

Church History

(THE SEVEN CHURCHES AND THE SEVEN ANGELS)

STUDY # 45



**THE GREAT TRUTHS OF
THE BIBLE**

"Thy word is truth" ...John 17:17



THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE BIBLE

STUDY : # 45

CHURCH HISTORY

(THE SEVEN CHURCHES AND THE SEVEN ANGELS)

PLEASE NOTE: Kindly refer to your Bibles for every scripture reference and read thoroughly.

MOST SCRIPTURE PASSAGES ARE QUOTED FROM THE AUTHORISED KING JAMES VERSION (KJV)

Today we will take up the study of... **THE CHURCH'S HISTORY !**



DOES THE CHURCH HAVE A HISTORY ?

Yes ! It does and this history was known to God the Father who knows the -



“... END from the beginning” (Isaiah 46:10)

.... and **HE FIRST** revealed it unto Jesus after His resurrection,
.... and Jesus in turn **REVEALED** it to His Body - the **CHURCH !**

We read of this matter in -

Revelation 1:1


“...which God gave unto Him to show unto his servants things which must SHORTLY COME TO PASS.”

Yes ! The **BOOK OF REVELATION** contains in a large measure

2

the **HISTORY OF THE CHURCH**, recorded and written
- "in symbols" -

 Yes! **"...signified it unto John"** (K.J.V)

 Now the Church is referred to as - **"the kingdom of heaven"**
in the gospel of Matthew and the **BEGINNING** of its history
is shown in -

Matthew 13:24

**"...the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed
good seed in his field..."**

Here we see that in this passage, which is a **PARABLE**, and in
the **SEVEN PARABLES** of this 13th chapter of Matthew,
the **CHURCH** is referred to as -

 **"the kingdom of heaven".**

This is a reference to the **CHURCH IN THE FLESH** who
have received a **"calling"** to be

 **..... "kings and priests"**


in the **SPIRITUAL (INVISIBLE) PHASE** of God's
Kingdom as we read in -

**Revelation 1:6 - "And hath made us kings and priests unto God
and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever."**

Indeed! They are to be the **"new heavens"** under the
HEADSHIP of Jesus Christ in God's Kingdom.

Thus we have the reference to **"the kingdom of heaven" !**

Then we read -

 **"...is likened unto a man..."**

Yes! This is a **CLEAR** reference to the **FOUNDER**

3

and **HEAD** of the church

- **OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST** and.....His work of
INAUGURATING the church calling !

Then we read on -

 **“.....which sowed good seed..”**

This is a reference to His words, which were the words of God and the **GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM** as we read in -
Luke 8:11 - “now the parable is this; the seed is the word of God. ”

And then we continue to read

 **“...in his field...”**

As we all well know this **“field”** in this parable is a **SYMBOL**
for the world as we read in -

Matthew 13:38 - “...the field is the world ...”

Yes ! This is a reference to how the church began with the
Lord Jesus Christ and His **TWELVE APOSTLES**
and some disciples.

**This church would experience many developments and
HAVE HISTORY** over a period which is now nearly
2000 years old !!!

Yes ! This history of the church has been revealed
PROPHETICALLY to us by Our Lord Jesus Himself and has
been recorded in **TWO BOOKS** -



1.The Book of Revelation.

2.The Gospel of Matthew.

Let us begin by reading now from -

Revelation 1:12-13

“....and being turned I saw seven candlesticks of gold; and in the MIDST of the seven candlesticks one like unto the son of Man....”

and vs -16- “.....and he had in his right hand seven stars ...”



This is THE KEY OF OUR STUDY TODAY !!.



“seven candlesticks” AND



.....“seven stars” IN THE RIGHT HAND OF THE ONE LIKE UNTO THE SON OF MAN !

What does this mean ?



This is the Book of Revelation, remember !

The “**one like unto the Son of Man**” as we all know is a symbolic reference to Our Lord Jesus Christ, but.... **WHAT DOES THE REST MEAN ?**

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We see the answer to the symbolic language explained clearly in the same chapter and in **verse - 20 -**

Vs -20- “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in MY right hand and the seven candlesticks. The seven stars are the ANGELS of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the SEVEN CHURCHES.”

There ! Here is Jesus Himself explaining the matter in **A VISION** to the Apostle John !!

He speaks of “seven churches” and..... “seven angels”.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN ?

Are there to be SEVEN “special” churches of Jesus ?

Like today there are 750 and more denominations among the churches ?



IS IT TO BE UNDERSTOOD THAT WAY ?

We see the answer to this matter in -

Revelation 1:13

“And IN THE MIDST of the seven candlesticks one like unto the son of Man....”

There ! That is a **PICTURE** of Jesus **WITH** and.... **AMONG**

These **SEVEN CHURCHES** represented by the “**candlesticks**” !!

This “**being in the midst**” symbolizes the words of Our Lord which we find in -

Matthew 28:20

“....and lo, I am **WITH YOU ALWAYS** even unto the end of the world (“age” - NIV).

Please note the words - “unto the END of the world”.

So this picture **MUST** symbolise Jesus **BEING WITH** these “**seven churches**” **ALL THROUGH** the Gospel Age.

Thus the “**seven churches**” must symbolize **NOT SEVEN SEPARATE CHURCHES - BUT SEVEN TIME DIVISIONS OF THE ONE CHURCH IN THE GOSPEL AGE.**

Yes ! These “**seven churches**” or seven **TIME DIVISIONS** of the church are each given a **NAME** by the Lord Himself and we can read of this in -

Revelation 1:11

“I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last..... write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto **EPHESUS**, and unto **SMYRNA**, and unto **PERGAMOS** and unto **THYATIRA**, and unto **SARDIS**, and unto **PHILADELPHIA**, and unto **LAODICEA**....”

Yes ! In **CHAPTERS 2 and 3** of **REVELATION** the Lord Himself **foreseeing** the **EXPERIENCES** and conditions during those various periods of **TIME** has recorded certain **INSTRUCTIONS** and

7

.... ENCOURAGEMENTS and.... WARNINGS to those "churches".

(WE WILL NOT BE GOING INTO THOSE DETAILS TODAY,
AS IT WOULD TAKE A VERY LONG TIME. PERHAPS EACH
ONE CAN TAKE IT UP FOR PERSONAL STUDY.)

But now we are going to try and understand and **IDENTIFY**
these **SEVEN TIME DIVISIONS** of the **ONE Gospel**
Age Church.

The scriptures don't provide us that information **DIRECTLY**
but by the study of **Chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation**
respecting these "**seven churches**" Bible Students have come
to some date **CONCLUSIONS** on the matter **BASED ON**
SOME VERSES and events in **HISTORY** .

Let us now see the "**seven churches**" and their time divisions
as we take them up one by one -



Revelation 2:1

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write...."

Yes ! This is the **FIRST** church named by the Lord among
the "**seven churches**".

THIS PERIOD BEGAN AT PENTECOST in the year **33 A.D.**

and ended with the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D.



There are some who claim the end of this church period as 74 A.D. but our preference for 70 A.D. is based on -

Revelation 8:8

“and the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea...”

Yes ! This is a reference to the **SECOND TRUMPET** during the **beginning** of which we read -



“....a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea.”



Yes ! In **SYMBOLS** this represents the **GREAT NATION OF ISRAEL** (“ **a great mountain**”) in the midst of its **FINAL JUDGEMENTS** (“**fire**”) during the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 A.D

Thus we see that if the **SECOND** church period begins at

this time then the **FIRST** church period should **END THERE TOO !!**

➔ This is the bases of our understanding the conclusion for this church period which was **also** the period when the **APOSTLES** were alive and guiding the church.

This church period could be called

“THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH PERIOD.”



Revelation 2:8

“Unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write....”

Yes ! We have already identified the **BEGINNING** of this church period which is....the **END** of the period of the **PREVIOUS** church of Ephesus.



Now how do we identify the **END** of this church period ?

The **END** of the time period of this **SECOND** time division of the church is identified through the scripture we read in -

Revelation 2:10

“....and ye shall have tribulation TEN DAYS, be thou faithful....”

Here these **“ten days”** of prophecy denote **TEN LITERAL**

YEARS of “tribulation” and PERSECUTION upon the church.



This refers in history to the period - 303 A.D to 313 A.D

....the terrible Roman persecution of Christians in the reign of **DIOCLETIAN**

- the emperor who ruled **BEFORE** Constantine.



Thus this “church” period can be said to have ended with the **ENDING** of this “TEN YEAR TRIBULATION” period in the year 313 A.D.



CHURCH #3

PERGAMOS

A.D. 313 A.D. 1157



Revelation 2:12 - “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write....”

Yes ! This THIRD church period began at the end of the TEN YEAR TRIBULATION ” period in 313 A.D.

Now for how long would this period be and when....would it **END ?**

The **END** of the period of this **THIRD** time division of the church is identified through the scripture we read in -

Revelation 2:21 - “And I have given her space to repent of her fornication....”

Now who is this **“her”** and what is meant by -

“I have given her time to repent...” (NIV)

When we read the scripture in vs 20 we read -

“...Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess....”

This **“woman”** called **JEZEBEL CANNOT BE LITERAL** as the literal Jezebel was the wicked wife of the **KING AHAB** who reigned during the time of Elijah the prophet in the Old Testament times.

This **“Jezebel”** here is.....a **SYMBOL** of that wicked **NOMINAL CHURCH SYSTEM....**





which seeked for a **RELIGIO - POLITICAL UNION** with the civil governments and is referred to in the scriptures in -

Revelation 17:5

“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT....”


Yes ! **“She”** is called **BABYLON THE GREAT !!**

 Just as Elijah the prophet represented in **TYPE** the **TRUE FAITHFUL CHURCH OF GOD**

so too this **“Jezebel”** is a **TYPE** of the wicked and **UNFAITHFUL NOMINAL CHURCH** of the **ANTICHRIST SYSTEM** who is referred to as-

“the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.” (Revelation 17:1)

Here the **“whore”** is a reference to **SPIRITUAL UNFAITHFULNESS** of **“Babylon”**.

 Now God gave **TIME** for Babylon to repent of this **UNFAITHFULNESS** before the coming of the Reformation.

 **HOW LONG WAS THIS PERIOD ?**

We read the reference to be -

 **“space”** in the **KJV** and **“time”** in **NIV**.

This is the Greek word - **“chronos”** (Strong's - **Greek # 5550**).

This word means **“a space of time”** which in this symbolic book of Revelation would mean the prophetic word - **“time”**

....which in turn means **A PROPHETIC YEAR** period of **360 PROPHETIC DAYS,**

which in turn would mean **360 LITERAL YEARS.**



The REFORMATION began on October 31st 1517.

Thus 360 years BEFORE that would be -

1517 — **360** → **1157**

Yes ! This was the year that began the “**time**” that God would give for repentance of “**Jezebel**” and since we find these words mentioned in the period of the **FOURTH** church period of **THYATIRA** (Revelation 2:21)

we can assume that this is where the period of Thyatira **ALSO BEGAN !!!**

And **IT IS ALSO** where the **PREVIOUS** church period of **PERGAMOS** ended !



Revelation 2:18

“And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write....”

Yes ! This **FOURTH** church period began where the previous church period **ENDED** in 1157 A.D.



NOW WHEN DOES THIS CHURCH PERIOD END ?

The **END** of the time period of this **FOURTH** division

of the church is understood by something concerning the
NEXT "church" time division as found in -

Revelation 9:5

**".....And to them it was given that they should not kill them,
but that they should be tormented FIVE MONTHS"**



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN ?

These **"five months"** refer to a period of **PROPHETIC TIME**
about something that happens during the **FIFTH TRUMPET**
period which also corresponds to the **FIFTH CHURCH** period
and about which we read in -

Revelation 9:1-3

**"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the
earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened
the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke
of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of
the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the
earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the
earth have power."**

All these matters and their **MEANINGS** we are **NOT**
GOING TO GO INTO TODAY !

But it suffices us to know that this **FIFTH CHURCH**
period would consist

....of a **PROPHETIC TIME PERIOD** of **"five months"** .

These **"five months"** represent

5 X 30 → 150 "PROPHETIC DAYS"



And 150 PROPHETIC DAYS = 150 LITERAL YEARS.

Thus this **FIFTH CHURCH** period of "Sardis" WHICH WOULD END in the REFORMATION date of 1517 would begin 150 YEARS EARLIER.

Thus the year calculated would be -

$$1517 - 150 \rightarrow 1367 \text{ A.D.}$$

Thus the year 1367 A.D. would be the **BEGINNING** of the "Sardis" church period and would **ALSO** be the **END** of



.....the previous **THYATIRA** church period !



Revelation 3:1

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write..."

Yes ! This **FIFTH** church period of **SARDIS** has a **BEGINNING** and **ENDING** time calculation which we have already studied and found in

the **PREVIOUS** study of the church periods of **PERGAMOS** and **THYATIRA** and from the words of **Revelation 9:5** denoting **"five months"** or **150 LITERAL YEARS !!**

Yes ! It began in the year **1367 A.D.** and ended in the year

that the reformation began - 1517 A.D. !



Revelation 3:7

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write.....”

Yes ! This is the church **PERIOD** that **BEGAN** with the **REFORMATION** of 1517.

 Now when does this period **END** ?

The **END** of this **SIXTH** time division of the church which begins at Reformation is identified through the comparison of **two scriptures** in -

 **Revelation 3:11** - “Behold I **COME** quickly”


and in.....

 **Revelation 3:20** - “Behold I **STAND** at the door and knock...”

DID YOU SEE THAT ?

It seems quite clear that in the **SIXTH** church period the Lord proclaims that

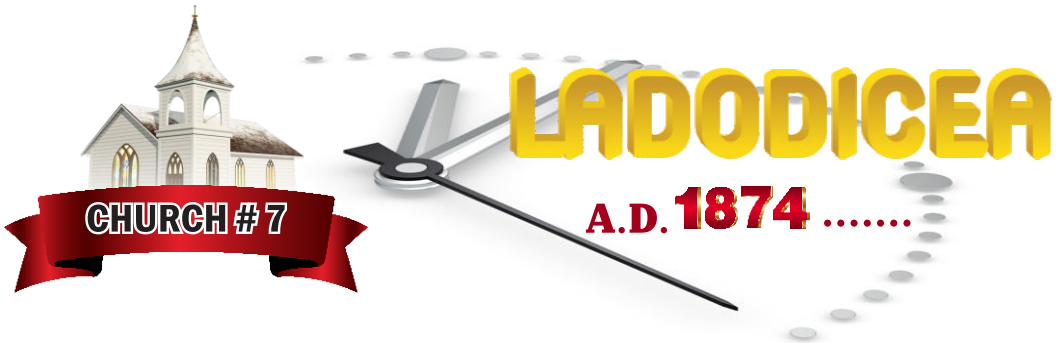
His Second Coming is.... **VERY NEAR**.....

and in the **SEVENTH** church period **HE ACTUALLY ANNOUNCES** that He is **ARRIVED PRESENT** !

Thus the Second Coming DATE is.....THE DIVIDING LINE between the sixth and seventh church periods.

Yes ! In the year 1874 the sixth church period ENDED and the seventh church period BEGAN.

Thus we have -



Revelation 3:14

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write.....”

Yes ! The SEVENTH and LAST time division of the church begins with the Lord's Second Coming in 1874.

Throughout this LAODICEAN church period the RETURNED KING is present !

Now do we know when this church period ENDS ?

The END of this SEVENTH and LAST church time division is to be in our days - in the very near future !!

Thus -

TIME PERIOD : 1874 A.D. TO COMPLETION OF CHURCH.

These then are the "seven churches" and their time divisions
in **CHURCH HISTORY !!**

Now let us see something of the history of church events as
they took place in these **SEVEN TIME DIVISIONS** as
revealed in **SEVEN PARABLES** spoken by the Lord in **THE
GOSPEL OF MATTHEW** and the 13th Chapter -

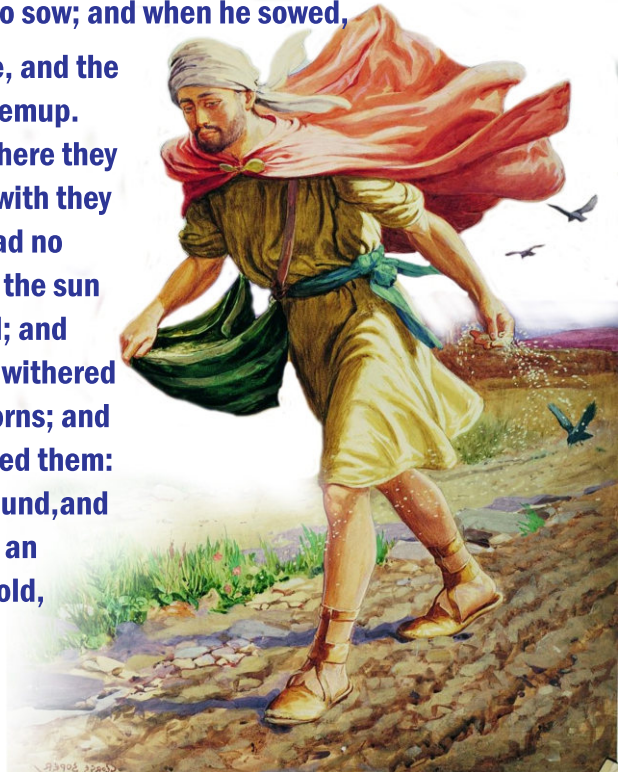


Matthew 13:1-8

(The Parable of the Sower)

“The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed,

some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth : And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but the other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold.”



This parable **ILLUSTRATES** the events of the **FIRST** church period of **EPHESUS** when the 12 Apostles and disciples went forth all over to **PREACH** and “**SOW**” the seeds of the gospel of the kingdom in accordance to the **COMMISSION** of the Master in -



Matthew 28:19,20

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”



And in.....

Acts 1:8

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Yes ! This was the “**MISSIONARY**” church time division

where extensive traveling was undertaken to reach far and wide in the world.

And the **GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM** (“**the seed**”) was “**sown**” amidst **GREAT CHALLENGES** and **TRIBULATIONS** and amidst varying **REACTIONS** as represented by -

 “**Some seed fell by the way side...**”

represents those who heard, with the **PHYSICAL** ears but having no “**EARS OF UNDERSTANDING**” could not understand.

 “**Some fell upon stony places...**”

represents those who “**HEAR**” and react **INSTANTANEOUSLY** but have no depth of **CHARACTER** to face up to and stand in **ADVERSITY** and **TRIBULATION**.

 “**...Some fell among thorns..**”

represents those who “**HEAR**” and “**REACT**”, but find themselves caught up among the things of this world and are unable
... **TO FULFILL THE TERMS OF DISCIPLESHIP**.

 “**...But the other fell into good ground...**”

represents those who “**HEAR**” and... “**REACT**” and... **FAITHFULLY** “**fight a good fight of faith.**”

Oh ! Yes ! It took a LOT OF SOWING to find the REAL disciples of the Lord !

And now let us turn to the **SECOND** parable in -



Matthew 13:24-30

(The Parable of the wheat and the tares)



“Another parable put he forth unto them, saying The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares,

ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.”

This parable illustrates the **SECOND** “church” time period of **SMYRNA** when we read that



“the enemy”

who is **SATAN**, began the **CORRUPTING** of the Most Holy Faith of **BIBLICAL TRUTH** with **FALSE DOCTRINES** to **REPLACE** every doctrine of **TRUTH** from the Word of God !!

This was done **GRADUALLY** over a period of time and was in **FULFILLMENT** of the prophecy of the Apostle Paul which we find in -

I Timothy 4:1

“Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils....”

Yes ! Gradually was raised up **BELIEVERS** in these **FALSE DOCTRINES** and



“POPULAR TRUTHS”

who thus only in **NAME** were called **“CHRISTIANS”** and here are compared in **SYMBOL WHEAT “lookalikes”** to the which are - **“TARES ” !!**

Yes ! It was in this period of the **CHURCH** that all forms of



POPULAR WORLDLY “TRUTHS”

....which have **NO BASIS IN THE BIBLE** began to enter into the **BELIEFS** of the church.

Now let us turn to the **THIRD** parable in -



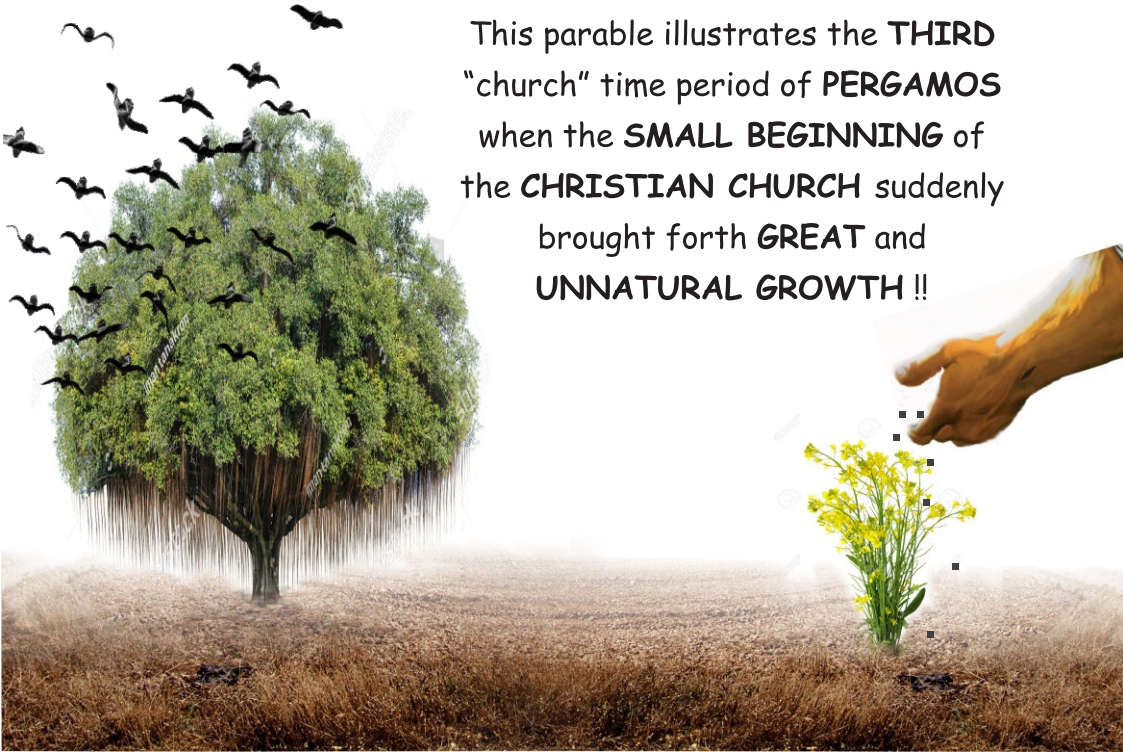
Matthew 13:31,32

(The Parable of the mustard seed)

“Another parable put he forth unto them, saying the kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field. Which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.”

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This parable illustrates the **THIRD** "church" time period of **PERGAMOS** when the **SMALL BEGINNING** of the **CHRISTIAN CHURCH** suddenly brought forth **GREAT** and **UNNATURAL GROWTH !!**



Yes ! Just as the **TINY** mustard seed brings forth **A PLANT** that is maximum only 3-4 feet high, and is only a garden plant and is

.... , **NOT AT ALL A TREE**, so too the **TRUE SEED** of the gospel of the kingdom with its **TEACHINGS** and **DOCTRINES** such as -

Matthew 16 : 24

"Then Jesus said unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his CROSS...."

and again in -

II Timothy 2 : 11

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with him."



.....WOULD NOT AT ALL ATTRACT A LARGE NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS OR..... EVEN BELIEVERS !!

Yes ! With these doctrines of **TRUTH OF THE WORD** the Christian church would **NOT** have any large growth at all !

But it was seen that with the conversion of the Roman Emperor **CONSTANTINE** around 315 -320 A.D. that **CHRISTIANITY** began to become **POPULAR** with the emperor himself taking great interest to arrange



THE COUNCIL OF NICE

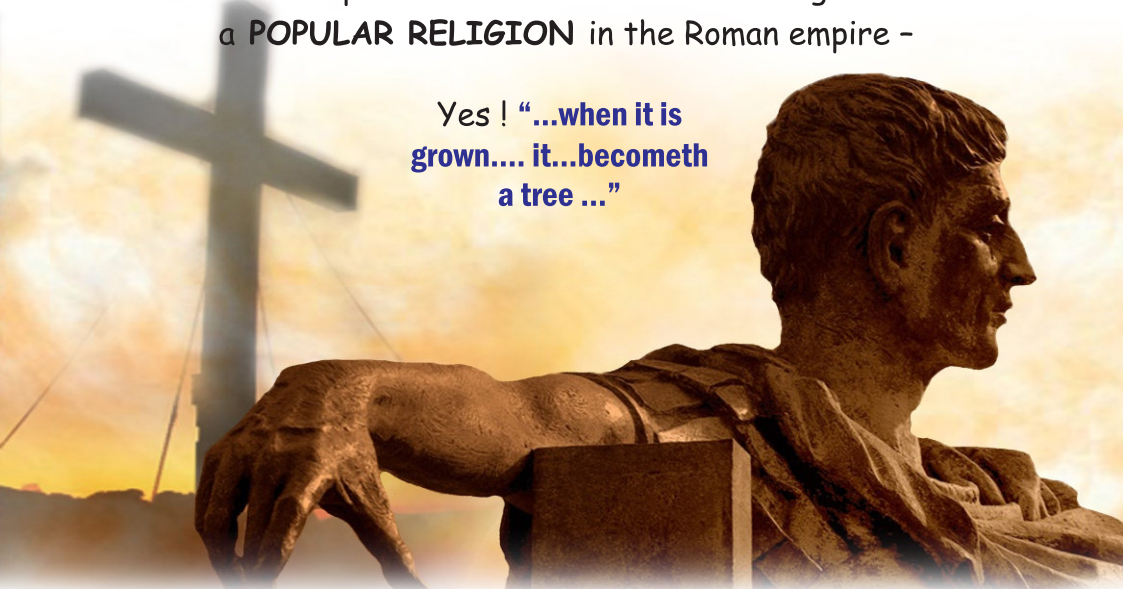
where many Christian bishops were invited to the discussion that was the **FIRST STEP** towards the birth of -

THE GREAT FALSE DOCTRINE OF "THE TRINITY".

Yes ! Indeed, with the introduction of more and more **POPULAR WORLDLY "TRUTHS"** and with the emperor himself becoming a "Christian"

.....the next step was that **CHRISTIANITY** began to become a **POPULAR RELIGION** in the Roman empire -

Yes ! "...when it is grown.... it...becometh a tree ..."



Now let us turn to the **FOURTH** parable in -



Matthew 13:33

(The Parable of the woman with leaven)

“Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”

This parable illustrates the **FOURTH** “church” time period of **THYATIRA** when

→ the **“woman”** - the Nominal church which was now **IN POWER** -

→ ...the “Antichrist” **PAPACY SYSTEM** - in Rome

caused the Bible to be “buried” and....introduced **“leaven”** - the **FALSE DOCTRINES AND the BELIEFS and TEACHINGS** of the heathen into the church beliefs.

→ Notice the **COMPLETE ABSENCE** of mention of **“the man.....who sowed”** !

Yes ! This represents that the **TRUTHS** of God's Word as revealed by His **SON JESUS** was now **COMPLETELY LOST** during this period !

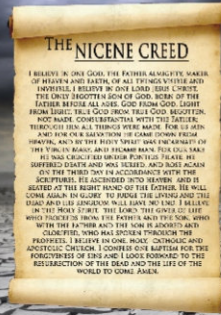
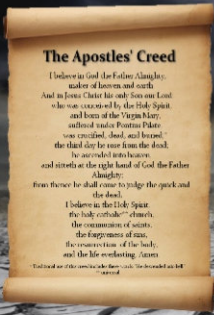
Yes ! The **BIBLE** and its **STUDY** individually or in groups was neglected and faith was based on what was called -

 **“CREEDS”**.

..... **WHICH CONSISTED OF A SHORT SUMMARIZED SET OF BELIEFS !!**

There were **THREE PRINCIPAL CREEDS** -

1. **THE APOSTLE'S CREED (115 words)**
2. **THE NICENE CREED (230 words)**
3. **THE ATHANASIAN CREED (702 words).**



Thus the people's attention was turned from the **STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES** to these creeds and the **BASIC TEACHINGS** and **DOCTRINES** of the Christian faith from the Bible was lost sight of **COMPLETELY !**

Yes ! The CHURCH had entered into THE DARK AGES !!

This **COMPLETE LOSS** is what is illustrated in this parable by the words -



“...the whole was leavened.....”

And now we turn to the **FIFTH** parable in -



Matthew 13:44

(The Parable of the hidden treasure)

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”

This parable illustrates the **FIFTH** “church” time period Of **SARDIS** which was the period that **PRECEDED** and which led to **THE REFORMATION** of 1517.

What then did the “hidden treasure” SIGNIFY ?



It signified the - **WORD OF GOD THE BIBLE !**

It had long been “buried” or **HIDDEN FROM VIEW**, of the common people as it was in old understandable

languages like Latin and Greek but was **"UNCOVERED"** by the translation of the Bible into **FRENCH** and **ENGLISH !!** Thus this **"treasure"** was discovered and great **TRUTHS** from the Bible were found and shined forth the **LIGHT** of **TRUTH** upon the **"DARKNESS"** of the **ERRORS** and **FALSE DOCTRINES** being preached publicly **at that time !**

Yes ! Having found this **"treasure"** and these **GREAT TRUTHS** many

 **"sold all"**

.....or **LAI D DOWN THEIR LIVES FULLY** in the service of the Word of God.

And great efforts were spent in taking those **"DISCOVERED" TRUTHS** to the common people !

And now let us turn to the **SIXTH** parable in -



Matthew 13:45

(The parable of the goodly pearl of great price)

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man,.... seeking goodly pearls: who when he had found one pearl of great price went, and sold all that he had, and bought it."



This parable illustrates the **SIXTH** "church" time period of **PHILADELPHIA** which was the period and time **AFTER.....the GREAT REFORMATION**

...which began on **OCTOBER 31st 1517!**



Now who is this **"merchant man"** and what is meant by **"goodly pearls"**?

The merchant man refers to a **SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL** of that time who was **"seeking goodly pearls"**.

We find the meaning of these pearls in -

Matthew 7:6 - "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet...."



Yes! Pearls represent that -

"which is holy".



Yes! These **"pearls"** are **THE WORDS OF GOD** which we read about in -

Psalms 12:6 - "The words of the LORD are pure words...."

Yes! They are **GOD'S HOLY WORDS OF TRUTH** as found in the Bible!

Thus this **"seeking goodly pearls"** represents.... **BIBLE STUDY** and.... **SEARCH FOR TRUTH.**





At this time period of the church which began at **REFORMATION** the individual “**merchant man**” being referred to over here is none other than the “**FATHER OF REFORMATION**” - **MARTIN LUTHER** himself !

➔ And what was that “**one pearl of great price**” that he had found ?
It was the great **TRUTH** found in -

Romans 1:17

“**For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith .**”

**YES ! THIS WAS AN ASTOUNDING TRUTH
AT THAT TIME !**

For at a time when forgiveness of sins was **BOUGHT AT A PRICE** through what was called **INDULGENCES**” like -



..... medals, certificates, scapulars, holy oil, holy water etc.
THIS TRUTH from the scriptures was so amazing and simple !

Yes ! Martin Luther, when he beheld the open and
“**TRADESMAN**” like manner in which **JOHN TETZEL**
was **SELLING** so called “symbols” of

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

and claiming that it was **DIVINE** and of God, was **TROUBLED**
and wondered of the **TRUTH** of it all.

It was in such circumstances that the Lord drew his
attention to this **GREAT TRUTH** and



.... “**pearl of great price**”.

After **Martin Luther** there were others like **John Wesley**, **Zwingli** etc. who too began to rediscover great truths from the scriptures regarding “**DISCIPLESHIP**” and.... “**BEING A CHRISTIAN**”.

And truly during this period too there were many who
were willing to

 “sell all”

.... and lay **DOWN THEIR LIVES FULLY** in the service of
God's **TRUTH**.

This was also the period when the Bible was translated into
German by Martin Luther and later **THE KING JAMES
VERSION (KJV)** was printed in the year 1611 and after the
fall of **PAPACY** in 1799, in the year 1803, Bibles began to be
printed **SYSTEMATICALLY** through the establishment of
BIBLE SOCIETIES in many places !

Yes ! Bibles began to be printed in the many languages of the
world in the tens and hundreds of thousands **ANNUALLY !!**

And now we come to the **SEVENTH** parable in -



Matthew 13:47,48

(The Parable of the Net)

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the
sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full,
they drew to shore



and gathered the good into vessels but cast the bad away.”

This parable illustrates the **SEVENTH** church time period of **LAODICEA** and shows the main work of this period -

.... **THE HARVEST** of “wheat” and “tares”

....here represented as “**good fish**” and “**bad fish**”.

This is the period when the Lord is Himself present as
THE CHIEF REAPER

....as He was present at the harvest of the Jewish Age
at His first coming.

He **SEPERATES AND JUDGES HIS CHURCH** as we read in -

Luke 19:15

“.....that when He returned, having RECEIVED the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading....”

Yes ! Here is a parabolic picture of **THE JUDGEMENT** and
separation of the church **INDIVIDUALLY !**





“every man”

We are currently living at the very **END** of this period of the **HARVEST** ...when all the “**wheat**” have almost been gathered into the barn and the **GREAT WORK** is reaching its **END!**

Yes ! The HARVEST that began in 1874 is nearing its COMPLETION VERY SHORTLY !

Having seen an **OUTLINE OF CHURCH HISTORY** of the “**seven churches**” let us now turn and look at the “**seven stars.....he had in his right hand**” - **REVELATION 1:16**

We have already seen **what they represent**, when we read from -

Revelation 1:20

“**.....the seven stars are the ANGELS of the seven churches...**”

Yes ! Here the word “angel” is from the Greek word - “**aggelos**” (Strong's - Greek # 32) which means.... “**a messenger**” or “**a pastor**”.

Thus seen we realize that these “**seven angels**” are



SEVEN SPECIAL MESSENGERS

of the Lord to these seven **PHASES** or “**time periods**” of the **CHURCH**.

These are **NOT** spirit beings but **HUMAN BEINGS** and **SPECIAL BRETHREN** whom the Lord **CHOOSES** to bring forth a particular **MESSAGE OF TRUTH** to each period of the “**seven churches**”.

Now what is meant by these being “**in his right hand**” ?

(**REVELATION 1:16**)

This signifies that these seven messengers are



..... **SPECIALLY CHOSEN VESSELS** of the Lord

....and under the Lord's **CARE** and**PROTECTIVE GUIDANCE**.

 Now that we live at the **VERY END** of this Gospel Age, can we **IDENTIFY WHO** these “**seven angels** or **seven stars**” were ?

Let us see as we now look to the **FIRST** of the “seven churches” -

1. EPHESUS (33 A.D. - 70 A.D.)



When we look at the first church the question that arises is -
**WHO WAS THE ONE THE LORD USED MOST IN BRINGING
FORTH TRUTH TO HIS EARLY CHURCH ?**

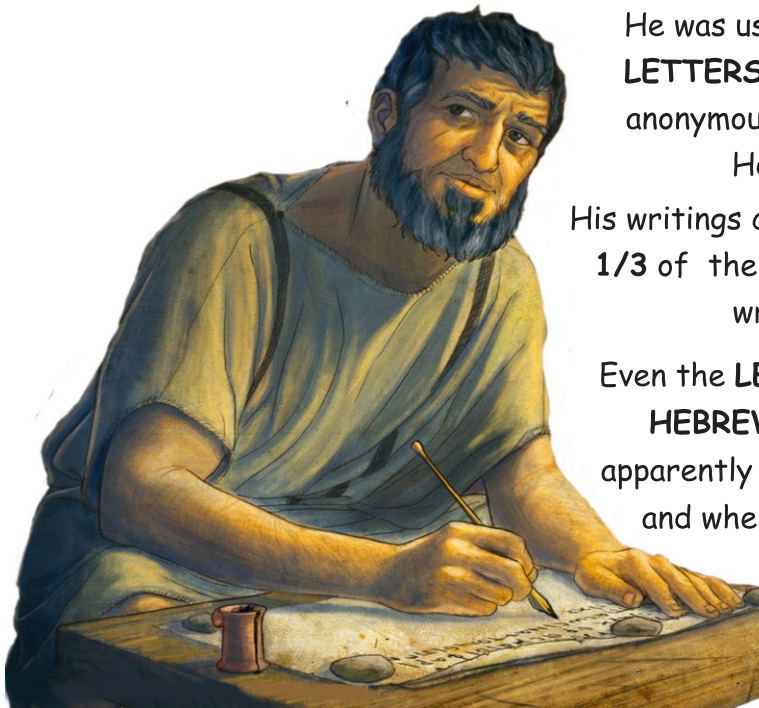
We gain the answer by just simply looking at the New
Testament of the Bible !!

Yes ! It was the “last” apostle - THE APOSTLE PAUL !

He was used to write **14 LETTERS**, including the anonymous letter to the Hebrews.

His writings consists of **nearly 1/3** of the New Testament writings.

Even the **LETTER TO THE HEBREWS**, which is apparently **ANONYMOUS**, and where the writer does not name himself is



.....**UNDERSTOOD** to be written by the Apostle Paul because of **TWO REASONS** -

➡ **ONE**, the style of writing is very **DISTINCTIVE** of the manner of Paul's writings

➡and **TWO**, the **SPECIAL LOVE** that the apostle had for the Hebrews -
his own people as is clearly evident in -

Romans 11:14

“...If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.”

Yes! The Apostle Paul greatly loved his own **“flesh”** . -
THE HEBREWS !

He was the **LAST APOSTLE** to be chosen by Jesus Himself to replace the fallen Judas Iscariot as we read the words of the Lord in -

Acts 9:15

“But the Lord said unto him, go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bring my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.”

Yes! The Lord chose **SAUL OF TARSUS** as he was
....**ON THE WAY** to Damascus to persecute the
CHURCH !



I Corinthians 9:1,2

“Am I not an apostle ?have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord ? if I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.”



But his selection as the **LAST APOSTLE** by the Lord is not just **A CONTROVERSY TODAY**, but was so in the early church too as we read in - **I Corinthians 9:1,2.**

Yes ! There were many Christians IN THE EARLY CHURCH WHO DID NOT ACCEPT THE APOSTLESHIP of Paul !!

But he very clearly explains the matter in -
Galatians 1:1

“Paul, an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

We must **NOTE** the manner in which Paul clarifies the matter of him being an apostle -

➡ “not of man”

represents that His being chosen was **NOT** by the other **ELEVEN APOSTLES !**

➡ “not by men”

represents how the **METHOD** of his being chosen was

NOT by the methods of man, such as by LOT !!



**“but by Jesus Christ and
God the Father”** 

Here he clearly shows the
AUTHORITY by which he
had been chosen !!

**But Alas ! How few
today KNOW this
TRUTH !!**

Then we see that the
Apostle Paul was a Pharisee
(Acts 26:5) who had been
trained under the great
Jewish teacher Gamaliel as
we read in -

Acts 22:3

**“Yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught
according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers...”**

But when he became a **CHRISTIAN**, perhaps the
GREATEST MATTER was that he was trained and **TAUGHT**
THE TRUTH BY THE LORD JESUS Himself as we read in -

Galatians 1:11,12

**“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me
is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught
it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”**



YES ! WHAT A CERTIFICATION INDEED !!

This apostle Paul was the **SPECIAL APOSTLE** to the **GENTILES** (as we read in **Galatians 2:7**) as Peter was to the Jews !

His works and ministry is greatly and in **DETAIL** recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

His life **ENDED** in **67 A.D.** when he was beheaded in Rome. Though he was the **LAST** of the apostles to be chosen he is **NOW** possibly the **GREATEST** of **THEM ALL** !

.....the one who was "last" and who has now become "first" !

2. SMYRNA (70 A.D. - 313 A.D.)



When we think of this second period of the church and wonder through which "angel" the Lord brought forth the "light" of **TRUTH** we again turn to the New Testament for the answer !!

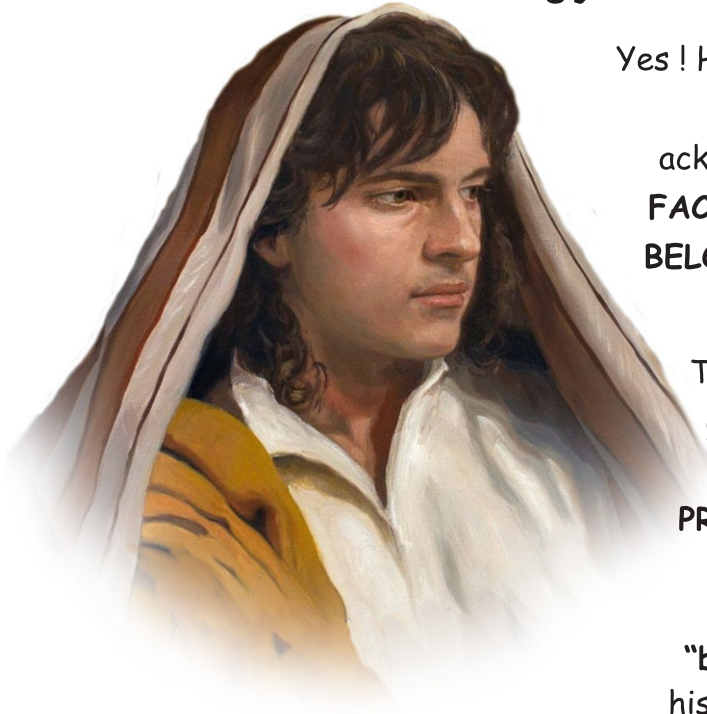
It was **ANOTHER APOSTLE** - **THE YOUNGEST** of Jesus **TWELVE** Apostles, who was used to write **FIVE** books of the Bible around the period 90 - 96 A.D.

Yes ! It was the "beloved" APOSTLE - JOHN !

Because of his **ZEAL** and **ENTHUSIASM** he was **SPECIALLY LOVED** of the Lord as we read in -

John 21:20

"Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following which also leaned on his breast at supper..."



Yes ! Here is the **APOSTLE JOHN** himself acknowledging **THAT FACT** of him being the **BELOVED APOSTLE** of Jesus !

The apostle John was greatly used of the Lord to explain the **PREHUMAN DETAILS** and matters of the Lord before he "**became flesh**" and his relationship with -

➡the **HEAVENLY FATHER** from "**the beginning**".

He was known as -

➡ "**the apostle of LOVE**"

as he placed much **EMPHASIS** on that **DIVINE** quality !



Tradition says that when the apostle had grown too old even to walk, and had to be carried to the "**meetings**" his words of encouragement to the brethren was always -

➡ "**Love one another, for that is what the Master taught us....**

Yes ! Love one another - that is enough !!"



Tradition further says that he was thrown alive into a **CAULDRON** (a large pot) of boiling oil and that **NOTHING HAPPENED TO HIM !**

Is it UNBELIEVABLE ? Or SURPRISING ?

No ! IT IS"NT !!

Remember the **THREE HEBREWS** who were put into the **FURNACE** and came out without even the "smell of fire" upon them in Daniel chapter 3 ??!

Yes ! The God of those **THREE HEBREWS IS THE SAME GOD** of the Apostle John !



He was also imprisoned for a period of time in **PATMOS ISLAND** where he wrote **THE BOOK OF REVELATION**.

The apostle John was the **LAST** of the apostles to die and lived a long life to be nearly 100 years of age and died of **OLD AGE** -

the **ONLY ONE** among the twelve apostles **NOT** to die a martyr's death !!

3. PERGAMOS (313 A.D. - 1157 A.D.)



Now when we come to the **THIRD** period of the church we find that this is the period when Satan





"the enemy"

BEGAN to sow his seeds of **FALSE DOCTRINES** and **ERRORS** !
 So who was the “**angel**” or “**star**” that the Lord chose to use
 to bring the “**light**” of truth during this period ?

He was the one involved in the great debate arranged by
 emperor Constantine in **NICE** in **325 A.D** where
 the **RELATIONSHIP** of Jesus and the Father was discussed
 based on the scripture of -
John 10:30 - “I and my Father are one.....”



 Yes ! This debate was between.....**ARIUS** and **ATHANASIUS** !!
 One was an old man and the other was a young man !!

 It was the older man **ARIUS**, who presented the “**light**” of
TRUTH while **ATHANASIUS** the much younger man claimed a
 “**ONENESS IN PERSON**” between Jesus and the Father !!

This would later lead to the **DEVELOPMENT** of that false and blasphemous doctrine of


 **"THE TRINITY".**

The argument of **ARIUS** was -


"The Father is a father; the Son is a son; therefore the Father must have existed before the son; therefore once the son was NOT ; therefore he was made like all creatures of a substance that had not previously existed".

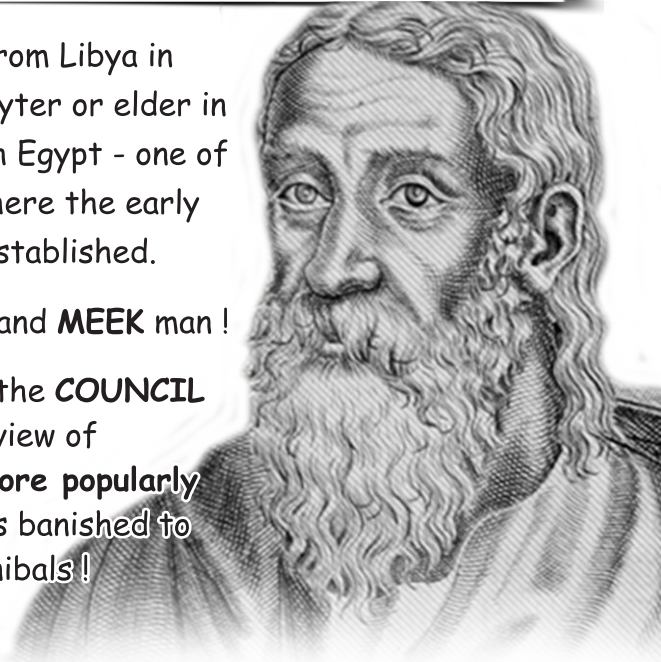
 Yes ! He taught clearly **THE TRUTH** of how Jesus was.....**THE CREATED SON** of the **FATHER**.

Yes ! This ARIUS was the "angel" to this THIRD church period of PERGAMOS.

 He was a teacher from Libya in Africa and was a presbyter or elder in **ALEXANDRIA** in North Egypt - one of the **FIVE CITIES** where the early church was first established.

He was a very **HUMBLE** and **MEEK** man !

 In the great debate of the **COUNCIL** of **NICAEA** the view of **ATHANASIUS** were more popularly accepted and Arius was banished to an island of cannibals !




Some time later when some people went to search for him in that island of cannibals they were **SURPRISED** to find him alive and not only that, they saw that he had managed to **CONVERT** some of the cannibals to the **CHRISTIAN FAITH !!**

Yes ! **ARIUS** was very popular in North Africa and his followers were called "**ARIANS**" and his teachings was called

 "**ARIANISM**".


Till the rise of Islam in the seventh century the believers in **ARIANISM** were many in Egypt and North Africa.

 Till today the "**POPULAR**" Nominal Church considers **ARIUS**to be a "heretic" and **ATHANASIUS** to be a "saint" !!! Arius died suddenly in Constantinople in the year 336 A.D. under "strange and horrid" **CIRCUMSTANCES** -
...POSSIBLY POISONED BY HIS ENEMIES WHO ALL REJOICED AT HIS DEATH !!

Yes ! The Lord Himself referred to **ARIUS** in Revelation as "**my faithful martyr**".

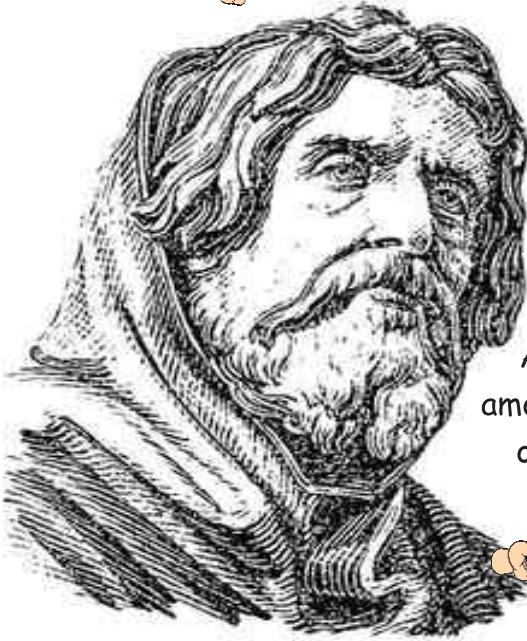
4. THYATIRA (1157 A.D. - 1367 A.D.)

This **FOURTH** period of the church was during the period when the "**ANTICHRIST**" **PAPACY** system was well established and in great power.

 During this period the "**angel**" that the Lord chose to bring forth the "**light**" of **TRUTH** was from the very

CENTER of Papacy support

the NATION OF FRANCE !!



His name was **PETER WALDO !!**


He was a rich merchant from **LYONS IN SOUTHERN FRANCE.**


Around 1157 in a discussion among certain prominent citizens of Lyons on various matters, **SUDDENLY** one of them

 **JUST FELL TO THE GROUND AND DIED !**

This incident greatly **SHOCKED** and **TERRIFIED** one of the persons who was present there and brought to mindthe **MORTALITY** of man and.....the **DEATH PENALTY.**

That person was **PETER WALDO !!**

 He was a very wealthy man and he began to **THINK** and **REFLECT** and to repent and amend his life.

 He began **TO GIVE ALMS GENEROUSLY TO THE POOR** and to seek **GODLINESS.**

 He began to zealously **LEARN** and **TEACH** the Holy Scriptures.

 He even employed a Catholic priest called **STEPHANUS**

DE EVISA to translate the whole Bible into French from Latin and it was not long before he noticed **THE GREAT DIFFERENCES** between the Roman Catholic beliefs and **the original teachings** of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

He then gave up his business and distributed much of his wealth among the poor and entered **FULLY INTO TEACHING** and **INSTRUCTION**.

Those who heard him and followed him were known as -



..... **“WALDENSES”**.

They encouraged the people to accept the teachings of the Holy Scriptures instead of the **TRADITIONS** and **CLAIMS** of the Roman Catholic church.

Long before the days of Martin Luther these were



.....the **FIRST PROTESTANTS**

against the errors of Papacy !!!

Their **DOCTRINES** of **TRUTH** backed, by **A LIFE OF SIMPLICITY AND MORALITY** shone forth in the midst of the darkness of Papacy !!



Gradually the **PERSECUTION** of these **“Waldenses”** led to them having to leave Lyons and to take refuge in **THE ALPINE MOUNTAINS** and caves.



THUS THEY TOOK THE TRUTHS ALL OVER EUROPE !!

Yes ! Much before the **REFORMATION** it was the Waldeneses who possessed and propagated great truths from the scriptures, though there be no record of the details.

Peter Waldo finally settled in a place called **BOHEMIA**,

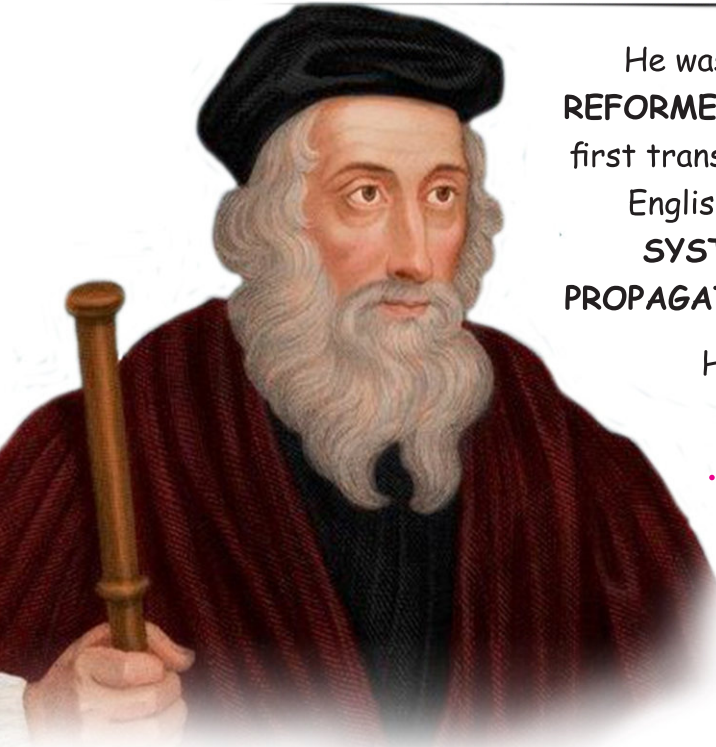
where he died in the year 1179.

5. SARDIS (1367 A.D. - 1517 A.D.)



In the **FIFTH** period of the church, which was **just before** the **REFORMATION**, the Lord chose as his “angel” and “star” a teacher from Oxford University in England.

His name was **JOHN WYCLIFFE**.



He was **A VERY BOLD REFORMER** and it was he who first translated the Bible into English and sought to **SYSTEMATICALLY PROPAGATE** the Bible truths.

His followers were called -

.....**“LOLLARDS”**



which was from the German word “lollen” or “lullen” which means - “to sing softly or slowly”.

Yes ! It is from this word that we have the English word



“lullaby”

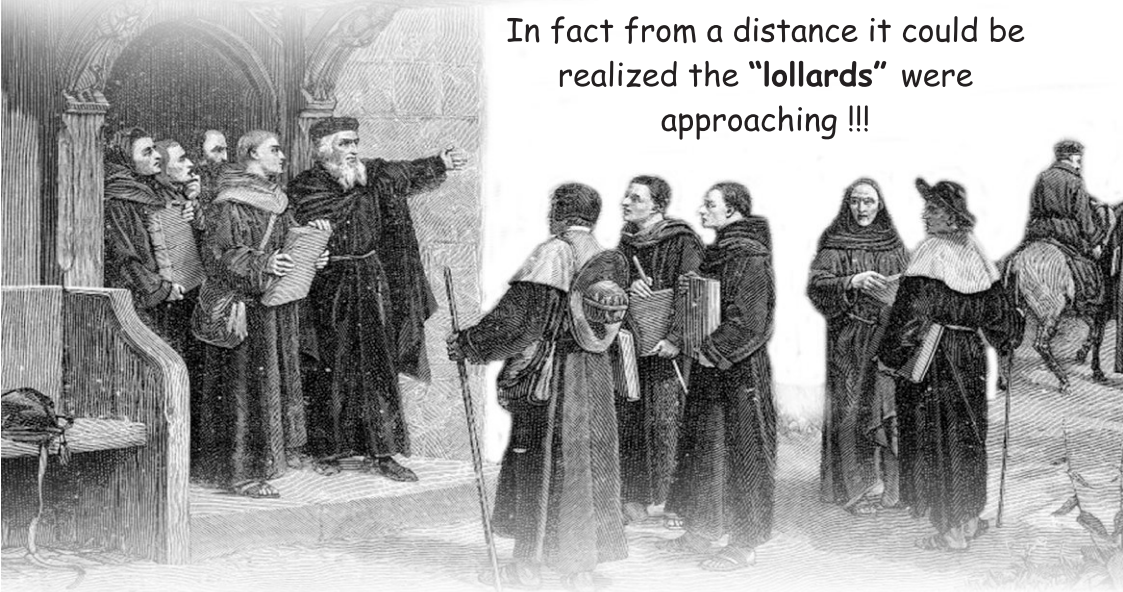
WHICH MEANS A SONG SUNG SOFTLY !!

This name came to Wycliffe's followers because of their



CONSTANT HYMN SINGING.

In fact from a distance it could be realized the "lollards" were approaching !!!



John Wycliffe used a class called -



"the poor priests"

who with staff in hand would carry the Gospel message far and wide.

It was Wycliffe who during this period in church history discovered the "buried" Word of God which was "buried so to speak in languages **ununderstood by the common man LIKE LATIN** and translated it into English and put the "treasure" -

the **HOLY SCRIPTURES** unto the hands of the common people.

He himself paid these "poor priests" as they went forth, **BAREFOOT** and **LIVING ON ALMS** and the plainest food to **CARRY THESE TRUTHS** to the common people.

John Wycliffe's combination of -

➡ a **GREAT INTELLECT**

➡ ...and his **CLEARNESS OF THOUGHT**

➡ ...and the **FIRMNESS** to maintain the truth

➡and the **BOLDNESS** to defend it

...was almost **WITHOUT EQUAL** and that made him one of the greatest **REFORMERS !!**

He was called -

"THE MORNING STAR OF REFORMATION"

Yes ! It was John Wycliffe who laid **THE FOUNDATION** for the great **REFORMATION**.

In fact so great was the hatred of the **PAPACY** against John Wycliffe that even forty years **after his death**, his body was **EXHUMED** (removed) from his grave and then was **PUBLICLY BURNED !**

And his ashes were thrown into a neighboring brook (stream).



THE GREAT POET WORDSWORTH wrote of how Wycliffe's ashes were carried by the brook into the ocean !!

So too the doctrines and teachings of John Wycliffe was carried forth and **dispersed all over the world after his death**.

The English translation of the Bible that was undertaken by John Wycliffe was carried forward and completed by his follower -

➡ **WILLIAM TYNDALE.**

...who paid with his life for this effort - **WHEN HE WAS BURNT AT THE STAKE !!**

6. PHILADELPHIA (1517 A.D. - 1874 A.D.)



The **SIXTH** church period began with the great **REFORMATION** and the "angel" and the "star" that the Lord chose to bring forth the **LIGHT OF TRUTH** was none other than the very person who "sparked off" the Reformation in -

.... **WITTENBERG** Germany on **October 31st 1517**.

Yes ! His name was MARTIN LUTHER.

He was a Roman Catholic monk (priest) from **SAXONY IN GERMANY**.

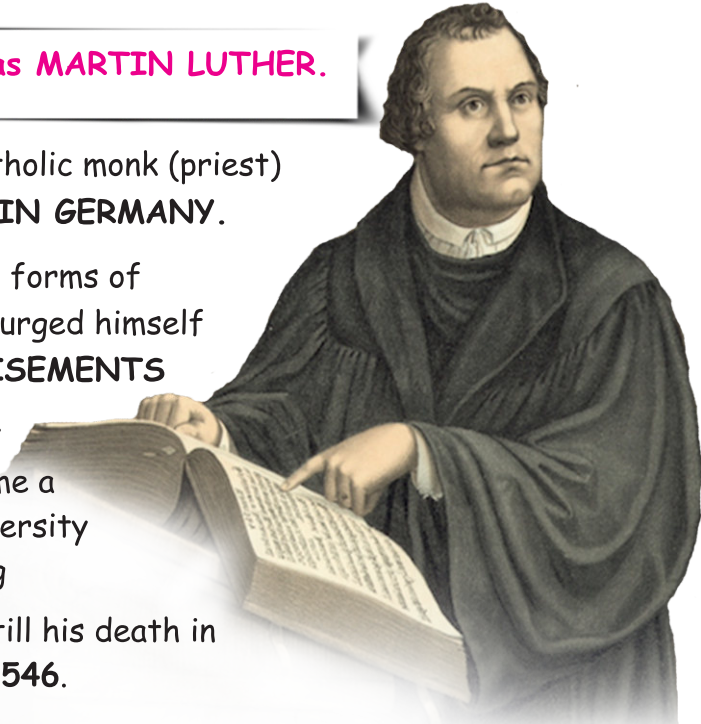


He practiced all forms of **FASTINGS** and scourged himself as **SELF CHASTISEMENTS** for his sins.

In **1508** he became a teacher at the University of Wittenberg

- a position he held till his death in the year **1546**.

Then in **1511** he went to Rome on a pilgrim visit seeking for the forgiveness of his sins.




While he was climbing the staircase called "Scala santa" (or Pilate's staircase) on his knees in **PENITENCE** for his sins the scripture came to him that would change **HIS LIFE** and **BEGIN** the great Reformation !!

Yes ! We read that scripture in -

Romans 1:17

"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith."

Yes ! On getting this scripture he **IMMEDIATELY** descended the stairs and left Rome and **RETURNED** to Germany.

 And a few years later he pasted what was to be called -

 **"THE NINETY FIVE THESES"**



on the door of the main church in Wittenberg.

These "theses" dealt primarily against -

the **BELIEF** that **FORGIVENESS OF SINS** could be bought with money,



.....and against the sale of **INDULGENCES** by **John Tetzel**.

Tract after tract followed



.....in **LATIN** for the **EDUCATED**



.....and in **GERMAN** for the common people.

By **1520** Martin Luther was **THE MOST POPULAR MAN**
in Germany !!

In that same year the Pope issued a "**BULL**" (an
AUTHORISED PAPAL LETTER) **EXCOMMUNICATING**
Luther and threatening him with death for being a **HERETIC**.

But on December 10th 1520 Martin Luther burned
"THE PAPAL BULL" in public !

And yes ! There began **THE PROTESTANT MOVEMENT**
against **PAPACY** and the teachings of its **ROMAN CATHOLIC**
CHURCH.

He then left being a monk and married **CATHARINE VON**
BORA who herself had once been a nun !!



SHE WAS A VERY SPECIAL HELPER TO HIM.





Their marriage and example caused many monks and nuns to
follow in their footsteps.

Martin Luther later translated the Bible into *German* amidst
great **OPPOSITIONS** and **ANTAGONISM**.

It was perhaps his **MOST VALUABLE WORK**, taking very
much of his time and involving much **TOIL** (hard work).

Truly Martin Luther possessed **EXTRAORDINARY TALENTS** and **UNCOMMON GENIUS !!**

Some of his qualities were -

-  a **COPIOUS MEMORY** of Bible verses as also other **FACTS** and **INFORMATION**
- great **PERSEVERANCE** in all that he undertook to do in the Lord's service
- superior **ELOQUENCE** in presentation of the word of **TRUTH**
- a great **LARGENESS OF HEART** despite human weaknesses.

Yes ! Indeed this great reformer was the one the Lord chose to be -



“THE FATHER OF REFORMATION”

His closest friend and most helpful co-worker was who wrote the book -



“LOCI THEOLOGICI”

which was greatly praised by Luther himself !!

7. LAODICEA (1874 A.D. - CHURCH COMPLETION)



This seventh phase of the church is very special for it is **DURING THE PRESENCE** of the **RETURNED KING JESUS**.

Thus the “angel” or “star” in the right hand of the Lord who was used to bring forth the “light” **WAS VERY SPECIAL TOO !!**

Yes ! We read about him in the scriptures itself in -

Matthew 24:45

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his Lord hath made RULER over his household, to give them meat in due season ?”



...and then we read again of this “faithful and wise servant” in -

Matthew 24:46,47

“Blessed is THAT SERVANT, whom his lord WHEN HE COMETH shall find so doing....He shall make him RULER over all his goods.”

Yes ! After the Lord's Coming in 1874



that **FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT**

he appointed was from Pittsburgh in **AMERICA (USA)**.

His name was
CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL.



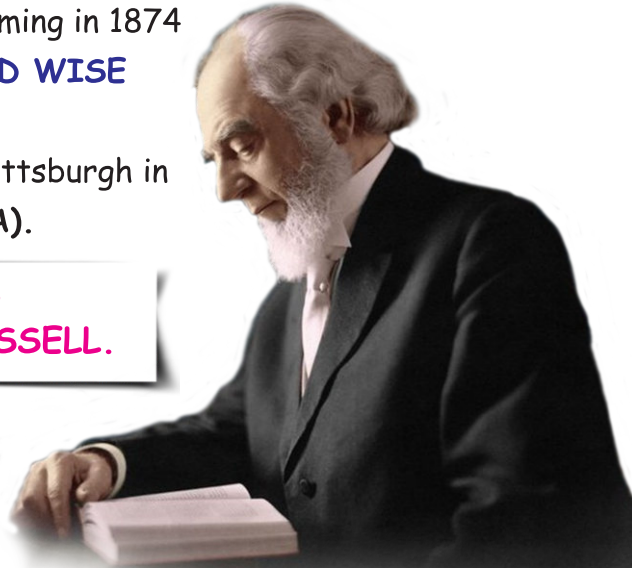
He was born on
February 16th 1852.

At the age of 15 he found
that the **CREEDS** of
Christendom were **DISCORDANT**

and **CONTRADICTED EACH OTHER** and most of all
- **THE REASON !**

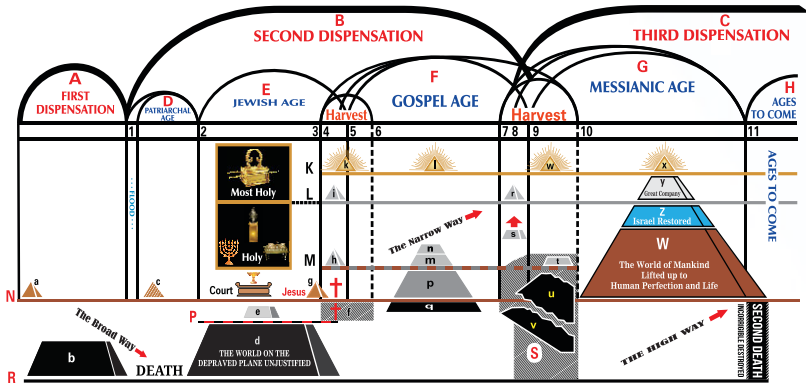
The doctrine of eternal torment in “Hell” greatly disturbed him and he became an admitted **SKEPTIC** (one who doubts).

He searched in other religions and **WAS EVEN MORE DISSATISFIED.**



Then finally **WITHOUT ANY PREJUDICE** and with
 **an open mind** he again approached the Bible and
 God blessed his efforts and he was slowly enlightened of

GOD'S GREAT DIVINE PLAN FOR MAN.



"And the LORD answered me, and said, write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it" Habakkuk 2:2

Yes ! It was through this "angel" to the **SEVENTH CHURCH**
 of Laodicea that the words of God to **HABAKKUK** in
HABAKKUK 2:2 was **FULFILLED** -

Habakkuk 2:2 - "....write down the **VISION** and make it plain upon
 tables..."

Yes ! It was Charles Russell who



.... **WROTE DOWN "the vision"** .

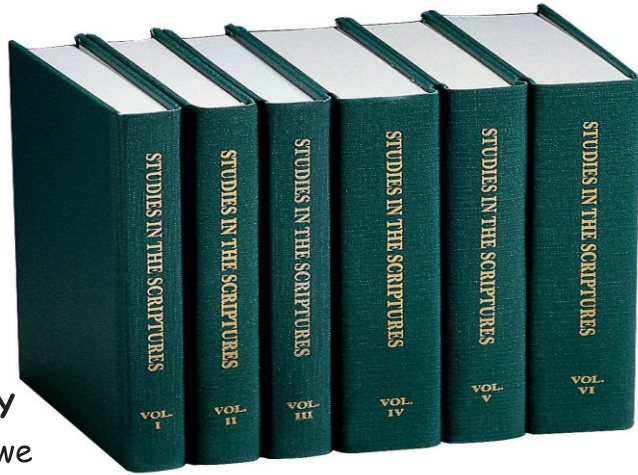
It was he who **FIRST** clearly understood **THE DIVINE**
PLAN OF GOD from Eden to the kingdom. He also "made it
 plain" by writing the -



“STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES” in

SIX VOLUMES as
also the booklet
“**Tabernacle
Shadows**”.

Yes! His ministry was
MOST IMPORTANTLY
the **work of writing** as we



see him being described in the Bible in a prophecy
in the book of **Ezekiel** in -

Ezekiel 9:3

**“....And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the
writer's inkhorn by his side.”**

This is a direct reference to **“the angel”** of the seventh church
- **CHARLES RUSSELL !**

Yes! This **DESCRIPTION** most aptly suits the one who it can be said



.... **WROTE** the **MOST PAGES**

about and explaining the **SCRIPTURES IN THE WHOLE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH !!**

**He wrote about 50,000 printed pages between the period
from 1879 to 1916 over a period of 37 years**



.....at an average of 4 pages per day !!

Charles Taze Russell was a **PIONEER** in the idea of chain stores.

He had a chain of stores in partnership with his father and by
the age of twenty one was worth more than **250,000 dollars !!!**

But 3 years later in **1876** at the age of twenty four he became aware of the **TIME FEATURES** and **PROPHECIES** of the scriptures pointing to the Lord's **PAROUSIA** (presence) that begun in **1874** !

He immediately realized it was **the special time of the HARVEST** !



A DECISION HAD TO BE MADE !!



Should he **CONTINUE** with his business interests ?



....or **DEVOTE HIS FULL TIME** to the Lord's service in the Harvest work ?

If he had continued in **BUSINESS** he perhaps would have had a fortune to rival the wealth of **John D. Rockefeller** - one of the richest men in America at the time !

But Russell chose to give up his business and to enter into **THE FULL TIME SERVICE** of the Lord in **1877**.

He was then worth about 350,000 dollars, which he invested into the ministry.



He worked **TIRELESSLY** over a period of 42 years -

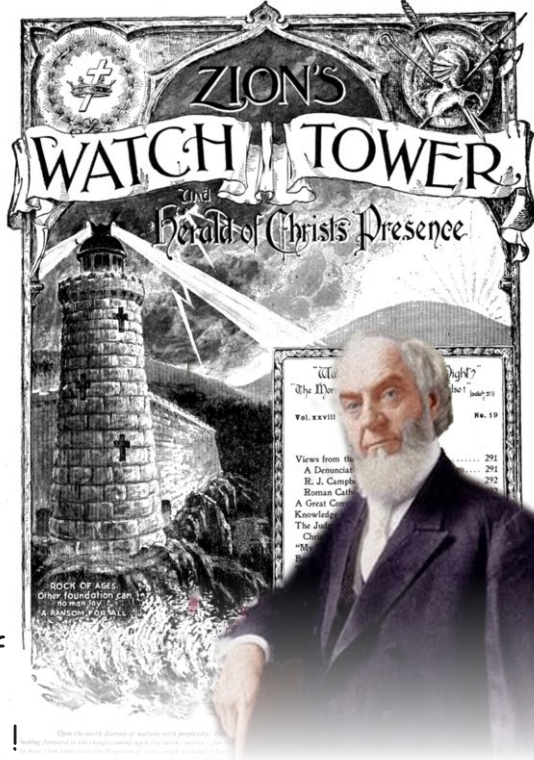


➡ **TRAVELLING** more than a million miles, and many a times fifty thousand miles a year.

➡ ...**DELIVERED 30,000** lectures and sermons.

➡ ...personally **EDITED** and **WROTE** all of the articles in the magazine

“ZION'S WATCH TOWER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE”.



➡ also **WROTE** for the newspapers and at one time two thousand (2000) papers printed his articles simultaneously.

This went out to an audience of about fifteen to twenty million (about 2 crore people) **WEEKLY** !

➡A great work was **“THE PHOTODRAMA OF CREATION”** -


.....a narrated **slide presentation** of the history of the world.

It consisted of hundreds of paintings and sketches and costed



more than **A MILLION DOLLARS** (about four crores of rupees as in 2008 value).

It was shown all over **EUROPE** and **AMERICA** and **AUSTRALIA** in approximately four thousand places, reaching about ten million people. (1 crore people)

He was privileged to speak to four thousand Jews in New York who gave him a **STANDING OVATION**.

Yes ! **CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL** was

 **THAT “...faithful and wise servant whom his lord hath made RULER over his household...”**

AND

 **“...ruler over all his goods...”**

The followers of Charles Taze Russell and his writings were called

 **“BIBLE STUDENTS”.**

He was married to **MARIA RUSSELL** who later separated from him quoting **UNJUST REASONS**, which she later regretted much after the death of Russell.

**Charles Taze Russell DIED on -
OCTOBER 31st 1916 on board a train,
traveling to one of his meetings having only a FEW
DOLLARS IN HIS POCKET !**

Yes ! These then are those

 **“seven stars..... in the right hand”** of the Lord.

Truly they were **ANGELS** and **MESSENGERS** of His truth to **EACH Of THE SEVEN TIME - DIVISIONS**

of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Now having seen and understood these matters of the **SEVEN** time - divisions of the church and their respective **"ANGELS"** let us now look into **A RELATED PROPHECY** that supports and sums up this matter in -

Zechariah 4:1-14

"And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, what seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, what are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, this is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying Not my might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth. Then answered I, and said unto him, what are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, what

be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, knowest thou not what these be ? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

This was a **VISION** seen by the prophet Zechariah.

 **WHAT DOES IT MEAN ?**

It is a **PROPHETIC** vision of **ALL** that we have studied about today

....the **CHURCH** of Jesus Christ and it's **SEVEN** time divisions along with.....the seven **"ANGELS"**.

Let us now see the vision **IN AN ILLUSTRATION** and then see the interpretation and meaning of it -



THIS THEN IS WHAT THE VISION seen by the prophet Zechariah must have looked like !

This “**candlestick**” with its “**seven lamps**” and the seven branches we saw being referred to also in -

Revelation 1:12

“And being turned I saw seven golden candlesticks....”



Yes ! The same is again found in **THE HOLY** of **THE JEWISH TABERNACLE** as we read in -

Exodus 25:31

“...and thou shalt make a CANDLESTICK of pure gold; of beaten work shall the candlestick be made; its shaft and its branches, its bowls, its knobs, and its flowers shall be of the same...”

As we **NOW KNOW** this “**seven branched golden candlestick**” **SYMBOLIZES** the church of Jesus Christ and



....ITS SEVEN TIME DIVISIONS.



BUT WHAT DOES THE REST OF THE VISION MEAN ?

The seven **CANDLESTICKS** and their “**seven lamps**”

....receive “**golden oil**”

....that came from the “**two olive trees**”

.....and through the “**two golden pipes**”

.....into a “**bowl**”

...and then from the bowl through

“**seven pipes of gold**” into

the “**seven lamps**” of the seven candlesticks.

WHAT DOES ALL THIS REPRESENT ?



This in totality represents God's DIVINE ("gold") PROVIDENCE for the church in this gospel age.

The interpretations of the various parts of the vision are -



"the seven candlesticks"

As we just saw this represents the **SEVEN TIME DIVISIONS** of the church of Jesus Christ from Pentecost unto its completion.

They are to be the **BEARERS OF THE LIGHT** of God's truth as Jesus said in -

**"...ye are the light of the world."
(Matthew 5:14.)**



"the seven pipes of gold"

This represents the seven "**angels**" or specially appointed messengers of the Lord for each time division

THROUGH WHOM

the church of that period was supplied and fed **WITH THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD.**

They are the "**seven stars**" in His right hand -



....the **SPECIAL INSTRUMENTS** or **CHANNELS** used of the Lord.



“the bowl”

This represents **THE HEADSHIP** of the Lord Jesus over the church as we see very clearly in -



Ephesians 1:22

“...and hath put ALL THINGS under His feet and gave Him to be the HEAD over ALL THINGS to the church...”

Yes ! He is the **HEAD** and **PROVIDER** of the church -
**THROUGH HIM ALONE** is sustained
 the spiritual life of the **NEW CREATURES**.

This is clearly shown again in -

John 15:5

“...I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth IN ME, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for WITHOUT ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING. ”



There ! Isn't it very clear !!

Just as in a tree the trunk supplies the needed **“sap”** to the branches and without a **CONNECTION** to the trunk the branches will have no life



.....so too the **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS** of the Body of Christ are kept alive **ONLY** through Jesus - the **HEAD !**

Thus it is seen that here **ALL THE SEVEN BRANCHES** of the candlestick receive the “golden oil” **ONLY** from the “bowl”.

This matter is again beautifully illustrated in -
Revelation 1:13

“...And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man.”

YES ! HERE IS A PERFECT PICTURE OF THE HEAD AND HIS WATCHCARE OVER THE (“HIS”) CHURCH.



Now to the “two olive trees”.

WHAT DO THEY REPRESENT ?

We see them mentioned again in -

Revelation 11:3,4

“...And I will give power unto my two witnesses and they shall prophesy...in sackcloth. These are the **TWO OLIVE TREES**....standing before the God of the earth.”

So we see these “two olive trees” **ARE ALSO**the “two witnesses” of Revelation 11th chapter.

And we read **SOMETHING MORE** in Zechariah 4th chapter about their identity. Let us now read from -

Zechariah 4:13,14

“...And he answered me and said, knowest thou not **WHAT** these be ?

And I said, no my lord. Then said he, these are the **TWO ANOINTED ONES**, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

Yes ! We see the reference of the “**two olive trees**” is
HERE shown as

.... “**THE TWO ANOINTED ONES**”.

So **WHAT** could these “**two olive tress**” which are also referred to as “**two witnesses**” and also “**two anointed ones**” REPRESENT ?

These represent the **WITNESS** of the **HOLY WORDS OF GOD**.
As we all know the witness of God's Word is in **TWO PARTS** -



THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

YES ! THESE ARE THOSE TWO WITNESSES OF REVELATION 11th CHAPTER.

You may be wondering how the **WORD OF GOD** can be described as



“BEING CLOTHED IN SACKCLOTH” in -

Revelation 11:3

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses and they shall prophesy...clothed in sackcloth”.

Yes ! How can the **WORD OF GOD** be “**clothed in sackcloth**” ?

Ah ! Here this clothed in sackcloth represents....a

CONDITION OF BEING !!

We find it referred to in -

Psalms 35:13

“...My clothing was sackcloth : I humbled my soul with fasting...”

And again in

Jonah 3:6

“For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.”

Yes ! This represents a

 **HUMBLER CONDITION OF HUMILIATION.**



What could be the humbled / humiliated condition as referring to the OLD and NEW TESTAMENTS?

It refers to them being for that period of -

“one thousand two hundred and sixty days”

...RESTRICTED to the “dead” languages of HEBREW, GREEK and LATIN !!!



Yes ! Thus God's “two witnesses” were in a very humbled condition of witness !

This was the period of THE ANTICHRIST REIGN - from 539 AD till 1799 AD.

It was only AFTER 1799 that the Bible began to be translated into the languages of the world and began to bear powerful witness !

And yes ! The “two olive trees” too are none other thanthese of the TWO PARTS WORD OF GOD.

Now having understood the meaning of the “two olive trees”

let us now see the meaning of the “golden oil” and the “two golden pipes” through which the oil from the olive trees go into the “bowl”.



 “the golden oil”

This represents the
DIVINE gift of God's
HOLY SPIRIT OF -
TRUTH which is of God the Father
 as we read in

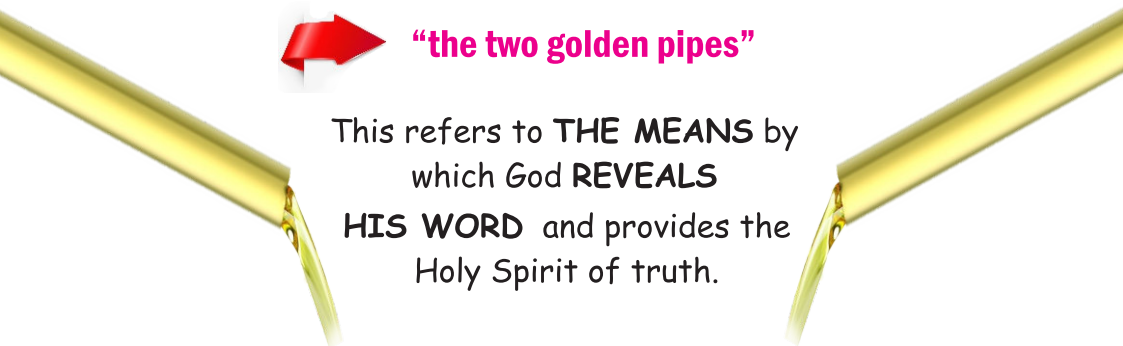
John 14:16,17

“and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

Luke 11:13

“if ye then, being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”

Yes ! It is very clear ! The Holy Spirit is from the Father and here is represented by “the golden oil”.



 “the two golden pipes”

This refers to **THE MEANS** by
 which God **REVEALS**
HIS WORD and provides the
 Holy Spirit of truth.

WHAT DO THESE "TWO PIPES" REPRESENT ?

The TWO "pipes" represent -



PIPE # 1

This represents the **MEANS** by which God reveals the truth
in the **OLD TESTAMENT**-

.....through **PROPHECIES, SYMBOLS** and **TYPES** or
SHADOWS.



PIPE # 2

This represents the **MEANS** by which God reveals His truth
in the **NEW TESTAMENT**

.....through **PROMISES, ENCOURAGEMENTS** and
EXPLANATIONS of the various features of God's Divine Plan
of Salvation.

Ah yes ! Through this **VISION** we have seen a very beautiful
picture of the **CHURCH** in this Gospel age and its
DIVINE PROVIDENCE



....through the **WRITTEN** and

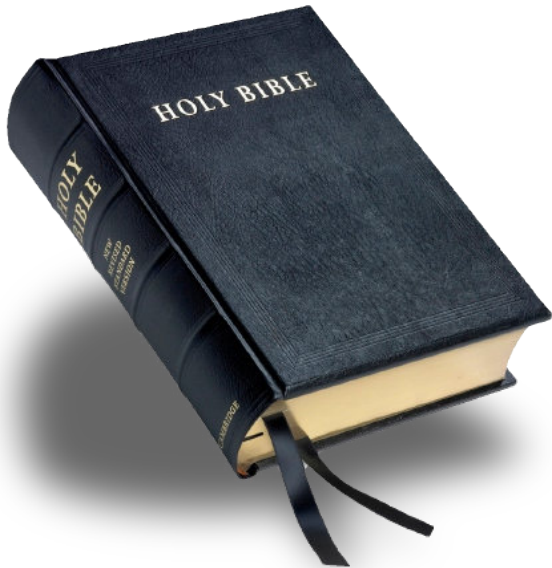


....then through the **LIVING WORD** - its "HEAD" Jesus Christ.

**THUS TODAY WE HAVE SEEN THE HISTORY OF THE
CHURCH IN GREAT DETAIL** and as further supported by
this scripture of a prophecy
....IN THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH !

Yes ! Truly we have been greatly **ENRICHED !**

---AMEN---



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