



Lesson 3: Gentile Church History

The LORD's Progressive Revelation about His Plan of Redemption.....

NOTES FOR LECTURE 3
Gentile Church History – Becky

Although Paul was known as the Apostle to the Gentiles, initially he focused on teaching the Jews about Yehoshua, that is, Jesus. He taught them from the Scriptures until they became abusive towards him. (Acts 18:4-7)

1. The Apostle Paul often warned the early church about:

- Divisions from within – Acts 20:29-31
- Pressures from without – Colossians 2:8

Those things would separate the *one new man* made up of Jews and Gentiles. (Romans 9-11; Ephesians 2). We will share more on that subject in Lessons 9-10, “Tending the Fields.”

2. In 90 A.D., the Apostle John wrote of the division between Jew and Gentile in the church. He said it was the result of the influence of Diotrophes, a leader in the church. (III John 9-10)

Did this take God by surprise? No! (Romans 8:28)

3. Constantine was a sun worshiper:

a. 321 A.D. – Constantine issues edict requiring Romans to rest on Sunday

b. 324 A.D. – Council of Nicaea convenes to unite Christendom:

- Nicene Creed clarifies the Deity of Christ – so don’t “throw the baby out with the bath water” (**Proverbs 21:1** – *The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD....*)
- Sets date for the celebration of Resurrection Day on the Spring Festival of Ishtar (Easter), known as “The Queen of Heaven.” (Jeremiah 7:18 and 44:15-16)
- Easter is to be celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox
- Birthday celebration of the sun god Ra (Baal) on December 25th to include the celebration of Christ’s birth

c. 364 AD – Council of Laodicea

- Declares Sunday to be **The Lord's Day** and forbids resting on the Sabbath
- Forbids **Judaizing** on threat of excommunication
 - ♦ **Paul's Definition of Judaizing** in 64 A.D. (Acts 15): Anyone saying that a Gentile was required to become a Jew through circumcision in order to be saved by Grace through Faith
 - ♦ **Church's Definition of Judaizing** in 364 A.D.: Anyone who kept Jewish traditions, even by choice

4. We are not bound by the history and/or the traditions of the Church:

- a. *...because it is for freedom that Christ has set us free - **Galatians 5:1***
- b. *See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. - **Colossians 2:8***
- c. *.....You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men. - **Mark 7:6-9** – **Jesus quoting Isaiah 29:13***
- d. *....he will try to change the set times and the laws. - **Daniel 7:25***
- e. *.....My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. **Isaiah 46:10***

Daniel 7:25a (NIV)

“He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the law.”

Homework after Lecture 3
Prepare for Lesson 4 – Jewish Church History

We have just walked through an overview of the early Gentile church. We saw how it grew out of its Hebrew roots and we watched as the Gentile church chose to separate from her Jewish brethren within the faith. Understanding that there always remains a faithful remnant of believing Jews, we now turn to take a look at what might have caused the disbelief, in general, within the Israelite nation as a whole. Remember, these questions and Scripture references are prompts meant to familiarize you with God's Word and to encourage you to think deeply and discover the LORD's truth for yourself.

1. Look at Leviticus 23:1-2 and compare it to Isaiah 1:11-17 and Amos 5:21-27.

- What has changed? (Note the pronouns)

- Whose Appointments are they supposed to be?

- In Isaiah 1:13 the LORD said that Israel's sacrifices were meaningless. What did He want from them instead (Isaiah 1:17)?

- So, what did He say that He would do in response to their assemblies (Amos 5:22 and 27)?

2. Read Hosea 4:1 and 6:6 along with Isaiah 29:13-16.

- If God gave His Appointments to the Israelites and they were commemorating them, why did God respond as He did?

- Was something missing from what they were doing?

- What was it that He desired from them instead?
3. The book of Hosea is about a prophet and his unfaithful wife. It is a parallel (picture or shadow) of the LORD's relationship with Israel. Read Hosea 2:5-11.
- What does God say he will DO with her celebrations and appointed feasts?

 - Why? (Hosea 2:5 and 8)
4. Read Mark 7:1-13 and Matthew 15:1-9 along with Colossians 2:8:
- Why were the Pharisees upset? What was it that the disciples were doing?

 - What did Jesus say they were letting go of, or nullifying, by holding on to their concerns?

 - What word do you see repeated in these verses?

In Yehoshua's time, there were a number of religious sects in existence. The **Pharisees** and the **Sadducees** were the two most well-known. Both, to some extent, opposed Yehoshua during his ministry and received condemnation from him. Below is a list of some of the characteristics of each group. Note how each group approached God's Law/Torah.

Pharisees	Sadducees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers of the Law • Taught in the Synagogues • Believed in resurrection • Believed in angels • Believed Oral Law (the added scholarly interpretation of the Torah). They believed it was <i>equal</i> to the original written Law or Torah given at Mount Sinai. • Focused on the Pharisees was teaching the application of priestly laws to non-priests, commoners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priests • Worked in the Temple • Did not believe in resurrection • Did not believe in Angels • Rejected the idea of Oral Law (added scholarly interpretation of the Torah) and insisted on a literal interpretation of the original written Law given at Mount Sinai • Focused on rituals associated with the Temple

