

# The Apostolic Age

## **Heresies during the Apostolic Age**

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# 3 types of heresies

- Judaizers

- Gnostic

- Pagan

## Judaizers (Re-Judaism)

- ❖ Practice of Moses' Law in Christianity and blend of Judaism with Christianity
- ❖ Denial of the divine nature of the Lord Jesus Christ and consideration that He was just a prophet or a 2<sup>nd</sup> Moses
- ❖ Denial of Lord Jesus Christ as the highest priest and the king
- ❖ They were apparently Christians but truly Jews and so they practiced Moses' Law ritually and literally and considered it necessary for salvation without it there was no saving

# Gnostic Heresy

- ❖ philosophy refusing blind faith and declaring that faith should be based on logic & knowledge
- ❖ logic was above faith; philosophy above religion
- ❖ denial of the OT and glorification of logic above faith
  - they considered faith is just logical knowledge of God
- ❖ its roots go back to the Apostolic Age, even though it appeared in the 2nd century
- ❖ Belief of 2 sources of creation:

## Gnostic (cont'd)

- ❖ They declared that spirit salvation is through either asceticism or more lusts (Hedonism - Licence) as they considered more lusts get victory on evil!
- ❖ Belief that Christ is just phantom and/or an apparition, denying his incarnation
  - ❖ 1 John 4:2-3

## Pagan heresy

- ❖ Pagan philosophies especially Plato, and Pythagoras' philosophies, such trials were by Philo of Alexandria in the 1st century and some of Therapeutae and so a mixture of Judaism and paganism appeared at that time.

# Common aspect

- ❑ Besides their differences, all 3 types of heresies deny the Divine nature of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Incarnation for the salvation of the world

# Famous heresies in the Apostolic Age

- ❖ **Ibionism**
- ❖ **Cerinthus**
- ❖ **Simon the Sorcerer**
- ❖ **Menander**
- ❖ **Nicolatans**

# Ibonism

- ❖ a heresy called by **Judaizers** referred by St. Paul as the liar brothers (2 Cor 11:26 and Gal 2:4) where they distributed churches' peace in Antioch and Galatia and denied St. Paul's apostleship
- ❖ They declared that Moses' Law is necessary for salvation and every believer must follow this law literally. They celebrated the Sabbath.
- ❖ They denied the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, considering Him just a prophet and also denied His death, believing His Second coming to set an earthly kingdom for Jews

# Cerinthus

- ❖ a Jew converted to Christianity
- ❖ lived in Ephesus, the See of St. John the Beloved
- ❖ called for circumcision and keeping of the Sabbath holy
- ❖ taught that God did not create the world but some other small god of Jews did, who gave the Torah
- ❖ taught that the Lord Jesus was born from St. Joseph and St. Mary and he was just a man and during baptism Christ came upon Jesus and left Him before Crucifixion and finally the Lord Jesus died and God resurrected him. He called that the Kingdom of God is just eating and lust

# Simon the Sorcerer

- ❖ mentioned in the Book of Acts where he used sorcery in Samaria and astonished the people, claiming his 'greatness' (Acts 8:9-21)
- ❖ Hoyostinos, a Samaritan, also mentioned that Samaritans worshipped Simon as the first god as he called himself the first god and his logic incarnated from a woman called Helena who was a prostitute at that time! He declared that the highest god appeared as Jesus the Son among Jews, himself as the father among Samaritans and in other states as the Holy Spirit

# Menander

- ❖ a Samaritan disciple for Simon the Sorcerer and was also a sorcerer
- ❖ taught that his fellows will not die and he is the saviour of the world and that through his baptism, every believer will be superior to the angels
- ❖ called for **Gnostic** heresy and through him, Syria was an eminent centre for Gnostic heresy between 70 AD and 100 AD

# Nicolaitans

- ❖ mentioned in the Holy Book of Revelation 2:6 and 2:15-16
- ❖ belonged to Nicolas (one of the seven appointed deacons)
- ❖ encouraged **pagan** worship and sacrifices
- ❖ denied that God created the world and another power did
- ❖ They called for lustful immoralities with women outside matrimony