being taken captive to Babylon. Others joined them over the next few centuries. “By the time of Christ, there were sizable Jewish communities in every major city in the Roman Empire. These Jews, scattered far and wide, but with strong emotional and religious connections with the land of their ancestors, are called the ‘Diaspora’ or ‘Dispersion.’”<sup>172</sup> Because many of these scattered Jews did not learn Hebrew, “it was necessary to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into languages that they understood—Aramaic in the eastern wing... and Greek in its western wing, within... the Roman Empire.”<sup>173</sup> The “Alexandrian Jewish population produced... a school of philosophers” that existed from about 260 BC to AD 40.<sup>174</sup> About 200 BC in Alexandria, Egypt, the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek and was called the Septuagint (LXX). “This translation... facilitated a translation of ideas from one cultural system to the other. With the Greek language came *paideia* [Greek training or worldview]. When, for example, the Jewish God revealed his name to Moses at the burning bush (Ex. 3:14), the Hebrew *ehyeh* (I am) became in the LXX *ho on* (the Being); anyone with even a rudimentary Hellenistic education would recognize in this designation the High God of philosophy. This Greek rendering of YHWH was altered, in later Christian manuscripts of the LXX, to *kyrios* (Lord) and thus understood to refer to the pre-incarnate Lord, i.e., Christ. Similarly, when the Lord established the heavens ‘by a word’ (Ps. 13:6), the Hebrew *davar* became the Greek *logos*. ... Greek concepts... did not need to be read into scripture. They were already there, by virtue of the new language of the text.”<sup>175</sup> “*El Elyon*, the most high God, is translated as *ὁ θεὸς ὁ ὑψιστος*, even though in Greek that expression is used of Zeus. Similarly in the translation of Hebrew terms connected with divine worship, such as sanctuary, altar, sacrifice, incense, ... the Jews did not hesitate to borrow terms from the Greek religious practices. All of these of course meant... a Hellenization in language only; not in religious belief or cult.”<sup>176</sup> The translators also avoided anthropomorphic descriptions of God. For example, “Ex. 19:3, Moses does not ascend to God, but to the *mountain* of God; Ex. 24:10, the elders do not see God, but the place where God stands. ...”<sup>177</sup>

“The Jews of ancient times were interested in behaving justly, not in trying to pin down justice in abstract definition. Philosophical reasoning came into Jewish life when the need arose to face the challenge of Greek thinking, which was philosophical in its approach. Jews trained in schools influenced by the Greeks found themselves thinking in a systematic way. ... That is why Jewish philosophy took root only in Greek-speaking communities such as Alexandria 2,000 years ago.”<sup>178</sup>

“The most notable Jewish philosopher of ancient times was Philo of Alexandria, who died... [about AD 50]. Although a devout Jew, Philo had been trained in Greek thinking from his infancy. It is even doubted whether he knew much Hebrew. ... The central problem faced by Philo was how to understand the Torah... in light of Greek thought. The Bible seems... to speak of

God in very simple terms—that he has a hand, or an eye, and can lose His temper—and also to speak of trivial matters, far removed from the sophisticated type of thinking to which Philo was accustomed.” How could one accept the Old Testament and be academically correct? “Philo’s response was twofold. Biblical descriptions of God in human form... must be taken metaphorically, not literally. ... As for the apparently trivial matters in Scripture—the stories about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for example— these actually happened... but they were recorded... only to suggest deep ideas. This is Philo’s allegorical interpretation of Scripture. The Torah has a plain meaning—the events really did happen and for ordinary folk this plain meaning is the only one possible—but it also has a deeper meaning. ...”<sup>179</sup>

Philo teachings represent the marriage of Judaism and Greek philosophy that might be called “Platonic Judaism.”

“These three tendencies in Alexandrian Judaism, the traditional, the allegorical, and the extremely allegorical... represent that conflict of ideas which is inevitably bound to appear in any religion based upon a scripture and a native tradition when on its coming in contact with a philosophy from another source attempts are made on the part of some to reconcile the two. The great mass of believers who will not have felt the impact of the foreign philosophy will see no need of any reconciliation between them. This great mass of believers will either remain indifferent to the innovations of the philosophic reconcilers, or will superciliously look upon them as mere triflers, or, if given provocation, will militantly oppose them as disturbers of the religious peace.”<sup>180</sup>

“Maimonides [AD 1135–1204], the greatest of the Jewish philosophers, wrote his *Guide for the Perplexed*. ... The ‘perplexed’... are the philosophically-minded Jews who are puzzled by the apparent conflict between Judaism and philosophical thought. ... Maimonides agrees with the Greek thinker [Aristotle] that God cannot really be described in human terms. He understands the ‘attributes’ of God mentioned in the Bible (that God is wise and one and so forth) in a negative sense. In other words, the Bible is not telling us what God is— this we can never know— but what He is not. Thus, when it is said that God is wise it means that no folly can be attributed to Him and when it is said that God is one, it means that there are not numerous gods, as the pagans suppose. Many descriptions of God in the Bible refer to His acts, not to His nature. The constant references to God’s being ‘good,’ for example, apply to His acts which, if performed by a human being, would reflect a good and kindly nature.”<sup>181</sup>

## Christianity

The relationship between Christianity and Greek philosophy went through five stages: cautious acquaintance, casual friends, good friends, courtship, and marriage.

**Cautious Acquaintance:** (1<sup>st</sup> century) The apostle Paul and other early missionaries used their Greek education to teach the gospel. Paul used rhetoric in his defense before King Agrippa<sup>182</sup> and quoted a Greek poet while speaking in Athens.<sup>183</sup> However, Paul warned Christians about philosophy. “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”<sup>184</sup>

**Casual Friends:** (2<sup>nd</sup> century) Justin Martyr (AD 100–165) quoted Greek philosophers in his defense of Christianity against objections to the resurrection and against accusations of being atheists, immoral, and subversive. For Justin, the wisdom of Plato and other Greek philosophers came from the Logos of God who

later came in the flesh as Christ and taught more fully what the philosophers had known in part.<sup>185</sup>

Tertullian (c. AD 160–220), a lawyer from North Africa, used his legal training to defend Christians against unfair treatment in the courts.<sup>186</sup> He also warned Christians against philosophy. “What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians...? Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition!”<sup>187</sup>

**Close Friends:** (3<sup>rd</sup> century) Clement of Alexandria (d. AD 215) and later his student, Origen, taught at the Catechetical School, the first Christian university. Clement used philosophy to interpret Christianity like Philo did Judaism. “God is the cause of all good things; but of some primarily, as of the Old and the New Testament; and of others by consequence, as philosophy. Perchance, too, of philosophy was given to the Greeks directly and primarily, till the Lord should call the Greeks. For this was a schoolmaster to bring ‘the Hellenic mind,’ as the law, the Hebrews ‘to Christ.’ Philosophy, therefore, was a preparation, paving the way for him who is perfected in Christ.”<sup>188</sup>

Origen (AD 185–232) “gave Christianity full scientific standing in that age”<sup>189</sup> by interpreting the Bible allegorically instead of literally. Origen wrote, “the Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written.”<sup>190</sup> Only simple and ignorant Christians accepted the literal interpretation of the Bible. “According to Origen, Celsus argues ‘at length’ against what Celsus understands to be the Christian belief that God ‘is corporeal by nature and has a body like the human form.’ In his rejoinder, Origen... [explains] that if Celsus ‘invents out of his own head ideas which he heard from nobody, or, to grant that he heard them from somebody, notions which he derived from *some simple and naive folk who do not know the meaning of the Bible*, there is no need for us to concern ourselves with unnecessary argument.”<sup>191</sup> “If Celsus had known that saying, ‘I and My Father are one,’ ... he would not have supposed that we worship any other besides Him who is the Supreme God. ‘For,’ says He, ‘My Father is in Me, and I in Him.’ And if any should from these words be afraid of our going over to the side of those who deny that the Father and the Son are two persons, let him weigh that passage, ‘And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul,’ that he may understand the meaning of the saying, ‘I and My Father are one.’ ... We worship, therefore, the Father of truth, and the Son, who is the truth; and these, while they are two, considered as persons or subsistences, are one in unity of thought, in harmony and in identity of will. So entirely are they one, that he who has seen the Son, ‘who is the brightness of God’s glory, and the express image of His person,’ has seen in Him who is the image, of God, God Himself.”<sup>192</sup>

**Courtship:** (4<sup>th</sup> century) Arius (AD 250–336) taught that there was only one God and that Jesus was subordinate to God and not divine. He called his opponents “polytheists” for believing that both God and Jesus were divine. The Emperor Constantine called the first council of bishops at Nicea (AD 325) to resolve the Arian controversy. To be academically correct and to believe that Jesus was divine, the council declared that Jesus and the Father were of “one substance” and coequal. Constantine suggested the Greek word *homoousios* (“one substance”) was found in the writings of the philosophers but not in the Bible.<sup>193</sup> The second council (Constantinople, AD 381) decided that the Holy Ghost was also divine and of one substance and coequal with both the Father and the son.



After this council in 381, the belief that God has a human form was suppressed. In 399, “the customary festal letter from Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria... included... a long refutation of the absurd heresy of the Anthropomorphites. Nearly all the monks in Egypt, being uneducated..., received this with bitterness and hostility. ... [They asked] a deacon of great learning, named Photinus, ... how the Catholic Churches of the East understood the text in Genesis: ‘Let us make man after our image and likeness.’ Photinus explained how *all the leaders of the churches understood the text spiritually, not literally nor crudely*. ... ‘That unmeasurable, incomprehensible, invisible majesty cannot be limited by a human frame or likeness. His nature is incorporeal, uncompounded, simple, and cannot be seen by human eyes nor conceived adequately by a human mind.’ At last old Sarapion was moved by the numerous and convincing assertions of this learned man. ... When we stood up to give thanks to the Lord in prayer, the old man felt mentally bewildered at having to pray, because he could no longer sense in his heart the anthropomorphic image of God which he had always before his mind’s eye when praying. Suddenly he broke into bitter weeping and sobbing, and throwing himself prostrate on the ground with groans, cried: ‘Woe is me! They have taken my God away from me, and I have none to grasp, and I know not whom to adore or to address.’”<sup>194</sup> Ultimately the anthropomorphite monks “answered by descending in force on Alexandria and creating such a storm that Theophilus executed a sudden” about face.<sup>195</sup>

Augustine (AD 354–430) whose mother was a Christian had the opposite reaction because of his training in Greek philosophy. Augustine was embarrassed by the Christian belief that God had a body.<sup>196</sup> “Augustine’s career as a teacher of rhetoric took him from his native Africa to Italy... where, under the influence of Bishop Ambrose, he became acquainted with Latin translations of Platonist writings and with the possibility of God’s being a purely ‘spiritual,’ i.e., totally immaterial, invisible and incorporeal being. Augustine accepted this view of God and, with his long-standing stumbling block to Christian doctrine now removed, he was converted to the faith in 386. ... In his newly found Neoplatonic reinterpretation of Christian doctrine, he exults: ‘But when I understood withal that ‘man, created by Thee, after Thine own image,’ was not so understood by Thy spiritual sons... as though they believed and conceived of Thee as bounded by human shape... with joy I blushed at having *so many years* barked not against the Catholic faith, but against the fictions of carnal imaginations. ... For Thou, Most High, and most near; most secret, and most present; Who hast not limbs... but art wholly every where and no where in space, art not of such corporeal shape. ... Thy Catholic Church... I *now* discovered... not to teach that for which I had grievously censured her. So I was confounded, and converted; and I joyed, O my God, that the One Only Church... had no taste for infantine conceits; not, in her sound doctrine, maintained any tenet which should confine Thee, the Creator of all, in space, however great and large, yet bounded every where by the limits of a human form.’ ... Augustine acknowledges that belief in God’s corporeality was still found among contemporary Christians, whom he mocked for not being able or willing to interpret the Bible allegorically.”<sup>197</sup>

**Marriage:** (5<sup>th</sup> century) The teachings of Augustine (AD 354–430) and the fourth council mark the marriage of Christianity and Greek philosophy that some call “Platonic Christianity.” The fourth council (Chalcedon, AD 451) met to resolve the controversy of whether Jesus was divine or human during his life time. The council decided that Jesus was both divine and human. This was

the last part of what became known as the doctrine of the trinity (“3 in 1”). The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were not three Gods. They were one God with three different manifestations just as water can appear as ice, liquid, or steam.

In the Vatican Museum’s Signature Room, two large murals painted by Raphael in 1510–1511 recognize and celebrate this “marriage” of Christianity and Greek Philosophy. “School of Athens” depicts Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle (in the center), Pythagoras, Euclid, Zoroaster, Ptolemy, Epicurus, and Socrates. On the opposite wall, “Disputation over the Most Holy Sacrament” depicts God the Father, Christ between Mary and John the Baptist, and the Holy Ghost in heaven with prophets (e.g., Adam, Abraham, Moses) and apostles (e.g., Peter, James, John, Paul). On the ground is the Most Holy Sacrament on an altar that is between disputants which include St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory the Great. “Few viewers need help to recognize the endorsement of both revelation and reason as avenues to truth and the inclusion of the Hellenistic [Greek] philosophy in the larger Christian tradition.” (Noel B. Reynolds, *Early Christians in Disarray* 15)



*Disputa (Disputation over the Blessed Sacrament) by Raphael*



*The School of Athens by Raphael*

The *Westminster Confession* of 1647 was a protestant creed that was approved by the governments of England and Scotland in 1648 and accepted by early American Congregationalists and Presbyterians. This creed described the “3 in 1” trinity in these words: “There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free,

most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal most just and terrible in his judgments; hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty. ... In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.”<sup>198</sup>

## 6. Church and State

The Roman Emperor, Constantine (AD 272–337), had a dream or vision that caused him to have a Christian symbol put on his soldiers’ shields and his standard before the battle of Milvian Bridge (AD 312). He gave credit to the Christian God for his victories. Although he was not baptized until he was on his deathbed, Constantine changed anti-Christian policies. The edict of Milan (AD 313) removed penalties for Christians and returned confiscated church property. Christianity went from being an illegal religion to being the emperor’s religion. “To adopt the emperor’s religion could promote one’s chances in the world. During the hundred years or so after Constantine, Christianity could be a passport to office, power, and wealth.”<sup>199</sup> Within 100 years after Edict of Milan (313) Christianity grew from 10% to about 90% of Roman Empire.

“After the conversion of Constantine, ... it was possible to invoke the authority of the state to settle theological questions. The Empire had a vested interest in the unity of the church. ... Thus, the state soon began to use its power to *force* theological agreement on Christians. ... As a result, many of those involved in controversy, rather than seeking to convince their opponents or the rest of the church, sought to convince the emperors.”<sup>200</sup> Constantine considered himself the “bishop of bishops” and called the first council of about 300 bishops at Nicea (AD 325) to settle the Arian controversy over the nature of God and Christ. The two bishops who refused to sign the Nicean creed, were declared to be heretics and were banished from their cities.<sup>201</sup> Constantine issued an edict condemning Arius and his writings. The writings of Arius were to be burnt and anyone who was found with his writings was to be killed.<sup>202</sup>

The council at Nicea “was concluded with a grand banquet, which the Emperor gave to the Fathers of the Council. ... The banquet had been arranged with a magnificence which surpassed all imagination. Some of the chief prelates sat with Constantine at the imperial table. ... Before dismissing them Constantine distributed presents among them, and also gave them letters to the proper officers of their provinces, ordering certain quantity of corn to be put at the disposition of the clergy, the Church widows and virgins, and the poor.”<sup>203</sup>

This grand banquet was in essence a wedding feast to celebrate the marriage of Church and State. As the established religion of the Roman Empire, the Catholic Church was now entitled to *government money* and to use *government force* to silence dissent and heretics.

**Government Money.** The church received money from the government to pay the clergy, build churches, take care of the poor, etc. “For two and a half centuries, ... the church had always considered it heretical to pay salaries to church leaders. However, when Constantine offered salaries to church leaders, the church reconsidered the matter and decided to accept them.”<sup>204</sup> The clergy “came to represent both the most prestigious and the most lucrative career. We have remarked that while most of those who

engaged in scientific research enjoyed private means, many earned a living as doctors or teachers. Yet in the sixth century, ... the bishop of Anastasiopolis enjoyed a salary that was six times that of the public doctor at Antinoopolis, and five times that of professors of rhetoric or grammar at Carthage. {Jones, p. II:905-6}”<sup>205</sup>

**Force to silence heresy.** The council of Nicea was the first of several universal Catholic councils called by the emperor to settle Christian controversies. The resulting creeds helped identify heresies and government force (e.g., police, courts, prison, war) was used to silence dissent and heretics. Not long before it had been a crime to be a Christian. Now it was a crime to be a heretic. It was certainly easier to use force to silence dissent than to use persuasion to keep or gain followers. Now Christians were using the sword against other Christians with different beliefs. “Eventually, far more Christians... were slaughtered by the sword of the church than had ever been slain by the Romans.”<sup>206</sup> Where necessary, armies were used to rebellious groups deemed heretical.

After the fall of the Rome (AD 410), the Catholic Church continued to be the established religion in most European countries and the pope retained power over or influence with kings. In the eastern part of the old Roman Empire, now called the Byzantine Empire, the imperial church continued to exist for another thousand years.

During the Protestant reformation starting about AD 1500, Catholics used government force (the Inquisition) to identify, torture, and kill Protestants heretics. In some cases, force was used to compel conversion to Christianity. When Protestants became the established religion in a country or state, they also developed creeds and used heresy laws to silence those who disagreed with them.

## Changes in Practices

“Until Constantine’s time, Christian worship had been relatively simple. At first, Christians gathered to worship in private homes. Then they began to gather in cemeteries, such as Roman catacombs. By the third century there were structures set aside for worship. The oldest [known] church... is a fairly small room, decorated with very simple murals.

“After Constantine’s conversion, Christian worship began to be influenced by imperial protocol. Incense, which was used as a sign of respect for the emperor, began appearing in Christian churches. Officiating ministers, who until then had worn everyday clothes, began dressing in more luxurious garments. Likewise, a number of gestures indicating respect, which were normally made before the emperor, now became part of Christian worship. The custom was also introduced of beginning services with a processional. Choirs were developed, partly in order to give body to that processional. Eventually, the congregation came to have a less active role in worship.”

Churches were built where martyrs had been buried. Some people began to think it was better to worship in “those holy places, where the relics of a martyr were present.” As a result, bodies of martyrs were placed under the altar of new churches. “Eventually, the relics of saints and of New Testament times were said to have miraculous powers.”<sup>207</sup>

Lavish churches or basilicas replaced the early simple churches. “No one was attracted to the early church by the architecture of its buildings, but rather by its teachings and by the godly lives of the people in the church. However, Constantine reasoned that many people would be attracted to Christianity if

church buildings were more impressive. So at state expense, he constructed lavish church buildings that rivaled the magnificence of pagan temples. The new church buildings were arrayed with impressive colonnades and vaulted ceilings. Many of them had beautiful fountains and elegant marble floors. Constantine wanted it to be difficult for an unbeliever to walk past a church building without being tempted to peer inside because of the beautiful architecture.”<sup>208</sup>

## Reformation

During the 1500s, the invention of the Gutenberg press made it possible to publish many copies of books and pamphlets. The Greek New Testament was printed along with Luther’s German translation and Tyndale’s English translation. The press also made it possible for many people to read about the protests of Luther, Calvin, Tyndale and others against the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church attempted to ban or burn protestant writings and Bible translations. In Catholic countries like Spain, the inquisition was used to identify protestant heretics who were then tortured and killed. Catholic countries went to war against countries that protected Protestants.

In England, King Henry VIII rebelled against the Pope for not approving his divorce of Catherine. In 1534, Parliament enacted laws rejecting the authority of the Pope and making the king the “supreme head of the Church of England.” The Church of England became the established or state religion of England. It retained Catholic beliefs and practices but rejected the Pope as the head of the church. It continued to restrict the religious freedoms of Protestants to meet, write, and teach their heresies.

In 1545–63, the Catholic council of Trent met to address Protestant criticism and teachings. Instead of reforming Catholic teachings and practices, the council restated Catholic teachings and condemned (anathema) anyone who taught or accepted opposing Protestant teachings. The Catholic Church insisted on using the Latin Vulgate Bible and discouraged the laity from Bible study. Translations were sanctioned in 1752 but only if accompanied by an orthodox commentary.<sup>209</sup>

In 1611, the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible was published. About 80% of it was based on Tyndale’s translation. The translators were Protestants who believed in God and the Bible. The KJV became the accepted English translation used by Protestants. Protestants began to travel to North America in search of religious freedom.

## Key Dates in Christianity

The table below shows some key dates in the history of Christianity. Underlined words indicate Catholic doctrines rejected by many Protestants as being based on tradition, not scripture. An asterisk identifies people or doctrines (e.g., \*Arius) declared to be heretical by the Catholic Church. ***Bold Italics*** (e.g., ***Church of England***) identify the beginning of major Christian religions which include the denominations listed in the top ten largest Christian bodies in the US.<sup>210</sup> The dates of the 21 universal Catholic councils are listed with key decisions.

Key Dates in Christianity	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Century (AD 1– 100)</b>	
Crucifixion: AD 30 or 33	Apostolic Church, Christianity, New Testament
Baptism by immersion <sup>211</sup> , Lord’s Supper or Eucharist. <sup>212</sup>	Jewish rulers use force to silence Christian heresy (Herod, Paul)
False teachers: <i>Jewish-Christians</i> , Gnosticism, Docetism (70)	<b>Nero:</b> Emperor (54–68), Fire of Rome (64), <i>1 &amp; 2 Peter, Jude</i> , Christians blamed and killed (Peter, Paul), <i>Revelation(?)</i>
Jerusalem Temple destroyed (70), <b>Vespasian</b> , Emperor (69–79)	<b>Domitian:</b> Emperor (92–96), <i>Revelation(?)</i> , <i>1–3 John</i> (85–96)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Century (100–200)</b>	
No apostles: visions and prophecy cease. <sup>213</sup>	Christian martyrs were arrested, tried, and killed.
In response to Gnostic and Marcion heresies, the “catholic” (universal) church defined the core of the New Testament, developed the Apostles’ <i>creed</i> , and accepted only teachings of bishops as the successors of the apostles. <sup>214</sup>	<u>Infant baptism</u> starts <sup>215</sup>
<u>Baptism for the dead</u> (1 Cor. 15:29) ceased <i>ca</i> AD 200 <sup>216</sup>	
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Century (200–300)</b>	
<u>Baptism by aspersion or sprinkling</u> starts. <sup>217</sup>	Alexandrian School: friendship of Christianity and Greek philosophy. Origen “gave Christianity full scientific standing...” <sup>218</sup>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Century (300–400): Constantine</b>	
“Christmas” moved from May to Dec 25, a pagan sun festival. <sup>219</sup>	First Christian <u>monastery</u> . <sup>220</sup>
325: 1 <sup>st</sup> council of Nicea- Christ of one substance with the Father, beginnings of Trinitarian (“3 in 1”) doctrine, *Arias	Marriage of church and state; force used to suppress heresy
Clergy: <u>paid</u> , <u>celibacy</u> encouraged, <u>social status</u> <sup>221</sup>	<u>Great churches built with baptisteries for immersion</u> <sup>222</sup>
381: 2 <sup>nd</sup> council- Holy Ghost divine, *Apollinaris	Prayer to <u>martyrs</u> as intercessors, <u>relics</u> <sup>223</sup>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Century (400–500)</b>	
Augustine: Trinity (“3 in 1”), <u>original sin</u> , <u>infant baptism</u> , <u>predestination</u> , grace, <u>sacraments</u> necessary for salvation, six sacraments. <sup>224</sup>	431: 3 <sup>rd</sup> council- Virgin <u>Mary</u> foremost saint, *Nestorius
<b><i>Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, Abyssinian churches</i></b>	451: 4 <sup>th</sup> council- Christ divine and human, *Eutyches
Marriage of Christianity and Greek philosophy: “Platonic Christianity”	Bishop of Rome recognized as <u>Pope</u> of Western Church <sup>225</sup>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Century (500–600)</b>	
553: 5 <sup>th</sup> council- condemned “Three Chapters”, *Origen’s pre-existence of souls	Pope Gregory: <u>purgatory</u> , <u>penance</u> , <u>confession</u> , <u>intercessors</u> (saints), <u>remissions</u> (alms) <sup>226</sup>
<u>Infant baptism</u> universal <sup>227</sup>	
<b>7<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> Centuries (600–1000)</b>	
680: 6 <sup>th</sup> council- condemned monothelism (Christ had divine will not human will) and *Pope Honorius	787: 7 <sup>th</sup> council- <u>images</u> venerated not worshiped, condemned destroyers of images
870: 8 <sup>th</sup> council	

<b>Key Dates in Christianity</b>
<p><b>11<sup>th</sup> Century (1000–1100)</b></p> <p>Crusades: Roman Catholic wars to recapture Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Muslims</p> <p><u>Indulgences</u> (e.g., money, pilgrimages, Crusades) could remit penalties for “deadly” sins.<sup>228</sup></p> <p>1054: <b>Greek Orthodox Church</b></p>
<p><b>12<sup>th</sup> Century (1100–1200)</b></p> <p>1123: 9<sup>th</sup> council</p> <p>1139: 10<sup>th</sup> council- compulsory <u>clerical celibacy</u></p> <p>1179: 11<sup>th</sup> council- method of papal election</p>
<p><b>13<sup>th</sup> Century (1200–1300)</b></p> <p>1215: 12<sup>th</sup> council- <u>Transubstantiation</u>, annual confession and communion, regulated inquisition, *Waldensians, *Albigensians</p> <p><u>Inquisition</u>, heretics killed</p> <p>Forbade laity to possess Bible, translations denounced.</p> <p><u>Baptism by aspersion</u> or sprinkling becomes common.<sup>229</sup></p> <p>1245: 13<sup>th</sup> council</p> <p>1274: 14<sup>th</sup> council- Papal elections</p>
<p><b>14<sup>th</sup> Century (1300–1400)</b></p> <p><b>Italian Renaissance</b></p> <p>1311: 15<sup>th</sup> council</p>
<p><b>15<sup>th</sup> Century (1400–1500)</b></p> <p>Spanish inquisition, forced conversions</p> <p>1431: 17<sup>th</sup> council</p> <p>1448: Gutenberg press invented</p> <p>1455: Gutenberg’s Bible (Latin Vulgate ) published</p>
<p><b>16<sup>th</sup> Century (1500–1600)</b></p> <p><b>Reformation and English Renaissance</b></p> <p>1517: Luther’s 95 Theses, beginning of <i>Lutheran Church</i></p> <p>1525: Tyndale’s English New Testament</p> <p>1534: <b>Church of England</b></p> <p>1536: Calvin’s <i>Institutes</i></p> <p>1545–63: 19<sup>th</sup> Council of Trent; *many protestant doctrines<sup>230</sup>;</p> <p>Aquinas theology, Latin Bible official; tradition, seven sacraments, Apocrypha official</p> <p>Protestants killed as heretics;</p> <p>Inquisition, forbidden books listed</p>
<p><b>17<sup>th</sup> Century (1600–1700)</b></p> <p>1611: King James Version of the Bible based primarily on Byzantine Greek manuscripts</p> <p>1647: Westminster Confession (Protestant Creed)</p> <p><b>Puritans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists</b></p> <p><b>Quakers</b></p> <p>Kepler, Galileo, Newton</p>
<p><b>18<sup>th</sup> Century (1700–1800)</b></p> <p>John Wesley (<i>Methodists</i>)</p> <p>Rationalism</p> <p>1788 U.S. Constitution ratified</p> <p>1791 Bill of Rights ratified (no establishment of national religion)</p>
<p><b>19<sup>th</sup> Century (1800–1900)</b></p> <p>1830: <i>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints</i></p> <p>1854: <u>Immaculate conception of Mary</u> proclaimed by Pope</p> <p>1870: 20<sup>th</sup> council: <u>Pope infallible</u>;</p> <p>1881: Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible based primarily on Alexandrian Greek manuscripts</p>
<p><b>20<sup>th</sup> Century (1800–1900)</b></p> <p>1901: <i>Pentecostal churches (Church of God in Christ, Assemblies of God)</i></p> <p>1962–65: 21<sup>st</sup> council- common languages used in rites and Masses</p>

## Secular attacks against Christianity

From 1600–1800, there was a “growing secularization of West European society, culture, and thought. ... The fragmentation of the universal church into competing churches, and weariness with religious warfare, hastened on the secularization process.”<sup>231</sup> Secular relates to ideas and practices that are not religious or supernatural. Secularism may be defined as “the idea that religion should not interfere with or be integrated into the public affairs of a society... [and that] religion and supernatural beliefs are not seen as the key to understanding the world. ...”<sup>232</sup>

“In the secularization of European thought, the decisive change came about at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth. ... By 1778, ... all stock arguments against Christianity had been invented except perhaps, ‘science versus religion’ ... Age-old anticlerical envies were taken over by economic theorists attacking ecclesiastical wealth and monastic idleness; from skeptics of the Italian Renaissance, French *libertines*... and English Deists... came doubts about the Bible and revelation; the arguments from miracle and prophecy were seen to be inconclusive; geographical discoveries allied to an education founded on the classics encouraged the development of the comparative study of religions, with slanted praise of pagan philosophers, Chinese sages, and noble savages. ‘It is come, ...’ wrote Bishop Butler in 1736, ‘to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is now at length discovered to be fictitious’. ... The ridicule heaped upon the Bible by the writers of the Enlightenment did Christians a great service. ... The Enlightenment did a further service to Christianity by ridiculing hell. ... Throughout the seventeenth century, Christian writers on the fringes of orthodoxy... denounced the idea of eternal punishment as incompatible with the love of God.”<sup>233</sup>

**Humanism.** “The word ‘humanism’ is often used in connection with the Renaissance. Since the word has lately become a matter of controversy, particularly in the modified form of ‘secular humanism’, some of its earlier uses need to be made clear. At the time of the renaissance, a humanist was simply a person who studied and worked at recovering, translating and otherwise making available material from the ancient world. More particularly, some humanists also were much interested in the imaginative literature and arts of the ancient world. From this, humanism came to connote an interest in the human in contrast with a primary interest in the sacred or divine. This should not be taken to mean that humanists were anti-Christian, or even necessarily un-Christian. Some humanists were devout Christians, Erasmus, for example; some were conventional Christians, da Vinci for example; and some may have been near-pagans in their ways of living, yet remaining nominally Christian. Humanism certainly did not imply atheism, as *secular humanism* does.”<sup>234</sup>

## 7. Basic Beliefs of Early Americans

During the 1700s and early 1800s, most Americans considered themselves Christians even if others did not. For centuries, Catholics had condemned Protestant teachings and had attempted to ban or burn protestant writings. Protestants were often tried as heretics and killed. Protestants had likewise condemned many Catholic traditions. Catholics and Protestants did not consider Unitarians to be Christians, but Joseph Priestly, an influential Unitarian, considered himself to be Christian. Priestly rejected more Catholic traditions than the Protestants. His writings had a significant influence on Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin, and many others of that time.



Catholics, Protestants, and Unitarians accepted both the *Jewish* Old Testament and the *Christian* New Testament as scripture. For this reason, some say the U.S. has a Judeo-Christian heritage. Because the different Christian religions accepted the Bible as scripture, they agreed on many things. However, they often disagreed about interpretations of the Bible. The following is a brief summary of the basic beliefs of those who considered themselves Christians and some of their differences.

1. **ONE GOD:** Most were Trinitarians (“3 in 1”) who believed the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were one God. This doctrine of the Trinity was debated and defined in the first four councils of the Catholic Church starting at the Council of Nicea (AD 325) called by Constantine. Most Protestants accepted this doctrine. Unitarians rejected these councils which they felt changed New Testament Apostolic Christianity into a Platonic Christianity based on the philosophies of men.
2. **CREATION:** God “created the heaven and earth”<sup>235</sup> with plants and animals. “God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image... male and female created he them.”<sup>236</sup> (The Hebrew word for created means “shape, fashion, create.”<sup>237</sup>) Many Christians believed God created the earth from nothing (ex nihilo) in seven days. Some believed each day was 1,000 years<sup>238</sup> while others believed each “day” was an unspecified period of time.
3. **FALL OF ADAM:** After Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, they were cast out of the Garden of Eden. Death, pain, and hard work became the lot of all mankind. Many Christians believed Augustine’s doctrine of “original sin” that not only are we subject to mortality because of the fall of Adam but that we are also conceived in sin and are evil at birth. Others believed the fall resulted in death and separation from God, but children are innocent at birth and will later commit sins.
4. **PROPHETS:** God had two-way communication directly with prophets through visions, dreams, angels, and the spirit of prophecy. Through prophets, God gave commandments, covenants, prophecies, and warnings to repent. Jews believed this type of communication was common in the Old Testament except for a few hundred years between Joseph and Moses in Egypt. Jewish rabbi’s taught that the spirit of prophecy ceased after Malachi about AD 400. Christians believed that this type of divine communication also happened just before the birth of Jesus and continued until the death of the apostles. Jews rejected the claims of Christians to revelation after the Old Testament. Christians rejected the claims of Gnostics and others to revelation after the New Testament. Both Jews and Christians believed that their written scripture contained all necessary divine communication and that God would not give any more.
5. **COVENANTS AND DISPENSATIONS:** Christians believed that Jesus was “the mediator of the new covenant”<sup>239</sup> that replaced the old covenant given to Moses. The Greek word for “testament” is also translated “covenant.” The Old and New Testaments are also called the Old and New Covenants.

The dispensation of Christ began with a new covenant. One entered this new covenant through baptism and remembered it by partaking of the Lord’s Supper or Eucharist. Before baptism, early Christians vowed or covenanted to reject Satan and to follow Christ. Some believed this dispensation ended with the death of the

- apostles while others believed it continued with the Catholic Church. Christians believed that a new dispensation would begin when Jesus comes again.
6. **SON OF GOD:** Jesus Christ was the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary. Jews believed that war would end when the Messiah came. Christians believed that Jesus was the Messiah who did come and will come again to end war. In 1854 the Pope proclaimed the doctrine of Immaculate Conception. Unitarians believed Jesus was the “son of God” just as Adam was the “son of God”<sup>240</sup> but did not believe he was divine.
  7. **TEACHINGS OF JESUS:** These include: love God and love neighbor, keep the Ten Commandments, live the golden rule, going the second mile, forgiving others, prayer, sex only within marriage between a man and woman, and so on. Most Christians tried to follow these teachings and to make laws that supported them. In our time, many Christians, who try to follow the teachings and example of Jesus, ask “What Would Jesus Do?” (WWJD)
  8. **LAST SUPPER:** Jesus gave his apostles bread and said “this is my body... this do in remembrance of me.”<sup>241</sup> He then gave them a cup of wine and said “this is my blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”<sup>242</sup> Christians call this the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper. Protestants rejected the Catholic doctrine that the bread and wine literally turned into to flesh and blood of Christ (transubstantiation) which was officially adopted in AD 1215.
  9. **RESURRECTION:** Jesus was crucified, “died for our sins,” and buried. On the third day, he rose again with a body of flesh and bone.<sup>243</sup> There shall be a literal resurrection of the body.<sup>244</sup>
  10. **BAPTISM:** Most Christians agreed that baptism was necessary but disagreed on how it was done and who could baptism a person. Catholic baptism was generally done by immersion until the 13<sup>th</sup> century when aspersion or sprinkling became common. Some Protestants rejected sprinkling as a form of baptism. Infant baptism started about AD 200 and became common about AD 400. Many Protestants believed that one must be older before baptism. The Catholic Church taught that seven sacraments were necessary for salvation: baptism, the Eucharist (Lord’s Supper), confirmation, penance, marriage, priesthood orders, and extreme unction (last rites). Protestants rejected the last five as being based on tradition not scripture.
  11. **ASCENSION:** Jesus ascended into heaven where he sits on the right hand of the Father.
  12. **JUDGMENT:** Jesus shall come again to judge the living and the dead.<sup>245</sup>
  13. **MIRACLES:** Jews believed that miracles occurred in Old Testament times but ceased afterwards. Most Christians believed that miracles occurred in both Old and New Testament times but ceased after the apostles died.
  14. **APOSTASY:** Catholics believed that Gnostics, Protestants, and other heretics were the false prophets and teachers prophesied in the New Testament. Protestants believed that the Catholic Church after AD 400 or 500 also became corrupt. Unitarians believed it happened with the first council of Nicea when Christianity began changing officially to Platonic Christianity.
  15. **SCRIPTURE:** All Christians accepted the Bible. However, they did not agree on what writings were considered scripture

or what translation to use. Most Protestants used the KJV which was translated from the Hebrew Old Testament and a Greek New Testament. The Catholics used the Latin Vulgate or a translation of it. Early Christians used the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) which was translated from Hebrew about 200 BC. About AD 100 after many years of debates with Christians, the Jews settled on the consonantal text and which books they considered scripture. They rejected books in the Greek Old Testament called the Apocrypha. The Protestants also rejected the Apocrypha as scripture. The Greek Orthodox Christians accepted the Apocrypha and a few other apocryphal books as scripture. About AD 400 Catholic bishops decided which New Testament writings would be considered scripture. The book of Revelation was not considered to be scripture until about AD 400. Luther believed Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation should be considered New Testament apocrypha.

## 8. Short History of the Old Testament

The following is a brief summary of ideas related to the Holy Bible. The next chapter will go into more detail and will provide references.

About 587 BC, those Jewish elite (e.g., leaders, rich, or skilled) were taken captive to Babylon while the poor were left to harvest the crops. When the elite began to return (c. 536 BC), the poor people (Hebrews) who had remained called the returning elite Jews and considered them to be apostate. Sometime after the Jews returned, the Samaritans separated from the Jews and preserved their own Scriptures called the Samaritan Torah or Pentateuch. After Ezra, a priest and scribe, returned (c. 458 BC), the preservation, study, and teaching of the Torah (Law) was emphasized. After the last prophet Malachi (c. 400 BC), several Jewish groups developed: Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes. The Essenes lived principally near the Dead Sea where many of their writings (i.e., the *Dead Sea Scrolls*) were later found. The Sadducees (priests, rulers, rich) controlled the temple. The Pharisees were learned men of non-priestly descent (e.g., scribes and rabbis) who controlled the synagogues and schools. They emphasized the preservation, study and teaching of the law. Before AD 70, Pharisees shared political power with the Sadducees in the Sanhedrin (the highest civil and religious Jewish court or council composed of 71 men). Pharisees also debated religious questions with Sadducees and Christians. After the temple was destroyed, the Sadducees (temple priests) lost power and the Christians separated from the Jews like the Samaritans and Essenes. Thus, the Pharisees were the “winners.” Winners write and interpret their history and determine which older writings to preserve.

**Original Writings.** We do not have the original writings of Moses and the prophets. The oldest manuscripts were written at least 200–1000 years after the death of the traditional author.

**Transmission.** Prophets did not make or check the handwritten copies. Ancient scribes made unintentional and intentional changes as they copied the Bible. Scribes, not prophets, abridged longer records and made editorial comments and changes. The printing press made it possible to have many identical copies of the same printing of a text. However, the press did not fix old scribal errors or prevent new typesetting errors.

**Canon.** Before AD 100, several different Hebrew versions were in use and many books were considered scripture. Prophets did not decide which books were scripture or the order of the books. These final decisions were made by Pharisees who

composed the Sanhedrin after the destruction of the temple (AD 70). The Pharisees excluded from their Hebrew Bible some books used by Christians and other heretics. The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Essenes include writings about Enoch and Melchizedek that are referred to or quoted in Hebrews, Jude, and the writings of early Christians. The Greek *Septuagint* (200 BC) was translated from Hebrew Scriptures and included the Apocrypha.

Below is a list of OT books showing the three Jewish categories and book order found in the Hebrew OT and the books in the Apocrypha.

1. *The Law (Torah):* This consists of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
2. *The Prophets (Neviim):* Joshua, Judges, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi).
3. *The Writings (Ketuvim):* Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1&2 Chronicles.
4. *The Apocrypha:* Tobit, Judith, Baruch, Maccabees, Esdras, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Letter of Jeremiah, etc. The Catholic Church accepts these as scripture. Jews and Protestants do not.

**Reconstruction.** Prophets did not decide which version to use or how to resolve differences in copies. These final decisions were made by Pharisees who were scribes. A Talmudic tradition reports that one majority text was composed by comparing differences in three texts and choosing the reading found in two of the three texts.<sup>246</sup> The consonantal MT of the Pharisees became the standard text of the Hebrew Bible. By about AD 1000, scribes, not prophets, had added standard vowel marks based on their oral tradition. With a change in vowels, scribes changed Jer. 7:3,7 (from “I [the Lord] will dwell *with you* in this place” to “I *will cause you to dwell* in this place.”), Ps. 42:3 (from “I will *see the face of God*” to “I will *appear before God*”), and Ex. 34:24 (from men were “to see the Lord” to men were “to appear before the Lord.”)<sup>247</sup> This avoided objectionable anthropomorphism. “The Hebrew consonants for ‘male cult prostitutes’ are the same as those for holy ones, angels *qdšm*, and, given what we know about the censorship methods of the ancient scribes, reading the letters in this way could have been deliberate.”<sup>248</sup>

**Translations.** Prophets did not translate the Hebrew Bible. There is clear evidence that translations reflect the beliefs and understanding of the translators. For example, the Greek *Septuagint* was translated from Hebrew “mainly in Alexandria”<sup>249</sup> a center of Greek philosophy. Some differences suggest that the translators avoided literal translations, used common terms that were not the equivalent of Hebrew expressions, and avoided expressions that would offend Greek philosophers.<sup>250</sup> Examples will be provided in a later chapter dealing with the Bible.

Aramaic translations were made after Aramaic became the language of Jews in Palestine. Generally these translations were more paraphrastic than literal. Latin translations of the Greek Septuagint were made before 200 BC. The Latin Vulgate (c. AD 400) was a translation of the Hebrew text of Jerome’s day. Other ancient translations include: Coptic (Egyptian), Ethiopic, Armenian, and Arabic. During the Protestant Reformation, Luther and others began translating the Hebrew OT into common languages like German and English.

**Interpretation.** After the last prophet Malachi (c. 400 BC), Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, and Samaritans frequently interpreted the Old Testament differently. The Sadducees

emphasized the Written Law and temple worship. The Pharisees emphasized the Written and Oral Law (unwritten traditions of the rabbis), synagogue worship, and temple like ceremonies in the home. Jesus and the apostles also interpreted the Old Testament differently than the rest. Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites and rejected their traditions. The apostles settled differences in interpretation and corrected false Christian teachings during the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Without prophets or apostles to interpret the Bible, Jews, Catholics, and Protestants often interpret the same passages differently and emphasize different parts of the Bible.

## 9. Short History of the New Testament

Apostles settled religious questions during the 1<sup>st</sup> century. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, Christians debated religious questions and formed different sects. Each sect considered their version of Christianity to be correct and others to be heresy. Starting in AD 325, councils of “catholic” bishops were used to settle all Christian religious questions in the Roman Empire. Force was used to silence heresies and heretics. The majority of bishops on the councils were the winners. Winners write and interpret their history and determine which older writings to preserve.

*Original Writings.* We do not have the original writings of the New Testament. The oldest Greek manuscripts include only parts of our New Testament and were written 100–200 years after the death of the traditional author (e.g., apostle). The earliest complete copy of the New Testament is dated about the 4<sup>th</sup> century (AD 300–400). All but 10 words from the 362 oldest “New Testament texts come after the time period when accusations of textual corruption were rampant” (John Gee in *Early Christians in Disarray*, 185; <http://mi.byu.edu>).

*Transmission.* Apostles did not make or check the handwritten copies. Ancient scribes made intentional and unintentional changes as they copied the Bible. By 1981 there were 5,366 known Greek manuscripts. The printing press made it possible to have many identical copies of the same printing of a text. However, the press did not fix old scribal errors or prevent new typesetting errors.

[add examples of KJV printing errors, Tvedtnes]

*Canon.* Before AD 400, Christians did not agree on which books should be considered scripture. The disputed books included Revelation, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John.<sup>251</sup> Some books which were popular with early Christians include: the Epistle of Barnabas (c. AD 120), the Shepherd of Hermas (c. AD 100), the Acts of Paul, and the Apocalypse of Peter. The Shepherd of Hermas “was one of the most popular books... in the Christian Church” between AD 100 and 400.<sup>252</sup>

Apostles did not decide which books were scripture or the order of the books. These final decisions were made by Catholic bishops. The Pharisees had excluded new Christian writings as well as old books used by the Essenes, Christians, and earlier Israelites. Likewise, Catholic bishops excluded from their New Testament some books quoted by or popular with earlier Christians or heretics. Protestants now accept the NT as defined by the early Catholics. However, Luther felt several NT books (e.g., James, ...) should not have been included, while some scholars feel we should seriously consider excluded writings that were popular with early Christians.<sup>253</sup>

*Reconstruction.* Apostles did not decide which version to use or how to resolve differences in copies. These final decisions were made by Catholic bishops, scholars, and translators. [Add more about this.]

*Translations.* The academically-correct belief is that the NT was originally written in Greek. However, there is evidence that some NT books (e.g., Matthew) were originally written in Aramaic (Syriac) and translated to Greek. The earliest Syriac versions (4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century) preserve a form of text that dates to the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, the NT was translated from Greek manuscripts into Latin, Coptic (Egyptian), Gothic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic, and Slavonic. The Latin Vulgate translation became the official translation used by the Roman Catholic Church. Starting in about AD 1500, protestants began translating the Bible into common languages (e.g., German, English). The Catholic Church attempted to ban and burn translations and to kill the translators as heretics.

Apostles did not translate NT writings or decide which Greek or Syriac manuscripts to translate. There is clear evidence that translations reflect the beliefs and understanding of the translators. For example, the KJV translators used the same word, “hell,” to translate two different Greek words: *geenna* (“everlasting punishment”) and *hades* (“the place... of departed souls”).<sup>254</sup> Other examples will be provided in a **later chapter** dealing with the Bible.

*Interpretation.* The apostles settled differences in interpretation and corrected false Christian teachings during the 1<sup>st</sup> century. After the last apostle was gone (c. AD 100), several charismatic leaders interpreted the NT differently. Each claimed to represent the correct Christian teachings and had many followers. To be academically-correct, Christian intellectuals began to interpret parts of the Bible allegorically or figuratively to be more acceptable to Greek non-Christians. Debates with Christian and non-Christian groups continued until about AD 325 when councils of Bishops began to decide the academically- and politically-correct Christian doctrine of the Roman Empire. Force was then used to silence all dissent. This continued until the reformation when Luther, Calvin, and others began teaching protestant interpretations. The Catholic Church tried unsuccessfully to silence these heresies with force. Protestant sects who used the same translation of the Bible frequently disagreed on the correct interpretation of various passages.

Sometimes, interpretations are based on mistranslations. For example, the KJV says “as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, *for that* all have sinned”<sup>255</sup> The NIV and RSV both use “because” instead of “for that.” However, the Latin Vulgate had “in whom” which was the only primary NT passage Augustine (AD 354–430) mentioned in support of his doctrine of original sin.<sup>256</sup>

Should the Bible be interpreted (1) literally, (2) allegorically or figuratively, (3) by anyone who can read, or (4) only by a trained minister or priest of a particular denomination?

Today there are thousands of different Christian denominations who accept the Bible but interpret it differently. Without prophets or apostles to interpret the Bible, Jewish, Catholic and Protestant sects often interpret the same Bible passages differently and emphasize different Bible teachings.

[End of Part 1]

<sup>1</sup> Jon Nielson and Royal Skousen, “How Much of the King James Bible Is William Tyndale’s?” in *Reformation*, vol. 3, 1998, p. 73 (49–74).

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd, *Early Greek Science: Thales to Aristotle*, p. 66

<sup>3</sup> G. E. R. Lloyd, *Greek Science After Aristotle*, p. 3

<sup>4</sup> John McManners, “Enlightenment: Secular and Christian (1600–1800)”, in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, p. 267–268

<sup>5</sup> See “Secularism” at [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

<sup>6</sup> Billy Graham, p. 136

<sup>7</sup> William Martin, *A Prophet Without Honor*, p. 112

<sup>8</sup> Billy Graham, p. 139

<sup>9</sup> William Martin, *A Prophet With Honor: The Billy Graham Story*, p. 109–112

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p.18–19

<sup>11</sup> Templeton, p. 29–31

<sup>12</sup> Templeton, p. 46

<sup>13</sup> Templeton, p. 193–202

<sup>14</sup> John Shelby Spong, *The Sins of Scripture*, (2005) p.ix–xi

<sup>15</sup> John Shelby Spong, *A New Christianity for a New World*, (2001) p. 3–7

<sup>16</sup> John Shelby Spong, *Why Christianity Must Either Change or Die*, (1998) p. 95–98

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* *Why...* p. 151–153

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* *Why...* p. 159

<sup>19</sup> Phillip E. Johnson, *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds*, p. 111

<sup>20</sup> Gen. 1:1

<sup>21</sup> Gen. 12:6–27

<sup>22</sup> BDB p. 135

<sup>23</sup> Gen. 2:16–17

<sup>24</sup> Gen. 3:8

<sup>25</sup> Gen. 3:21

<sup>26</sup> See “ordinance” in the *Oxford English Dictionary*

<sup>27</sup> Bercot, p. 658

<sup>28</sup> Gen. 17:4

<sup>29</sup> Is. 7:14

<sup>30</sup> Gen 1:27

<sup>31</sup> Gen. 5:1

<sup>32</sup> Gen. 32:30

<sup>33</sup> Ex. 24:8

<sup>34</sup> Ex. 31:18

<sup>35</sup> Ex. 33:11

<sup>36</sup> Ex. 33:23

<sup>37</sup> Num. 12:6–8

<sup>38</sup> Gen. 5:24

<sup>39</sup> Ex. 4:9

<sup>40</sup> Deut. 6:14–15

<sup>41</sup> Deut. 5:10

<sup>42</sup> Deut. 4:31

<sup>43</sup> Deut. 7:8–9

<sup>44</sup> Deut. 8:2

<sup>45</sup> Judges 3:1, 4; 2:21–23

<sup>46</sup> Paul taught that these sacrifices were types or shadows of Christ’s sacrifice which did away with the need for animal sacrifice. (Heb. 10) Paul also said that “the law [of Moses] was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” (Gal. 3:24–25)

<sup>47</sup> *Encyclopedia Judaica jr.* (Rona, p. 18)

<sup>48</sup> Deut. 6:4–5

<sup>49</sup> Lev. 19:13

<sup>50</sup> See “repentance” in *Encyclopedia Judaica*

<sup>51</sup> Is. 2:2–4

<sup>52</sup> Is. 53

<sup>53</sup> Matt. 3:17

<sup>54</sup> Matt. 13:58

<sup>55</sup> Mt. 15:1–9

<sup>56</sup> Mt. 12:22–28

<sup>57</sup> Jn. 8:1–11

<sup>58</sup> Mt. 19:3–9

<sup>59</sup> Mt. 22:17

<sup>60</sup> Mt. 22:23–33

<sup>61</sup> Mt. 22:34–36

<sup>62</sup> Mt. 22:46

<sup>63</sup> Jn. 12:3

<sup>64</sup> Mt. 21:1–9

<sup>65</sup> Zech. 9:9

<sup>66</sup> Mt. 21:9

<sup>67</sup> Jn 2:14–17

<sup>68</sup> Mt. 21:15

<sup>69</sup> Mt. 21:21

<sup>70</sup> Mt. 21:46

<sup>71</sup> Mt. 26:4–5

<sup>72</sup> Mt. 26:14–15

<sup>73</sup> Luke 22:19

<sup>74</sup> Matt. 26:27–28; 1 Cor. 11:23–26

<sup>75</sup> 1 Cor. 15:3; Luke 24:39; 1 John 2:2; Eph. 1:7

<sup>76</sup> Acts 24:15

<sup>77</sup> Mark 10:15–16

<sup>78</sup> Luke 6:13

<sup>79</sup> John 15:16

<sup>80</sup> Luke 10:1

<sup>81</sup> Ex. 18:21

<sup>82</sup> Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5

<sup>83</sup> Acts 1:2–3

<sup>84</sup> Acts 2:38

<sup>85</sup> Acts 1:21–26

<sup>86</sup> Acts 12:1–2

<sup>87</sup> Acts 14:14

<sup>88</sup> Acts 15:28–29

<sup>89</sup> Rom. 2:15; 9:32; Gal. 2:16; 3:2,5,10:

<sup>90</sup> Acts 10:1–48

<sup>91</sup> Acts 22:6–8

<sup>92</sup> Acts 9:32–41

<sup>93</sup> Acts 20:7–12

<sup>94</sup> Eph. 5:23

<sup>95</sup> Acts 1:2

<sup>96</sup> Eph. 2:19–21

<sup>97</sup> Eph. 4:11

<sup>98</sup> Acts 11:27; 13:1; 15:32; 1 Cor. 12:28–29; Eph. 3:5

<sup>99</sup> Philip 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1–2

<sup>100</sup> Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5

<sup>101</sup> Acts 9:13, 32; 26:10; Rom 1:7; 15:25

<sup>102</sup> Mt. 24:24

<sup>103</sup> 2 Pet. 2:1–2

<sup>104</sup> 2 Thess. 2:3

<sup>105</sup> 1 Tim. 4:1–3

<sup>106</sup> 2 Tim. 3:1–13

<sup>107</sup> 2 Tim. 4:24

<sup>108</sup> 2 Peter 2:1–3

<sup>109</sup> 2 Peter 3:16–17

<sup>110</sup> 1 John 2:18

<sup>111</sup> 1 John 4:1

<sup>112</sup> 3 John 1:9–10

<sup>113</sup> Jude 1:4–18

<sup>114</sup> Rom 16:17–18



- <sup>115</sup> 1 Cor. 1:11–13  
<sup>116</sup> 1 Cor. 11:18–19  
<sup>117</sup> 2 Cor. 11:13–15  
<sup>118</sup> Gal. 1:6–9  
<sup>119</sup> 2 Tim. 2:16–18  
<sup>120</sup> Titus 3:9–11  
<sup>121</sup> 1 Tim. 6:20–21  
<sup>122</sup> See “Apostolic Fathers” in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, (www.newadvent.org)  
<sup>123</sup> Rev. F. Crombie, “Introductory Note to the Pastor of Hermas,” in ANF 2:6; (www.ccel.org/fathers2)  
<sup>124</sup> Metzger, *Canon*, p. 65, 187–188, 310–311  
<sup>125</sup> Gonzalez, 1:31–33  
<sup>126</sup> Gonzalez, 1:33–36  
<sup>127</sup> Gonzalez, 1:41 (39–48)  
<sup>128</sup> Justin, *First Apology*, chap. 61  
<sup>129</sup> Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p.32  
<sup>130</sup> ANF 3:94  
<sup>131</sup> c 3; ANF 3:669  
<sup>132</sup> c8; ANF 3:672  
<sup>133</sup> Basil, NPNF 8:17  
<sup>134</sup> *Pliny: Letters*, translated by William Melmoth, rev. by W.M.L. Hutchinson (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1915), vol. II, bk. X, letter XCVI (96), p. 403–405  
<sup>135</sup> Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p.32  
<sup>136</sup> Gonzalez, 1:20  
<sup>137</sup> Margaret Barker, *Temple Theology*, p. 10–11  
<sup>138</sup> G. E. Mendenhall, “Covenant,” in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 1:714, 722  
<sup>139</sup> TDNT, p.4: 827  
<sup>140</sup> G. E. Mendenhall, “Covenant,” in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 1:722–723  
<sup>141</sup> Henry Chadwick, p. 54–55  
<sup>142</sup> Backhouse, p. 78  
<sup>143</sup> Eberhard Arnold, *The Early Christians*, p. 16, 19–20  
<sup>144</sup> Eberhard Arnold, *The Early Christians*, p. 16, 19–20  
<sup>145</sup> “Epistle of Peter to James,” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8, Pseudo-Clementine, Epistle of Peter to James, chap. 2 (www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-08/anf08-42.htm)  
<sup>146</sup> Eusebius (c. AD 260–339). *Ecclesiastical History*., 3:32.6, p. 118  
<sup>147</sup> Gonzalez, p. 1:59, 63 (see 58-61)  
<sup>148</sup> Ignatius, *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*, chap. 3; in ANF 1:87  
<sup>149</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. 3, ch. 30, p. 115  
<sup>150</sup> Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 775–776  
<sup>151</sup> Gonzalez, p. 1:62  
<sup>152</sup> Walker, p. 54–55; Gonzalez, p. 1:61–62  
<sup>153</sup> Edward Backhouse, *Early Church History*, p. 73; JFM p. 63  
<sup>154</sup> Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction*, p. 511  
<sup>155</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History of Eusevius Pamphilus*, 5:28:17 p. 215-6; JFM p. 65  
<sup>156</sup> Gonzalez, p. 1:62–66; Walker, p. 57–60  
<sup>157</sup> Gonzalez, p. 63  
<sup>158</sup> Metzger, *Canon*, p. 211–212  
<sup>159</sup> See “Constantinople, Third Council of” online at oolumbia.thefreedictionary.com  
<sup>160</sup> Metzger, *Canon*, p. 218–9  
<sup>161</sup> Metzger, *Canon*, p. 310–1  
<sup>162</sup> Gonzalez, 1:63  
<sup>163</sup> Schaff, 1:21–22  
<sup>164</sup> Gonzalez, 1:65–66  
<sup>165</sup> Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, p. 7  
<sup>166</sup> Lloyd, *Early Greek Science: Thales to Aristotle*, p. 66  
<sup>167</sup> Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., p. 72–3  
<sup>168</sup> Hall, p. 6–7  
<sup>169</sup> Celsus, *On the True Doctrine*, p. 103–4; see JFM p 108-9  
<sup>170</sup> Celsus, *On the True Doctrine*, p. 64  
<sup>171</sup> Clement, ANF 8:I.VII.1  
<sup>172</sup> Gonzalez, p. 12  
<sup>173</sup> Gonzalez, p. 12  
<sup>174</sup> Harry Wolfson, *Philo*, p. 4  
<sup>175</sup> Fredrikson, *From Jesus to Christ*, p. 14  
<sup>176</sup> Wolfson, p. 12–13  
<sup>177</sup> Wurthwein, p. 66  
<sup>178</sup> Louis Jacobs, *Jewish Belief*, p. 77  
<sup>179</sup> Jacobs, p. 77–78  
<sup>180</sup> Wolfson, p. 71–72  
<sup>181</sup> Jacobs, p. 80  
<sup>182</sup> Acts 26:1–29  
<sup>183</sup> Acts 17:28  
<sup>184</sup> Col 2:8  
<sup>185</sup> Gonzalez, 1:53–57  
<sup>186</sup> Tertullian, *Apology* 1.2 in ANF 3:18; Noel p. 209;  
<sup>187</sup> Tertullian, *Prescription against Heretics* 1.7 in ANF 3:246; Noel 210-11  
<sup>188</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* 1.5 in ANF 2:305; Noel 213-4;  
<sup>189</sup> Walker, p. 77 (72–77)  
<sup>190</sup> “Origen” in John McClintock and James Strong, eds. *Cyclopædia of biblical, theological, and ecclesiastical literature*, 7:430; Fuller, David, *Which Bible?*, p. 192  
<sup>191</sup> Origen, *De principiis*, p. 242; quoted in David L. Paulsen, “Early Christian Belief in a Corporeal Deity”, *Harvard Theological Review*, 83:2 (1990) p. 107, 113  
<sup>192</sup> Origen, *Against Celsus*, 8:12; in ANF vol. 4  
<sup>193</sup> Gonzalez, 1:165 (158–167)  
<sup>194</sup> Owen Chadwick, *Western Asceticism*, 234-5  
<sup>195</sup> Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 185-6  
<sup>196</sup> Augustine, *Confessions* in PNF#1 1:5:10:19 (bk.:vol::chap::para)  
<sup>197</sup> David L. Paulsen, “Early Christian Belief in a Corporeal Deity”, *Harvard Theological Review*, 83:2 (1990) p. 114–6; Augustine, *Confessions* in PNF#1 1:6:4:5  
<sup>198</sup> Schaff, p. 3:606–8  
<sup>199</sup> Oxl, p. 63  
<sup>200</sup> Gonzalez, 1:158–159  
<sup>201</sup> Gonzalez, 1:166  
<sup>202</sup> Rev. Issac Boyle, “A Historical View of the Council of Nice,” in the back of Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 26  
<sup>203</sup> Cutts, 334-5  
<sup>204</sup> Bercot, p. 123–5  
<sup>205</sup> G. E. R. Lloyd, *Greek Science After Aristotle*, p. 170–1  
<sup>206</sup> Bercot, p.126–7  
<sup>207</sup> Gonzalez, 1:125–128  
<sup>208</sup> Bercot, p. 127  
<sup>209</sup> McManners, p. 285  
<sup>210</sup> www.adherents.com/rel\_USA.html#bodies  
<sup>211</sup> Walker, p. 88

<sup>212</sup> Acts 2:46; Walker, p. 22

<sup>213</sup> “Christ is the seal of all prophets, fulfilling all that had in former days been announced concerning Him. For, since His advent and personal passion, there is no longer vision or prophet.” (Tertullian, ca 197AD) “The apostles have overcome unbelief through powers, signs, portents, and mighty works. After them, there is now given to the same completed churches the comfort of having the prophetic Scriptures subsequently interpreted. As I said, after [the apostles] there would be *interpreting* prophets.” (Victorinus, ca AD 280) as quoted in Bercot, *Dictionary*, p. 538–539)

<sup>214</sup> Gonzalez, p. 1:62–66; Walker, p. 57–60

<sup>215</sup> Walker, p. 87; Later writers mention infant baptism. “Origen (in cap. vi, Ep. ad Rom.) declares: ‘The Church received from the Apostles the *tradition* of giving baptism also to infants’. St. Augustine (Serm. xi, De Verb Apost.) says of infant baptism: ‘This the Church always had, always held; this she received from the faith of our ancestors; this she perseveringly guards even to the end.’ St. Cyprian (Ep. ad Fidum) writes: ‘From baptism and from grace... must not be kept the infant who, because recently born, has committed no sin, except, inasmuch as it was born carnally from Adam, it has contracted the contagion of the ancient death in its first nativity; and it comes to receive the remission of sins more easily on this very account that not its own, but another's sins are forgiven it.’ St. Cyprian’s letter to Fidus declares that the Council of Carthage in 253 reprobated the opinion that the baptism of infants should be delayed until the eighth day after birth. The [plenary or provincial] Council of Milevis in 416 anathematizes whosoever says that infants lately born are not to be baptized. The Council of Trent [1545–63] solemnly defines the doctrine of infant baptism (Sess. VII, can. xiii).” (see “baptism” in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02258b.htm> )

<sup>216</sup> **Anchor Bible.**

<sup>217</sup> Pope Cornelius criticized Novation, who “being supposed at the point of death, was baptized by aspersion [sprinkling], in the bed on which he lay” but was not confirmed by a bishop after he recovered. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6:43.15 on p. 262)

<sup>218</sup> Walker, p. 77 (72–77)

<sup>219</sup> Walker, p. 154–155

<sup>220</sup> Walker, p. 126

<sup>221</sup> Walker, p. 150–152; Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 163–164

<sup>222</sup> Gonzalez, p. 126–128

<sup>223</sup> Walker, p. 155–157

<sup>224</sup> Walker, p. 162–166; Augustine’s doctrine of original sin requires baptism of infants. (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1*, Vol. 5)

<sup>225</sup> “Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church” (Mt. 16:18) was first used by Pope Damasus (AD 382) to argue that the bishop of Rome was superior to all other bishops. (Henry Chadwick, p. 237–246) ; Pope Innocent I (402–407) claimed universal jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome. Pope Leo I (440–461) said Peter was over the other apostles and in 445 got an edict from the Western Emperor ordering all to obey the bishop of Rome. The Council of Chalcedon (451) placed Constantinople on a practical equality with Rome. Pope Felix III (483–492)

excommunicated the Patriarch Acacius of Constantinople. (Walker, p.123–124); The title pope (papa) was used in the Western Church for bishops until about the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Pope Gregory VII (1054–85) finally ruled that *pope* refer only to the bishop of Rome. (see “pope” in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, [www.newadvent.org/cathen](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen))

<sup>226</sup> Walker, p. 174

<sup>227</sup> Walker, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. p. 88

<sup>228</sup> Walker, p. 249

<sup>229</sup> “Three forms of ablution have prevailed among Christians, and the Church holds them all to be valid because they fulfill the requisite signification of the baptismal laving. These forms are immersion, infusion [pouring], and aspersion [sprinkling]. The most ancient form usually employed was unquestionably immersion. ... In the Latin Church, immersion seems to have prevailed until the twelfth century... [and] even as late as the sixteenth century. *Infusion and aspersion, however, were growing common in the thirteenth century and gradually prevailed in the Western Church.*” (see “baptism” in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, [www.newadvent.org/cathen](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen))

<sup>230</sup> Many protestants rejected (a) traditions not found in scripture, (b) the Latin Vulgate Bible, (c) the Apocrypha, (d) Catholic interpretations of the Bible, (e) five of the seven sacraments (i.e., confirmation, penance, extreme unction or last rites, priesthood orders, marriage), (f) infant baptism, (g) mass, (h) baptism by sprinkling, (i) confession, (j) transubstantiation of bread and wine, (k) celibacy for clergy, (l) predestination, (m) original sin, (n) purgatory, (o) veneration of saints, relics, images, (p) indulgences, and (q) the authority of the Pope..

<sup>231</sup> John McManners, “Enlightenment: Secular and Christian (1600–1800)”, in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, p. 267–268

<sup>232</sup> See “Secularism” at [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

<sup>233</sup> John McManners, “Enlightenment: Secular and Christian,” *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, p. 281–282

<sup>234</sup> Carson, p. 27–28

<sup>235</sup> Gen. 1:1

<sup>236</sup> Gen. 126–27

<sup>237</sup> BDB p. 135

<sup>238</sup> 2 Pet. 3:8

<sup>239</sup> Heb. 12:24

<sup>240</sup> Luke 3:38

<sup>241</sup> Luke 22:19

<sup>242</sup> Matt. 26:27–28; 1 Cor. 11:23–26

<sup>243</sup> 1 Cor. 15:3; Luke 24:39; 1 John 2:2; Eph. 1:7

<sup>244</sup> Acts 24:15

<sup>245</sup> Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5

<sup>246</sup> Tov, p. 32

<sup>247</sup> Tov, p. 274–5; *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 3:53

<sup>248</sup> Barker, *The Great High Priest*, p. 149

<sup>249</sup> Tov, p. 134

<sup>250</sup> Wurthwein, p. 66–67

<sup>251</sup> Metzger, *Canon*, p. 201–5, 209

<sup>252</sup> Rev. F. Crombie, *ANF*, 2:6–7 (Scott Peterson, p. 11)

<sup>253</sup> James H. Charesworth, *Authentic Apocrypha*, p. ix

<sup>254</sup> *Strong’s Greek Lexicon*, numbers 86 and 1067

<sup>255</sup> Romans 5:12

<sup>256</sup> Augustine, *Against Palagiens 7*, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2:5:419