

Period 2

Ebionism & Gnosticism

Lesson 5

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Ism's Throughout the Periods of Church History

1. Early Ism's in the Apostolic Age (33 – 100)
2. **Post – Apostolic to Constantine (100 – 312)**
3. Constantine to Charlemagne (312 – 800)
4. Charlemagne to Luther (800 – 1517)
5. Reformation – Specific groups (1517 – 1648)
6. Modern Denominationalism (1648 – 1880)
7. 19th Century Proliferation (1881 - Current)

Period 2.a. The Ebionites – Judaizing Christians

1. Reference: Is. 40:3, Matt.3:14-17, Ac. 9:2, 19:9,23, 24:14, 22.
2. Essential Theory, Belief, or Practice: Believed Jesus Christ was a mere man, Rejected the Apostle Paul's gospel as being insufficient, and a rigid adherence to the Jewish law as necessary to salvation through Christ. They venerated Peter and James (the Lord's brother, Bishop of Jerusalem).
3. Principle Characters: Earlier Ebionites – Essenes, "Doers of Torah". Of the later Ebionites= Cerenthus, educated in Alexandria, was shown the truth by Angels, believed that there will be a thousand year reign of eating, drinking and marrying; festivals, sacrifices and slaying of victims. Symmachus: Wrote a new translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek was an Ebionite. The Gospel of the Hebrews was a common text used by Ebionites. Modern groups: The Way,
4. Scriptural Refutation: Gal.1:6-9, 1 Cor.14:37, 2 Cor.11:1-5, 2 Pe.3:15&16, Col.2:18-19

Period 2.b. The Gnostics

1. Reference: Pista Sophia, (Faith, Wisdom) 2nd half of the 3rd Century. The name of a female aeon, emanation from the Supreme Light.
2. Essential Theory, Belief, or Practice: That the world is full of imperfection; the Supreme Being could not, therefore, be its author. The OT represents Jehovah (Elohim) as the creator of the world. Hence Jehovah is an imperfect being, and the religion of the Jews antagonistic to true religion. Aim: account for the existence of the present order of things without compromising the character of the Supreme Being.
3. Principle Characters: Philo (Alexandria) combine Gnostic philosophy with Christian doctrines. Precursor - Simon Ac.8:9-24, Marcion (138AD) a rigorous ascetic. "Gnosticism led the way in the amalgamation of Christian and pagan thought and life that was to transform the religion of Christ and his apostles into the Christianity of the 3rd and following centuries". (Newman. Vol.1.p.194)
4. Scriptural Refutation: 1 Jn. 1:1-7, Jn. 1:1-5, 1 Cor.8:1, Col.2:18, 1 Tim. 6:20