

# The World of the “*Apostolic Church*”

(Eph 2:20) *Foundation of the Apostles*

(Gal 4:4) In the *FULNESS* of time..

(Dan 2:40, 44) In the days of *THESE* Kings..

I. *Cultural World* in which Christianity was born.

- A. Roman Roads**: 50,000 miles- Britain to India.
- B. Roman Peace**: Pax Romana (27BC – AD 180)
- C. Roman Law**: Can appeal Caesar (Acts 25:11)
- D. Roman Citizenship**: Legal rights (Acts 22:27)
- E. Roman Religion**: Bankrupt and corrupt.
- F. Universal Language**: Common [Koine] Greek
- G. Roman Domination**: *left hunger for paradise*



# The World of the “*Apostolic Church*” (Eph 2:20)

## II. RELIGIOUS World in which the Church was born.

### A. *Pharisees*: The religious party (John 12:42).

1. John calls them (Mat 3:7) **Brood of Vipers**
2. Fenced Moses law (Mat 9:11) Eat w/ sinners
3. Note Jesus' Rebuke (Mat 23:2-7, 13-15, 25f)
4. Pharisees believed in (Acts 23:8b)..  
Resurrection, [Man's] Spirit and Angels
5. They were anti-Roman, but Hypocrites !



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II. *RELIGIOUS World* in which the Church was born.

***B. Sadducees***: Priestly, Noble Party (Acts 5:17).

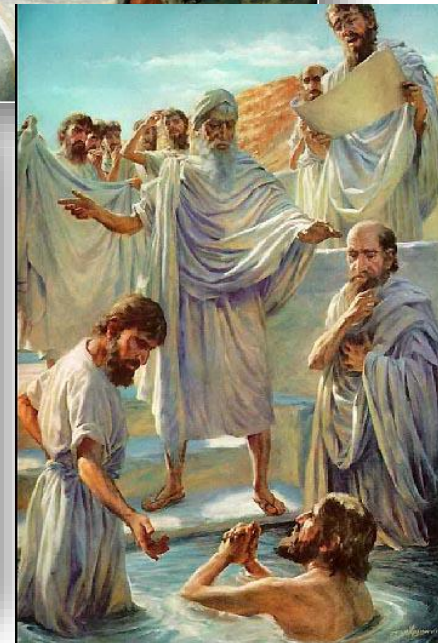
1. They *denied* (Acts 23:8a) Resurrection, Angels, and [man's] Spirit ie surviving death
2. Why irritated at the *preaching*? (Acts 4:1)
3. They were just frankly *irreligious* [ISBE]
4. HP & sons controlled *Temple Mkt* (Mt 21:13)
5. What was their *plot*? (Mat 26:3-5; 59)  
*Note Caiaphas'* reasoning (John 11:49-50)

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## II. *RELIGIOUS World* in which the Church was born.

### *C. Essenes*: Apocalyptic Party: (says Josephus).

1. No animal sacrifice
2. Observe the Sabbath
3. Communal meals
4. Despised marriage
5. Expect coming war
6. Farmed, Baptized, Moral.
7. Avoided cities & Jerusalem
8. Avoid War, Wear White.
9. Be silent. Bathe in cold H<sub>2</sub>O
10. *Write of Dead Sea Scrolls*





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## II. *RELIGIOUS World* in which the Church was born.

### *D. Zealots:*

The Nationalistic,  
Terrorist Party

They thought paying  
taxes to Caesar was  
*treason*.

They would try to *defeat* Rome by any means.

They were one of the reasons Rome *attacked* Jeru!

Simon the *Zealot* had been one of them (Luke 6:15)





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## II. RELIGIOUS World in which the Church was born.

***E. Sacarii***: The Assassins.

Splinter group of the ***Zealots***.

*(Say some authorities.)*

Carried small daggers.

*At public gatherings they  
attacked Roman soldiers  
and Roman sympathizers alike.*



**Josephus** said they massacred 700 men, women and children at En Gedi for not giving them food.



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## II. *RELIGIOUS World* in which the Church was born.

***F. Herodians***: The Political Party—supportive of King Herod’s line.

1. Involved in *testing* Christ. (Mat 22:36)

2. Allied with *Pharisees* to destroy Christ. (Mk 3:6)





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## III. *ETHNIC World* in which the Church was born.

(Mat 28:19) “Go.. make disciples of *all nations*.”

A. Beginning of the church was *all JEWS* (Acts 2:5)

1. Peter addressed: Men of Judea (Acts 2:14)

2. He then called them: Israel (Acts 2:22)

B. Then Philip went to *Samaritans* (Acts 8:5-14)

1. They were allied with Judaism religiously

2. But focused on (John 4:20 -21) the mountain

C. Now full -blood *Gentiles* converted (Acts 10:34f)

1. *Judiazers* mad: Ate w/ sinners. (Acts 11:1-3)

2. *God's* Gift calmed them down. (Acts 11:17)



# The World of the “*Apostolic Church*”

## IV. *Jewish Persecution* of Jesus

A. Jesus praised as  
*Rabbi & prophet*  
(Mk 6:15; John 9:17)

B. Jesus criticized as demonic (John 8:48)  
“You have a *demon and are a Samaritan.*”

C. Jesus condemned as blasphemer  
(Mat 26:57-67) “*He has blasphemed !*”

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## V. *Jewish Persecution* of the Early Church

A. Peter & John (Acts 4:21) *Penalty?*



B. All the Apostles  
*Penalty?* (Acts 5:17, 40)

C. Stephen *Penalty?*  
(Acts 7:56-60)

D. The Church:  
*Penalty?* (Acts 8:1-3)

E. Political by Herod: *Penalty?* (Acts 12:1-3)



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## VI. *ROMAN Persecution* of the Early Church

Persecuting Emperors:

*Nero* (AD 64)

*Domitian* (AD 81-96)

*Trajan* (AD 98-117)

*Marcus Aurelius* (AD 161–180)

*Septimius Severus* (AD 193–211)

*Decius* (AD 249–251)

*Valerian* (AD 253–260)

*Diocletian* (AD 284–305)

*Constantine* (313) legalized Christianity Edict of Milan

# APOSTASY

VII. But the Bible Foretold the Coming **APOSTASY**

(2 Thess 2:3f) “The *apostasy* comes first, ...

(1 Tim 4:1-2) “The Spirit explicitly says that in later times some *will fall away from the faith*, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.. v2 by means of the *hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron.*”