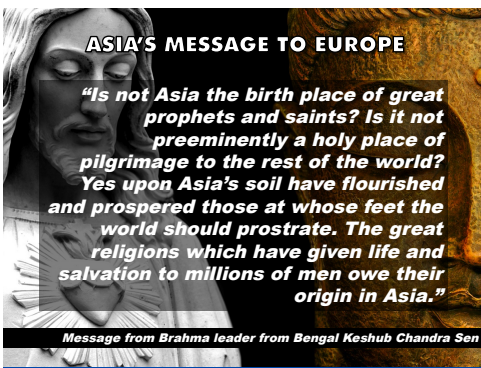
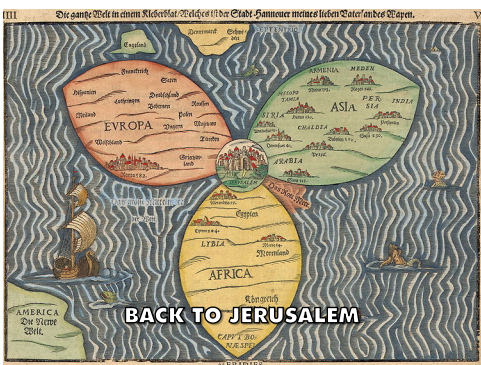


# Asian Church History: Lecture 1 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2012

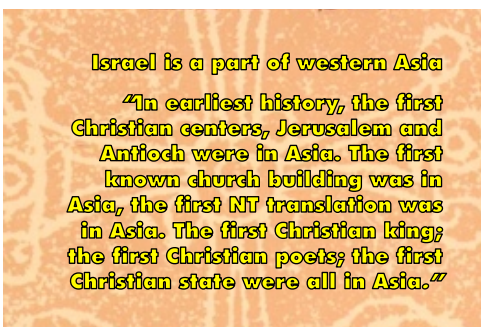
Steve Nicholes



➤ In 1883 in Calcutta India, the great Brahma leader from Bengal Keshub Chandra Sen gave a speech entitled, *Asia's Message to Europe*. Let me read you one paragraph from that speech. "Is not Asia the birth place of great prophets and saints? Is it not preeminently a holy place of pilgrimage to the rest of the world? Yes upon Asia's soil have flourished and prospered those at whose feet the world should prostrate. The great religions which have given life and salvation to millions of men owe their origin in Asia ...A ➤ But Asia is not only holy ground, ... in this one place you could count all leading prophets and all the great religious geniuses of the world. No great prophet was born outside the boundaries of Asia (Keshub Chandra Sen, *Asia's Message to Europe*, Calcutta, 1919).



➤ Have you ever heard of the 'Back to Jerusalem' movement? As Western Christians we often think of Christianity as having started in Israel, and then mainly traveled W thru Europe to the Americas and has now moved W again to Asia and is going back to Jerusalem.



But as we will see in this class the Christian church was born in Asia. ➤ **Israel is a part of Western Asia.** ➤ S.M. Moffett writes, "In earliest history, the first Christian centers, Jerusalem, Antioch and Ephesus were in Asia. (In the fifth century the only other centers were in Rome NT and Alexandria) The first known church building was in Asia, the first NT translation was in Asia. The first Christian king; the first Christian poets; the first Christian state were all in Asia." They called themselves "The Church of the East." ➤ **Now when we say "Church of the East" we are NOT talking about the Eastern Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe. We are talking about the church that is mainly east of the land of Israel, in Asia.**

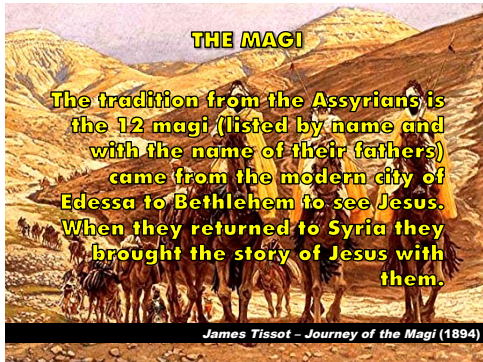


➤ **Asia can be divided up into at least five regions. East Asia in YELLOW (which includes Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan). Central Asia in BLUE (which are mainly the stan countries). Southeast Asia in RED (including the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, Malaysia and Indonesia). Then there is South Asia in GREEN (which are the Indian countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, all the way to Afghanistan). And finally there is West Asia in BROWN (which is what we know of as the Middle-East including Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Cyprus, Armenia, Georgia, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel).** I am giving you a printout of the regions and countries of Asia including their land



size, populations and capital cities (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia>).

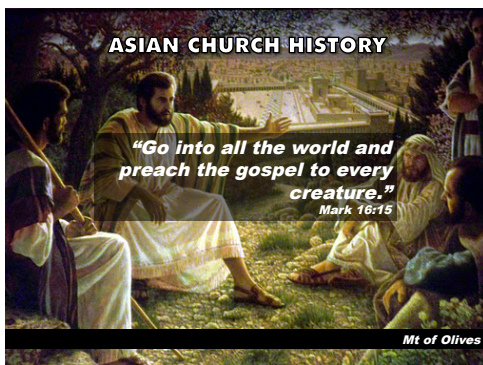
In the book of Jonah we have the story of how the whole great city of Nineveh believed in the God of Israel. ↘



When Jesus was born Matthew 2 says that wise men from the East came to worship Him. Aramaic-speaking Assyrians have the tradition that in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC Zoroaster made a prophecy that from their land Magi would be led by a great light to one who would rule the world, a Messiah like they heard about from the Jews when they were captive in Babylon for 70 years.

↘ **The tradition from the Assyrians said there was 12 Magi**, each listed by name with the name of their father. They are believed to have **come from the modern city of**

**Edessa** (originally called the kingdom of Urhai). The Magi, after returning from Bethlehem, are said to have told of the wonderful things they have seen and heard in such a way as to prepare the Syrian mind for the preparation of the Gospel.

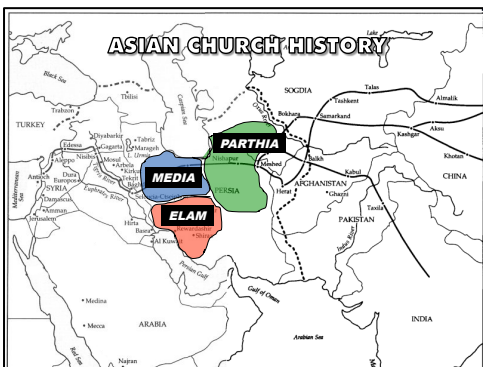


↘ Are you familiar with Mark 16:15 and Acts 1:8?

It was on a hill in Asia, in far western Asia that Jesus spoke these words to His disciples. Would someone read or quote this verse for us? *“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*

↘ Would someone else read Acts 1:8? *“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”* Now we know those verses. But one thing the NT does NOT tell us is what that little group, mostly fishermen, may have understood by the words *“all the world”* and *“ends of the earth.”* What did they imagine the world to be?

understood by the words *“all the world”* and *“ends of the earth.”* What did they imagine the world to be?



↘ In Acts 2 Luke talks about the crowds who came at Pentecost and it says they were *“Jews ... out of every nation under heaven.”* You will notice that they came from parts of Asia to the E of Israel: Parthia (NE Iran), Media (south of the Caspian Sea including modern Tehran) and Elam (Khuzistan, E of the Persian Gulf), and Mesopotamia. Jews were living in those areas and coming to Jerusalem for festivals. And it is probable that when 3000 came to believe in Jesus at Pentecost some of them came from this area of the world. Many were probably scattered Jews who came to visit Jerusalem.



Now the disciples probably did NOT know this at the time but there was another guy named Strabo who was living at the same time who gave his life to travel the world and to make an outline, a map of the known world of his day. ↘ And this is a map he drew about 20-25AD. This was the most updated information that only a few people in Jesus day had knowledge of. So **the known world to the disciples at that time was mainly western Asia, northern Africa and southern Europe**. They knew about India. But they did not really know much about

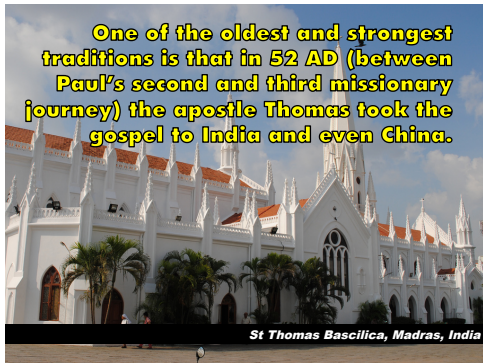
China, and certainly nothing about the Americas on the other side of the world. In many ways we know ancient Asia today better than it knew itself.





## Jews in the East

When the Assyrians and Babylonians conquered the land of the Bible in 722 and 606 BC they transplanted Jews to Assyria and Babylon. **At the time of Jesus the number of Jews living in the Persian world, mostly in or near Babylon, may have approached one million.** Sizable Jewish communities could be found in other cities, such as Edessa in Mesopotamia and Nisibis in Persia. Many common Jews lost the ability to speak Hebrew and Aramaic was their common language, although the upper classes also spoke Greek. The first Christians who came East with the gospel were often Jews and would, like Paul, be in contact with Jews wherever they went.



## Thomas in India

Now **one of the oldest and strongest traditions in church history is that Thomas the apostle carried the gospel E, especially to India and even China in 52AD (between Paul's second and third missionary journey).** There is a St Thomas Basilica in Madras, India built over the tomb of the apostle Thomas. They say he was killed by an arrow or spear and then buried here in 72AD.

A book called the *Acts of Thomas* was written around 200AD by a Christian in Edessa, which was NE of Antioch. It is an apocryphal book and combines both history and legends. But it is important in the history of Christianity in Asia because except for Scripture it is the oldest record we have of the church going to Asia.

I would like to read for you the first paragraph of *The Acts of Thomas*. Let me remind you that this is not Scripture. But there are other writers in the early church who also say that Thomas went to India and there are many Christians in India today who call themselves Thomas Christians. So the idea and tradition that Thomas did this is very strong:

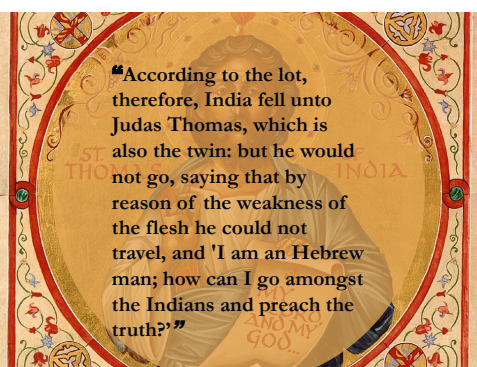
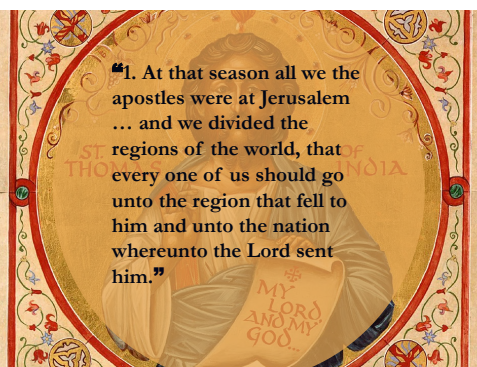
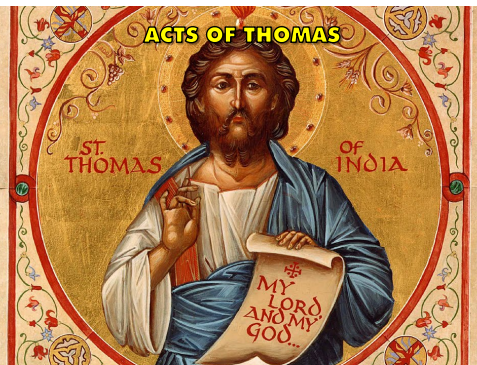
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## The Acts of Thomas: The First Act, when he went into India with Abbanes the merchant.

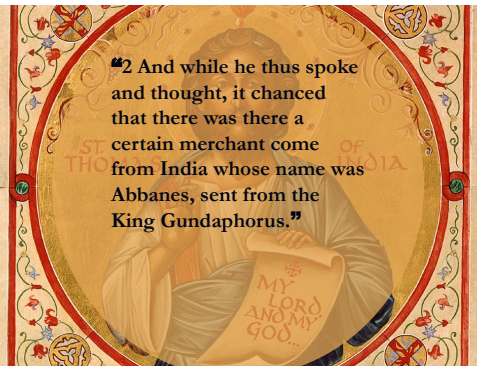
1. *At that season all we the apostles were at Jerusalem ... and we divided the regions of the world, that every one of us should go unto the region that fell to him and unto the nation whereunto the Lord sent him.*

According to tradition the apostle Mark and possibly Apollos (Acts 18:24-25) were a part of the early church in Alexandria and Egypt.

According to the lot, therefore, India fell unto Judas Thomas, which is also the twin: but he would not go, saying that by reason of the weakness of the flesh he could not travel, and 'I am an Hebrew man; how can I go amongst the Indians and preach the truth?' And as he thus







reasoned and spoke, the Savior appeared unto him by night and said to him: Fear not, Thomas, go thou unto India and preach the word there, for my grace is with thee. But he would not obey, saying: Wherever you desire, send me, but somewhere else, for unto the Indians I will not go.

2 And while he thus spoke and thought, it chanced that there was there a certain merchant come from India whose name was Abbanes, sent from the King Gundaphorus.

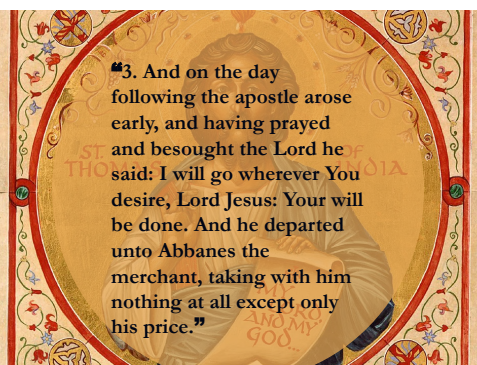
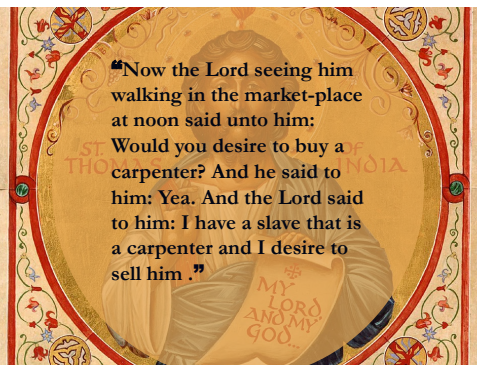
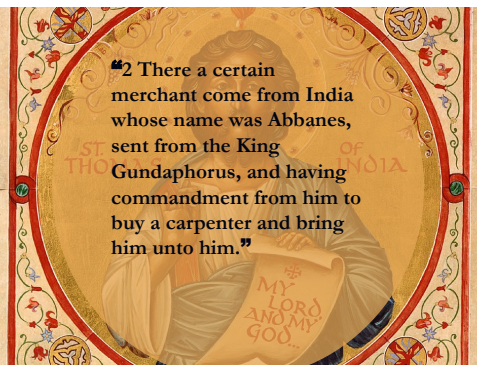
For over 1500 years people criticized this book, *The Acts of Thomas*. One reason was that there was no king by the name of Gundaphorus known in Indian history. There was a long list of kings in ancient Indian history that were known, men like Chandragupta, Ashoka, Menander, But no Gundaphar.

Then in 1834 an explorer discovered a treasure of ancient coins in the Kabul Valley of Afghanistan. On many of those coins were the pictures and names of forgotten kings. And among those coins were some with a name stamped both in Greek and in an old Indian script. The name was Gundaphar. Today the British Museum has at least 33 coins of King Gundaphar; the Calcutta Museum has 24 of them. Further research proved that these coins came this time period in the first century AD. Gundaphar was the dominant ruler at this time in NW India.

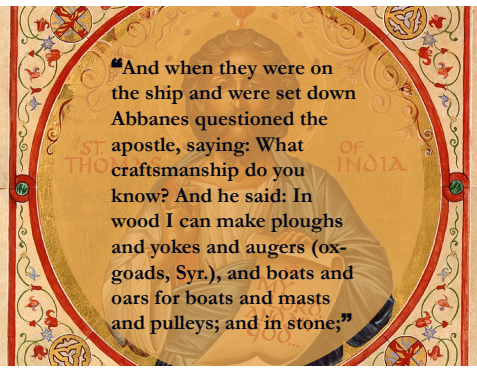
Well let's go back to the story: "there a certain merchant come from India whose name was Abbanes, sent from the King Gundaphorus, and having commandment from him to buy a carpenter and bring him unto him."

Now the Lord seeing him walking in the market-place at noon said unto him: Would you desire to buy a carpenter? And he said to him: Yea. And the Lord said to him: I have a slave that is a carpenter and I desire to sell him. Now in some Asian traditions they believe that Thomas the Twin was actually the twin brother of Jesus (also called Judas Thomas or Judas) and that their father Joseph was a carpenter. So he grew up knowing how to be a carpenter. And so saying he showed him Thomas afar off, and agreed with him for three litrae of silver unstamped, and wrote a deed of sale, saying: I, Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter, acknowledge that I have sold my slave, Judas by name, unto you Abbanes, a merchant of Gundaphorus, king of the Indians. And when the deed was finished, the Savior took Judas Thomas and led him away to Abbanes the merchant, and when Abbanes saw him he said unto him: Is this your master? And the apostle said: Yes, he is my Lord. And he said: I have bought you from him. And the apostle held his peace.

3. And on the day following the apostle arose early, and having prayed and besought the Lord he said: I will go wherever You desire, Lord Jesus: Your will be done. And he departed unto Abbanes the merchant, taking with him nothing at all except only his price."



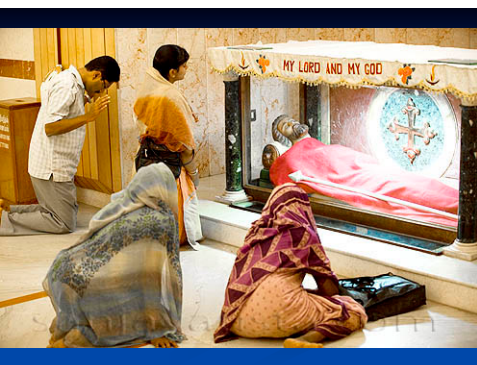




him nothing at all except only his price. 📌 For the Lord had given it to him, saying: Let your price also be with your, together with my grace, wherever you go.

And the apostle found Abbanes carrying his bags on board the ship; so he also began to carry it aboard with him. 📌 And when they were on the ship and were set down Abbanes questioned the apostle, saying: What craftsmanship do you know? And he said: In wood I can make ploughs and yokes and augers (ox-goads, Syr.), and boats and oars for boats and masts and pulleys; and in stone, 📌 pillars and temples and court-houses for kings. And Abbanes the merchant said to him: Yes, that is the kind of workman that we need. They began then to sail homeward; and they had a favorable wind, and sailed prosperously till they reached Andrapolis (Gk. also called Sandaruk), a royal city.

Well, this story cannot be proven but 📌 another thing that we do know is that in the first century there was a lot of traveling going on, especially by ship between India and the Roman Empire. Strabo, the guy who drew that 1 century map, said in his book *Geographica* that when he visited **Egypt about the time of Christ** he found as many as 120 ships a year sailing from the Egyptian head of the Red Sea (2. 5.12). That would be about **one ship going to India every 3 days**. The winds were favorable from May to September. The whole trip, including three weeks from Alexandria to the Red Sea, could now be done in 94 days. The ships would carry slaves, wine, coral, glass and British tin from the Mediterranean to India. And then they would bring back peacocks and ivory, pepper and spice, Kashmir wool and precious jewels.



The books and traditions of Thomas Christians in India also believe that Thomas came to India, then went to China and returned to India. They believe he was speared to death outside the city of Madras. 📌 Today the St Thomas Basilica with a burial site to represent the place where he was killed and buried. Except for one small bone from his hand his body was later (232 AD) moved to the city of Edessa. This was the same time that the books “Acts of Thomas” was written.

### The Church at Antioch

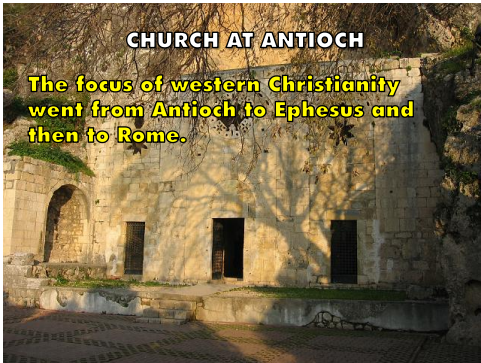
Christianity began in Jerusalem and then spread throughout Judea and Samaria. When it started to go out to the ends of the earth the center of Christianity moved 📌 from Jerusalem to Antioch (Today the city of Antioch is in the country of Turkey right next to Syria). In Acts 11:19-26 it says that when Stephen got stoned many Christians left Jerusalem because of the persecution and went to places like Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch. At first they were sharing the gospel just with the Jews in Antioch



but then guys like Barnabas (who was from Cyprus) came and started sharing the gospel with

Greeks in Antioch. And a great number of people believed and became followers of Jesus Christ. Barnabas went to Tarsus and found Saul and brought him to Antioch and for 12 months Saul served in this church. And the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. Galatians 2:11-13 tells about a time Peter came up to Antioch.

In Acts 13 we see that the church at Antioch was very international with Africans, Europeans and Asians. They started daughter churches around Antioch. And then they started sending missionaries out from their church. Every time Paul went on one of his missionary journeys he started his journey from Antioch and at the end he would come back and report what happened to this church. And then he would be sent out again.

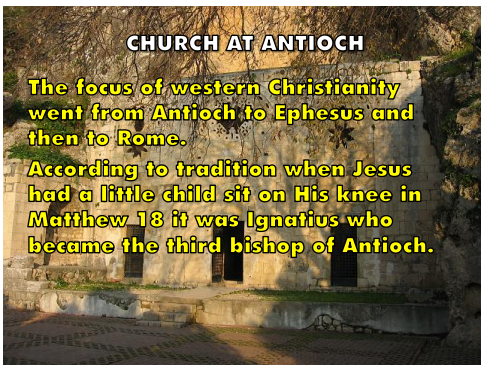


Now eventually in the Bible and in Western church history we see that **the focus of Western Christianity went from Antioch to Ephesus and then to Rome.** But what we don't hear much about is that the church also went South to Alexandria and it went East.

According to ancient Imperial historical records of China the first political embassy from Syria to China was in 91AD. The second political embassy from ancient Syria to ChangAn (today Xian), the capital of China was 120AD. And church people, missionaries from Syria went with the embassy staff to China, 6000 miles away. They said about themselves, "We are men from the west of the sea; the west of the sea is the same as Tatsin." The sea they are talking about is the Persian Gulf. And Tatsin had been called Likan in the past and is spelled TaChin later. We will talk more about Ta'Chin later when we talk more about China.

The church at Antioch became the mother of the Syrian Orthodox Church. They believe that Peter started this church in 37AD in a cave, that he stayed there 3 years and that he was the first bishop of the Patriarchate of Antioch. This is the traditional location of the cave of Peter's church – but the building you see here was actually built by the Crusaders in 1100AD.

When Peter left he chose Evodios to take his place. Evodios served as bishop for 27 years and then died as a martyr in 66AD. In his writings one interesting thing that he said was that the virgin Mary was 15 years old when she gave birth to Jesus.



Ignatius was the third bishop at Antioch. They believe that he also was chosen by Peter for this position.

**According to tradition he was the disciple of John and they also say that when Jesus called a little child in Matthew 18:2 to come and sit on his knee it was Ignatius** who was that little child. In 115 a great earthquake hit Antioch and the Christians were blamed. Ignatius was sent to Rome where Eusebius says he was

martyred in 108 AD. There are at least 7 letters that are believed to have been written by Ignatius (to the Ephesians, the Magnesians, the Trallians, the Romans, the Philadelphians, the Smyrnaeans, to Polycarp – bishop of Smyrna).

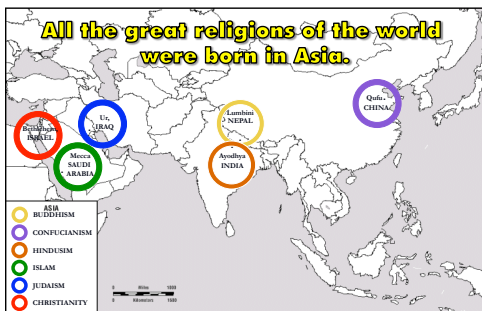
There is a list of all the heads (170) of this church in Antioch from that time until today. Their church moved to Damascus in 1342 (<http://www.antiochian.org/667>).



## Asian Church History: Lecture 2 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2012

Steve Nicholes, Professor:

### BIRTHPLACES OF WORLD RELIGIONS



➤ **All the great religions of the world were born in Asia.** **Buddha** was born in Asia and most of the world's Buddhists live in Asia. **Confucius** was born in Asia and most of the world's Confucianists live in Asia. **Hinduism** was born in Asia and most of the world's Hindu's live in Asia. **Muhammad** was born in Asia and most of the world's Muslims live in Asia. **Abraham** was born in Asia and the only Jewish nation in the world is in Asia. And **Jesus Christ** was born in Bethlehem, Israel.

John Philip Jenkins in his book, *The Lost History of Christianity*, writes, "No reasonable historian of modern

Christianity would leave Europe out of the story; and omitting Asia from the medieval record is just as unconscionable. We can't understand Christianity without Asia – or, indeed, Asian history without Christianity."

➤ **At the Council of Nicea (325)** the Christian church recognized key leaders of bishops

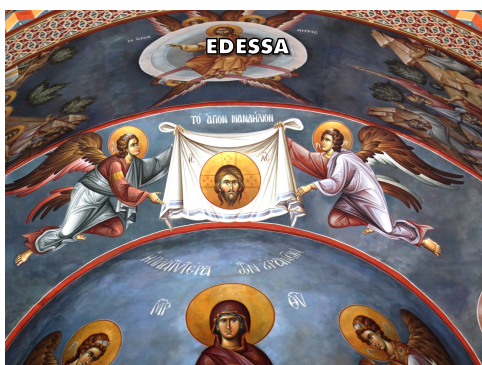


in Jerusalem (Macarius), Antioch (Eustathius), Rome (Sylvester sent two reps) and Alexandria (Alexander). The Council of Nicea was mainly a conference of the Church of the East. But it was located in Iznik, Turkey. **318 Christian leaders were in attendance but only 8 were from the west.** John, a bishop from India was one who attended this council. The main thing they proclaimed here was that Jesus is equal with God. The Church in Antioch was over all the Christians from Antioch and East of Antioch.



### Addai in Edessa

According to the historian Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History*) and the traditions of the Syrian and Assyrian church there is a story, that some consider a legend. ➤ **Abgar V, king of Edessa** (modern-day Urfa in Turkey, 250 kilometers, 160 miles East of Antioch) had leprosy. He heard about the power of miracles of Jesus. So he wrote Jesus a letter saying that he believed Jesus was either God or the Son of God and asking Jesus to come to Edessa to heal him. Jesus wrote back (according to Eusebius he saw both of these letters, which were kept in the archives of the city of Edessa) and said that He could not come but that He would send one of His disciples.



➤ The book *The Doctrine of Addai* says that the king was anxious to at least have an image of Jesus so he **sent an artist, Hannan, to Jerusalem to paint a picture of him and bring back** to the king. The artist painted Jesus' portrait and brought back the cloth with Jesus image imprinted on it to King Abgar in Edessa where it was kept in the royal palace. The king put the painting in

one of the rooms of his palace.

In 600AD Evagrius Scholasticus said that in 544AD when the city of Edessa was defending itself from an attack by the Persians they believed the picture of Christ miraculously saved them from defeat. ➤ The image was moved to Constantinople in 944AD but it



disappeared after the sack of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade in 1204. These are copies of the image. Do you know where Constantinople is? Do you know what other names this city was called? (Byzantium and Istanbul).

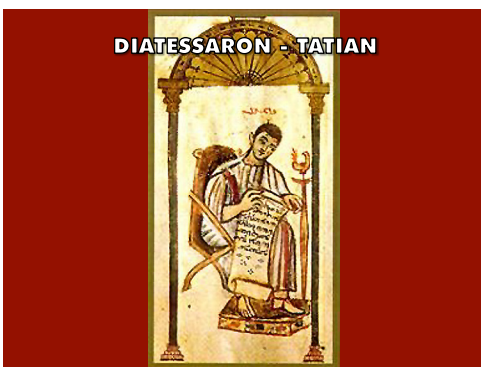
✚ Anyway, the apostle Thomas asked one of his disciples, a man named Thaddaeus (Addai in Syriac), “one of the 70” mentioned in Luke 10:1 to go to Edessa (72-120AD). Addai is called a Jew who was born in Edessa, at the time a Syrian city (now in Turkey). He came to Jerusalem for a festival and heard John the Baptist preaching. After being baptized by John in the Jordan River Addai stayed and became a follower of Jesus. He was chosen as one of the 70.



According to *The Doctrine of Addai*, written between 390-430 when Addai came to Edessa (29 AD) he first went to the Jewish community and stayed with Tobias. King Abgar V heard he arrived, sent for him and was miraculously healed. The next day he ordered all his people to come and listen to Addai tell them the good news about Jesus. *The Doctrine of Addai* says that some of the pagan religious leaders tore down the altars of their old religion, and a great number of the people freely believed in Jesus, for the king did not “compel any man by force to believe in Christ.” Jews of the silk trade were among his first converts and church leaders. Addai instructed the King in the Christian faith and baptized him. He ordained priests and founded the church there. He also started the first church in Beirut too.



One more interesting thing about Edessa is that the coins of Edessa from 180-192 show a cross on the king’s headgear.



### Addai in Armenia

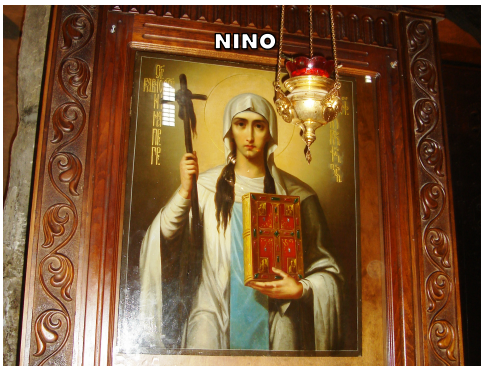
✚ The story of Abgar was also put on the money of Armenia. This is the Armenian 100,000 dram banknote. Armenia is the country just north of Syria and east of Turkey. They claim that Abgar was a prince of Armenia. The common tradition claims the Addai after he came to Edessa was sent to Armenia in 301AD to evangelize the Armenian King Sanatruk’s daughter, Sandookdht. The king ended up killing both his daughter and Addai

because she claimed to become a Christian.

In tradition Addai has been given the honored title of “the Father of the Church of the East” (Moffett, p. 50). The church of Armenia also became accepted by most of the people in the country because of the teachings of a guy named Gregory. **Armenia is the first country to officially be called a Christian nation.** The church in Edessa also received a letter from Thomas, from India, which they treasured. ✚ By the middle of the second century Edessa had the four gospels in Aramaic and it is possible that the missionary preachers who were sent out from Edessa had at least one gospel and possibly a harmony of the gospels by Tatian as well as the Diatessaron (a copy of the OT in Syriac). In the early 200s AD the church building in Edessa was greatly damaged when the Daisan River flooded. But the early Christians in Edessa and



Eastern Syria were NOT persecuted much. And the relationship between Jews and Christians were very cooperative and friendly.



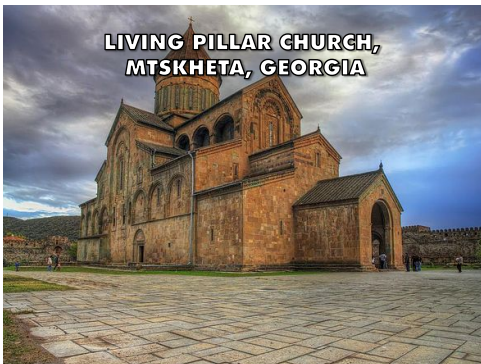
There was even a school of the prophets in Edessa that trained and sent out traveling missionaries that traveled to the farthest provinces of the Roman Empire, Arabia and other neighboring countries.

### Nino in Georgia

According to tradition a woman who grew up in Cappadocia (eastern Turkey today) decided to go as a missionary to Iberia (also called Georgia). The Queen of Iberia, Nana, heard that Nino had come and asked to meet her. Some in the queen's court became Christians first and then the queen herself. The **King, Miran**, threatened to divorce his wife if she did not leave the faith. But the story says that he got lost in the forest on a hunting trip and shouted out a prayer, "If the God my wife has trusted in real deliver me from being lost in the dark and I will leave my gods and follow you too." After this he believed he was miraculously delivered from being lost in the dark woods so when he came back he declared he wanted to be a follower of Christianity too. He and his whole house became Christians.



And in 326AD he declared that Christianity was the official religion of his kingdom. That made Iberia (or Georgia) the second Christian nation after Armenia. Tradition says that she carried a grapevine cross with her, which has become a symbol of Christianity in Georgia. This is a picture (or icon) of Nino that hangs in the Living Pillar Cathedral in the historical town of Mtskheta, Georgia. The church itself is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It was originally built in the fourth century (300s). But the current building was built in the 11th



century.

### Arbela

Possibly before 100AD the center of Christianity went from Edessa, the capital of Oserhoene to Arbela, the capital of Adiabene, some 650 kilometers (400 miles) east. Arbela was located on the Tigris River near the ancient city of Nineveh. Josephus says that King Ezad of Arbela had converted to Judaism when he was a prince (36 AD). Traditionally Paqida was the first bishop here in 104AD. And he was led to Christ and ordained by Addai. The second bishop of this city, a guy named Samson, was killed about 120AD.



At this same time back in Edessa at least three guys (Sharbil, Babai and Barsamya) were killed. Sharbil was a converted chief priest of the idols of Edessa. According to *The Acts of Sharbil* he was "bent back and beaten on his belly, hung up by one hand, branded with flames between the eyes, burned slowly with candles,



blinded with iron nails, fastened into an iron chest, suspended upside down, burned with red-hot brass balls under his armpits, hung on a tree, sawed in two and finally beheaded – during this time he preached the gospel to his persecutors.”

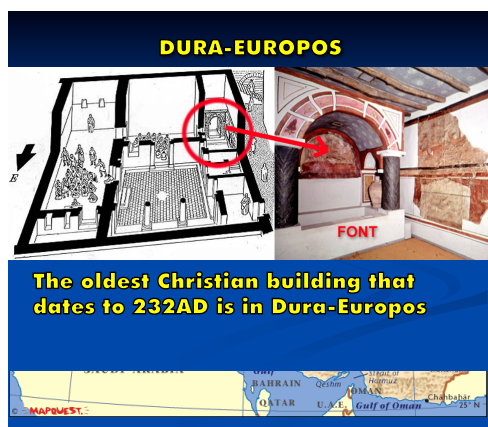
➤ The ancient city of Arbela is the modern-day Erbil, in Iraq. Here is a picture that shows the ancient city wall, which is still at the center of Erbil today. Today this city is the fourth largest city in Iraq (after Baghdad, Basra and Mosul) with 1.3 million people. And many of the people who live in this area have Bible names.

➤ Now Antioch was in kind of central Turkey, right above Lebanon, which is above Israel (where the A is). Edessa is a little bit more east but still in Turkey and right above Syria (where the B is). Arbela is farther east in Iraq.



### Dura Europos

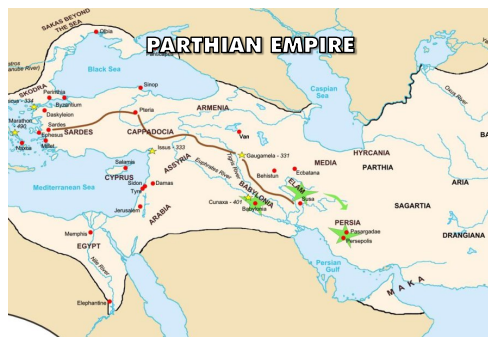
➤ Well south of Edessa (B) they have found the ancient ruins of **the oldest Christian building** (actually a house church) ever found, **that dates to 232 AD in a place called Dura Europos**. ➤ This is right on the Euphrates River in western Syria near Turkey. The name Europe comes from this city. But what is important to us is that the oldest known stones or ruins of a Christian house church were found in this city by the British in 1920. The house church was built in around 240 AD. Inside it had a baptismal tub. Protected in the sand were brilliantly fresh wall-paintings, showing scenes from both the Old and New Testaments: Adam and Eve, David and Goliath. It has the oldest picture of Jesus that we have today ... walking on water, the Good Shepherd, the healing of the paralyzed man, a painting of the three Marys who came to the empty tomb and others. The city was conquered and abandoned in 257AD (16 years after it was built). Nothing was built over it. So we have a little window into what Christianity was like at this time. In the early 1930s Yale University dismantled this church building and reconstructed it. Here is a picture of it. You can usually see these at the Yale University Art Gallery.



### Persian Empire

➤ Now at this time (247BC – 224AD) the Parthian Empire was ruling this part of the world. This included the land of Persia, which is today southern Iran. It included Assyria, which includes the country of Syria today. We have already heard how Addai probably went to Armenia and that Armenia became the first Christian nation. Aggai was his disciple and also is recorded to have gone to Armenia and throughout western Asia, probably went with him.

➤ They went to Media. Media is right below the Caspian Sea. What country is that today? It is northern Iran. In fact, it's where the capital of Iran is, Tehran. That is where these first missionaries from Edessa and Arbela took the gospel. In fact *The Chronicle of Arbela* says that by the year 225 when the Parthian dynasty fell Persia already had more than 20 bishops leading the churches all over Persia. It says

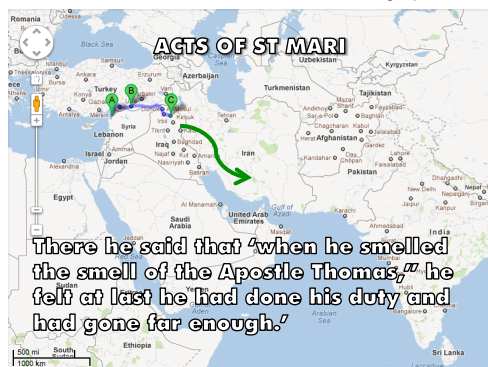




“churches multiplied” and “monasteries increased.” Every bishop wanted to start a church that had a school connected with it. According to Tertullian (c. 160-230 AD) some of these bishops were assigned south into Arabia and some east into Central Asia.



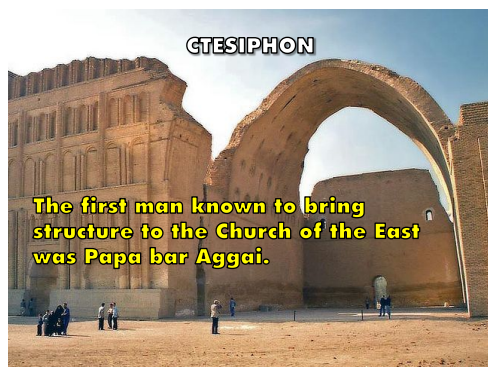
him from his mission and allow him to return. But the church ordered him to persist. So obediently but grudgingly he set himself to the evangelization of Persia and set off on an difficult series of missionary journeys that brought him almost to India. There, when as he said, ‘he smelled the smell of the Apostle Thomas,’ he felt at last that he had done his duty and had gone far enough.” So anyway between Thomas and Addai and Aggai and Mari they took the gospel to Pakistan and India.



Next it says they went to Babylonia. Where is that? That is today Iraq.

It says they went right up to the borders of India. That would probably include Pakistan today. Now remember we said Addai had two main disciples. One was Aggai that we have been talking about. The other was a guy named Mari. In a book called *The Acts of St. Mari* it says that like the apostle Thomas Mari was a reluctant missionary who doubted himself. It says, “He was sent from Edessa to ‘the regions of the East’ and he became discouraged and begged the church at home to release him from his mission and allow him to return. But the church ordered him to persist. So obediently but grudgingly he set himself to the evangelization of Persia and set off on an difficult series of missionary journeys that brought him almost to India. There, when as he said, ‘he smelled the smell of the Apostle Thomas,’ he felt at last that he had done his duty and had gone far enough.” So anyway between Thomas and Addai and Aggai and Mari they took the gospel to Pakistan and India.

Now in 196AD Bardaisan, a Christian philosopher from Edessa wrote a book entitled, the *Book of Laws of Countries*. And in that book he mentions Christians living as far as Bactria, which is now known as northern Afghanistan.



### Seleucia-Ctesiphon

In the early years, the Asian Church was not very organized. Many church leaders also worked part-time jobs as businessmen, carpenters and weavers. **The first man known to try to bring structure and organization to the Asian Church was a guy named Papa.**

In 280AD Papa bar Aggai was consecrated as bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon by two visiting bishops, Akha d-abuh of Arbela and Hai-Beel of Susa. By 315, he called for a conference of all the local pastors and churches. He tried to organize them into a group with himself as the head. But the other pastors didn’t like this and even deposed him, saying he didn’t even deserve to be a bishop. Well, it just so happened that some bishops from Antioch, Edessa and Nisibis came at this time and reinstated him as the bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon.

himself as the head. But the other pastors didn’t like this and even deposed him, saying he didn’t even deserve to be a bishop. Well, it just so happened that some bishops from Antioch, Edessa and Nisibis came at this time and reinstated him as the bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon.

In 410 AD there was a very historic conference or Council of Seleucia-Ctesiphon where a bishop from Antioch came and recognized/declared to the 40 bishops present that the bishop of Seleucia was the head, the archbishop, the “catholicos” of the Persian Church. The guy who was the bishop of the Seleucia church at that time was Bishop Mar Isaac. He was also given the title, “Great Metropolitan and Chief of all Bishops.” In other records he was called the Patriarch of the East, the “Great Metropolitan of all the East and Major Metropolitan of Seleucia-Ctesiphon.”

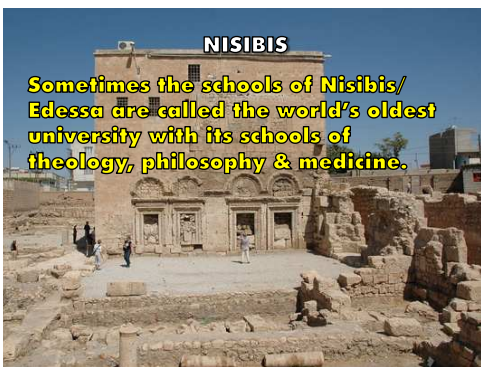


14 years later at the Council at Markabta with 31 bishops attending in 424AD he was called the Patriarch and his church became independent from the church at Antioch or from any Western church. The main reason for this was to keep Persia from blaming and persecuting them for being connected to Rome. This lasted until at least 780 AD. **✚ In the 500s AD Ctesiphon was the largest city in the world.** Today the cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon are in Iraq, 35 kilometers south of Baghdad.



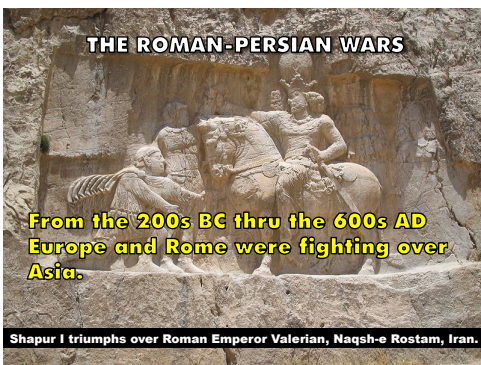
### Nisibis

✚ According to church history a guy named Mani came to Nisibis and preached the gospel here in the 200s AD. The church in Nisibis began in 300 AD by a guy named Babu who was the first bishop of this church. The next bishop, Jacob, became famous when the city was surrounded by the Persian army. The city believed they were protected by his prayers. Nisibis became a large church, called a metropolitan (or big city) church, which meant that it was usually over at least 6 other churches. By 410AD it was in charge of at least 6 other churches in the area. ✚ It was the second most powerful church in Asia at this time (next to Seleucia-Ctesiphon). Today it is called Nezib and is a town of 3000 people. This city is especially famous for a Bible training school for Christian leaders and for a guy named Ephrem the Syrian, that we will talk about in a little bit.



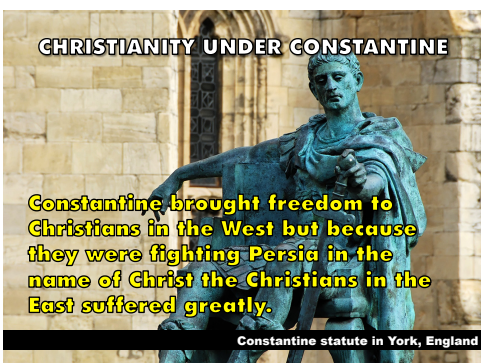
### The School of Nisibis/Edessa

✚ Actually by 350 AD there were Bible training schools in Edessa, Nisibis, Seleucia and Arbela. The schools in Edessa and Nisibis were the larger and most respected ones. This is actually one school that moved between these two locations. **Sometimes the school is called the world's first university. The school had three main departments - the school of theology, the school of philosophy and the school of medicine.**



✚ From the 200s BC thru the 600s AD Europe (controlled by Rome) and Asia (controlled by Persia) were fighting in Asia.

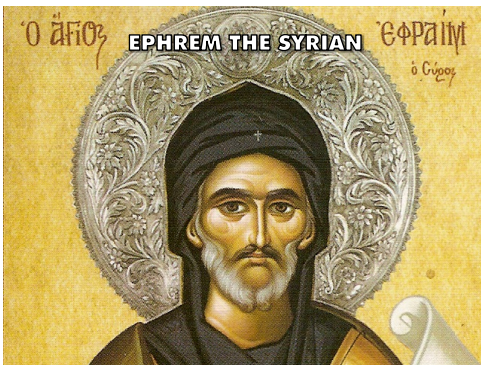
✚ Because Rome (under Constantine) claimed to be Christian this made the Persians who were fighting Rome brought persecution to the Christians who were living in Persia. When Nisibis was transferred to Persian control in 363 and many Christians in the East were persecuted by the Persians, many Christians from Nisibis moved west to Roman territory where they had religious freedom. In 488AD when the Eastern Roman Empire closed the school at Edessa the staff and students moved back to Nisibis. Many Syrian Christians moved back east to Persia. From 596-604 (when Sabr-Ishu was the head of the Church of the East) this school had over 800 students.





# Asian Church History: Lecture 3 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2012

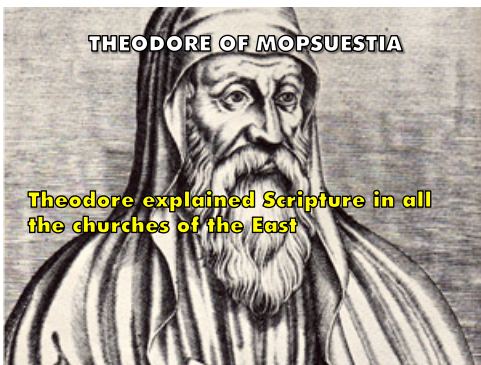
Steve Nicholes, Professor:



## Ephrem the Syrian

➤ Ephrem is the most famous guy in the Syrian church. The tradition is that he was born into a Christian family in 306AD in or near Nisibis. In 363AD when Nisibis was handed over to the Persians by Jovian, many teachers including Ephrem left Nisibis and moved to Edessa because of the persecution of Christians in Persia under Shapor II. It was in the city of Edessa and in the great church of St Thomas the Apostle that Ephrem spent the last 10 years of his life, mostly in a cell. Here he continued

the writing he had started back in Nisibis – biblical commentaries, sermons and hymns, which were very popular. He wrote against false teachers and heretics of his day – Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan. In the school in Edessa and Nisibis his writings became the main textbooks.



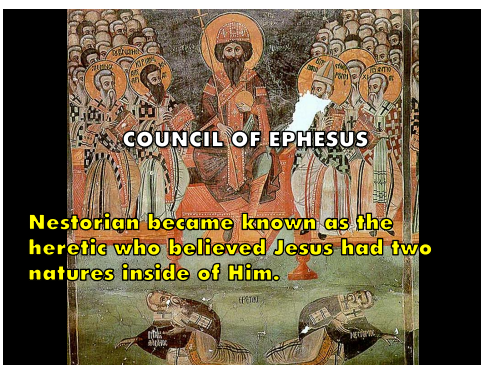
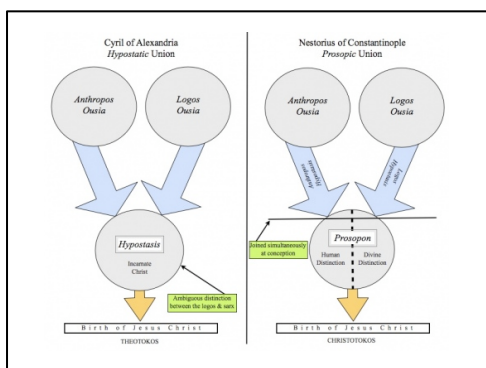
## Theodore of Mopsuestia

➤ Later the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia (392-428 AD) came to be used. For the Persian church he became the top theologian. This school followed the writings of church fathers from Antioch. John of Antioch writes, “Theodore explained Scripture in all the churches of the East.”

## Nestorianism

One of **the church fathers** that had come from **Antioch** was a guy named Nestorius who was a famous preacher. And Nestorius became the Archbishop of Constantinople from 428-431 AD. What city is Constantinople today? (Istanbul, Turkey) It was in the West (not in the Eastern Church of Asia). He did not like to call Mary, the “mother of God.” Others, especially **the church fathers from Alexandria** ... what country is that? (Egypt) guys like Cyril of Alexandria argued against him – “Why don’t you call Mary, the mother of God – Don’t you believe Jesus is God? Isn’t Mary his mother?” Nestorius argued that God could not have been born so the title Mary the mother of God was not a good one.

➤ Another big argument at this time in the church was over how Jesus was both human and divine. **Nestorius argued that Jesus had two natures inside of him**, one human and one divine ... but he said those two natures could not mix. Cyril accused Nestorius make making Jesus two people inside one body and denying the incarnation of Christ.



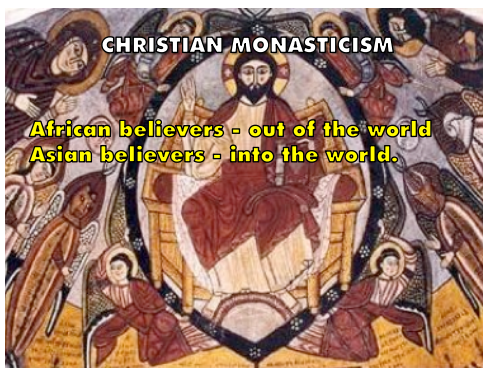
➤ There was a big church council at Ephesus in 431 and they declared that Nestorius was a heretic. But the bishops from Antioch arrived late (they traveled a long way from Antioch and some of the bishops died and had to be buried along the way) and when they heard that Nestorius had been declared a heretic and the council was finished before they arrived. So they set up their own church council and declared Cyril a heretic and Nestorius innocent. At first the Roman government exiled both Nestorius and Cyril.

But in the end the teaching that Jesus had **two natures in one body** was condemned by the church (again at the Council of Chalcedon), including the Syrians. However aside from this the Eastern church in Asia loved Nestorius and his teachings.

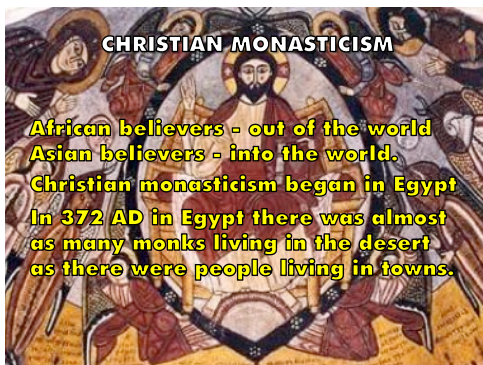
We know that by 363 AD the theological school at Nisibis moved to Edessa and became a center for theological training for all the Christians of the Church of the East, following the theology of the church fathers from Antioch.

## Christian Monasticism

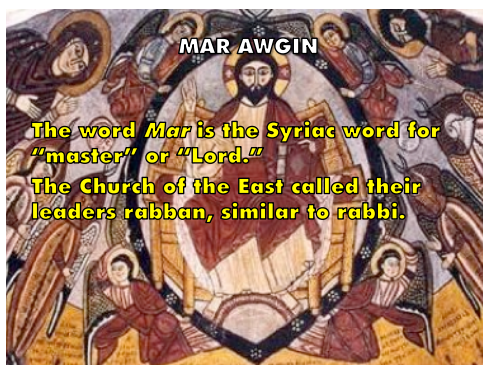
↘ When you study early Christianity one thing you will see is that many of the church leaders of the early centuries started monasteries and practiced spiritual disciplines or habits.



**But one general difference between the church in Egypt or Africa and the church in Asia was that the believers in Africa seemed to withdraw more from the world and spend a long time on top of a mountain or in a cave or monastery and the early Christ-followers in Asia who lived along trade routes and traveled for business between cities emphasized going and preaching and serving and spreading the gospel.** The *Gospel of Thomas*, which they held with honor back in Edessa, said that going and serving was a higher calling than fasting, praying and giving. It repeats Jesus words, “the harvest is great but the laborers are few” and then it says this one ... “many are round the opening but nobody in the well.” Do you understand that?

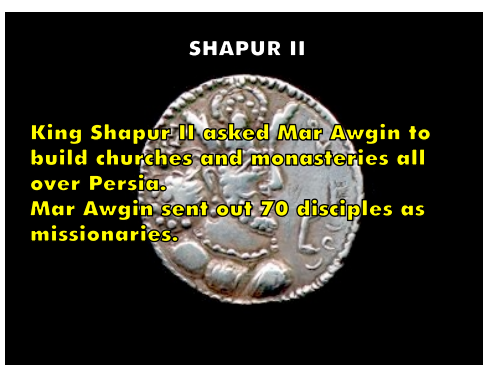


↘ **Christian monasticism** (where the followers completely separate from the world like a monk) **did not begin in Asia. It actually began in Africa, in Egypt.** According to one historian, **monasticism became so popular in Egypt that by 372 AD there were almost as many monks living in the desert as there were people living in the towns.**



## Mar Awgin

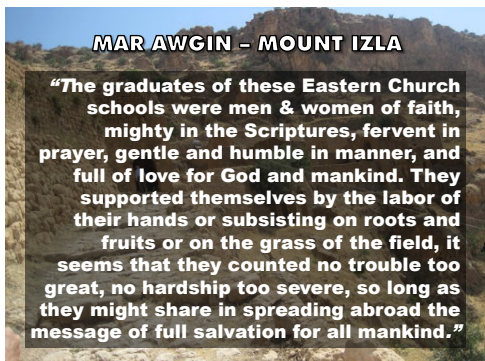
↘ Sometime before 362 AD a guy from Egypt, Mar Awgin came from Egypt to a mountain, Mt Izla in Mesopotamia (Near Nisibis, between the Tigris and Euphrates River) with 70 Christian monks. **The word Mar is the Syriac word for “master” or “Lord” and was used like we used the word saint (for St. Peter). They would also call their leaders a rabban, similar to rabbi.** They lived in a cave there for 30 years. And during that time their numbers grew to 350. Today we can still see a copy of the rules they had at the Izla monastery. And it quotes Scripture for almost every statement. It talks about quietness and fasting and prayer and reading Scripture. So the idea of a quiet time is not new. You can trace it thru the western church and the eastern church as well.



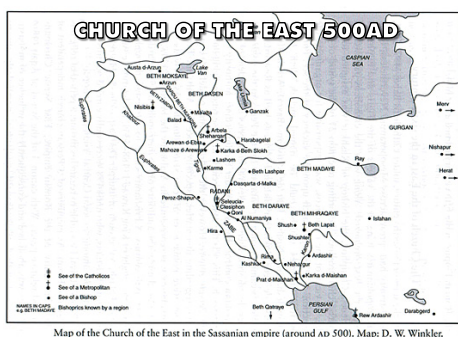
↘ When this got started **the king of Persia, Shapur II (309-379) sent for Mar Awgin,** the founder of the Izla monastery and gave him an official government



document asking him to build churches and monasteries all over the Persian empire. A few days later Mar Awgin laid his hands on 70 disciples (copying Jesus' 70 disciples) and sent them out as missionaries to start monasteries. These were Bible training schools that were training a younger generation of Christian leaders. They would do enough work at the school so that their education was free. They would study the Bible, especially Psalms and the New Testament.

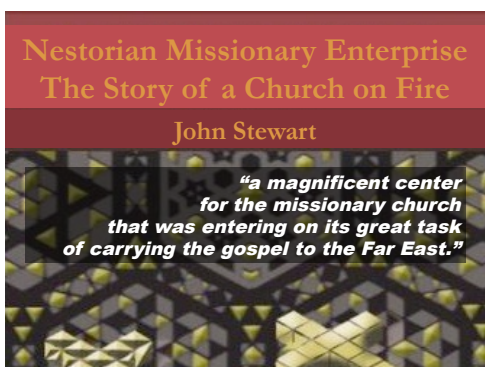


➤ One writer says that **“the graduates of these Eastern Church schools were men and women of faith, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in prayer, gentle and humble in manner, and full of love for God and mankind. They supported themselves by the labor of their hands or subsisting on roots and fruits or on the grass of the field, it seems that they counted no trouble too great, no hardship too severe, so long as they might share in spreading abroad the message of full salvation for all mankind.”** So in the fifth century (the 400s) the monastic system spread rapidly all over Persia and central and eastern Asia. These students went and started these discipleship training schools for the next generation of Christian leaders. ➤ Here is a map that shows where the Church of the East was located about 500AD.



### Moving East

The early traditional histories say that Addai and his disciples Aggai and Mari were the first missionaries to take gospel farther east. Here is the story of Aggai, written by Bar Hebraeus. “Aggai used to weave Chinese cloth for Abgar and after the death of his master Addai he fled into the East. And he began to preach throughout Persia, Assyria, Armenia, Media, Babylonia and in the region of Khuzistan and among the Geles, right up to the borders of India. Then he returned to Edessa, as he was afraid that the faith there might decline, because of the native superstition of Abgar’s son, who succeeded him as king. When he reached Edessa, Abgar’s son ordered him to weave Chinese cloth for him as he used to do for his father. Aggai replied to him, ‘When my master was feeding the flock of Christ, I used to work for your father. But now the work of feeding has come down to me, and I cannot follow another trade.’ The ruler was angry at his words and killed him by breaking his leg bones.”



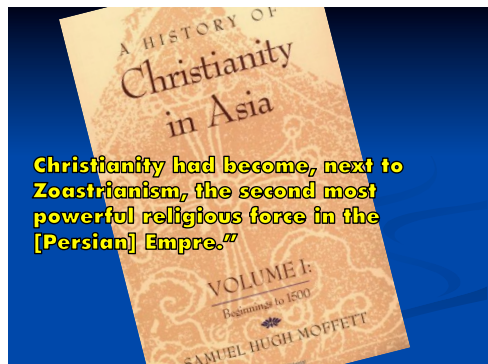
➤ So the headquarters, the center of the Asian Church was moving east. In the words of **John Stewart, it was "a magnificent center for the missionary church that was entering on its great task of carrying the gospel to the Far East."**



➤ So do you see what is happening? Less than 200 years after Jesus gave the Great Commission to go into all the world and preach ... the gospel has now gone from Antioch to Edessa to Arbela ... and in all three of those places they set up training and mission sending stations and began sending missionaries to Armenia, to Syria, to northern and southern Iran, to Iraq (and actually into

Saudi Arabia), to Afghanistan, to Pakistan, and Thomas went to India ... all in the first 200 years. Have you ever heard that before? Did you ever realize that? Honestly I did not know this either until I began studying and preparing for this course. And I think that is amazing.

And for the next several hundred years while the Western Church of the Roman Empire was busy arguing theology during the church councils the Eastern Church in Asia was busy taking the gospel to the Persians, the Arabs, the Indians, the Turks and the Chinese. The whole life of the Christian community in Asia was filled with a missionary spirit. This included not only pastors and elders but businessmen and refugees – wherever they went they tried to be ambassadors for Christ. One historian calls this “the most missionary church the world has ever seen.”



By the 500-600sAD Moffett writes “Christianity had become, next to Zoroastrianism, the second most powerful religious force in the [Persian] Empire.”

A training school for pastors was established in Seleucia by Mar Bawai (457-484). Convents for women as well as monasteries for men started to multiply throughout the Persian Empire. Seleucia became the center for training of missionaries and Christian leaders who were taking the gospel farther east into central and south Asia. By 410, many churches and monasteries in Eastern Mesopotamia had hospital clinics and doctors serving in the emperor’s court who were mostly Christian.



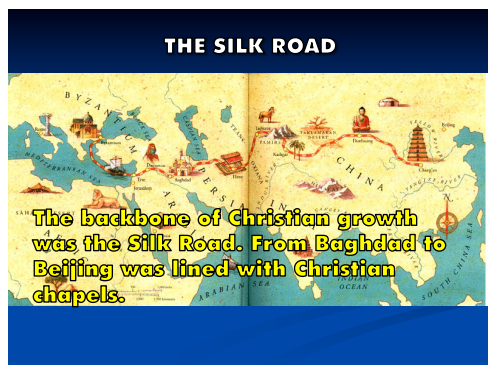
### Synod of Beth Lapat

Barsauma, was a teacher at Edessa. He became the head bishop of Nisibis, one of the 5 main head churches in the Church of the East at that time in the fifth century (400s).

In 484AD Barsuama hosted the Synod of Beth Lapat. At that council he encouraged monks and nuns to marry. This has been called the birth of the Persian Church because it began a separation of the Persian Church from the Church of the East.

### Babai the Great

The separation actually happened 120 years later in 604AD with Babai the Great. Babai had studied at the Christian school of Nisibis. He became a teacher and began his own school. When he became a leader he kicked out all the monks who had married and emphasized a life of prayer and solitude. Many monks left the church at this time. Babai built or restored 60 schools, sent out missionaries and traveling evangelists. It was said that people living at this time had more than 2000 Christian books or booklets available to read, which had been written by the top Christian leaders up to this time.



### The Silk Road

The backbone of Christian growth was the Silk Road. Marco Polo tells us that in his day this road from Baghdad to Beijing was lined with Christian chapels. The great city of Antioch was a terminal in West Asia for ancient trade connecting the Mediterranean world to Asia. In the ancient world and the Middle Ages the silk road ran from Syria into northern Persia and into what are the nations of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Travelers passed through such cities as Nishapur, Merv,



Bukhara and Samarkand. This route finally took them all the way to Changan on the east side of China as well as down into India.



✚ By the year 424 missionaries traveled north and east and planted churches and schools in places like Merv, Nishapur and Herat. One thing the Christian missionaries were famous for was teaching the people about physical health. They taught the importance of eating fresh fruits and vegetables. They brought natural medicines and served as physicians to government leaders. The Nestorian missionaries for very famous for their medical skill, especially during the Mongolian Empire..

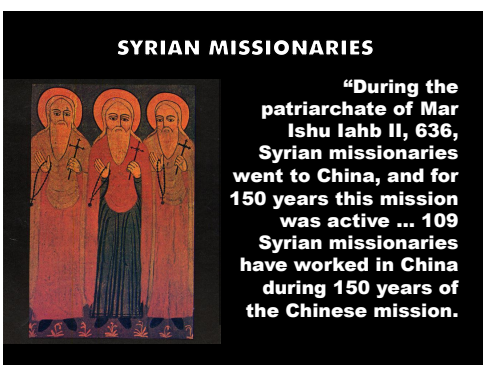


✚ Merv was a major oasis-city in central Asia on the historical Silk Road. Today it is located near the city of Mary in Turkmenistan. It is said that **Merv was briefly the largest city in the world in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (1100s)**. It's walls were 35 feet high and 10 feet thick. After Edessa and Nisibis it became the third center of Christian scholarship in Asia. From here they translated the Bible from Greek and Syriac into the languages spoken in Samarkand and Bokhara. The site of ancient Merv has been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The city of Merv received a bishop in 424AD. Starting in 553AD for

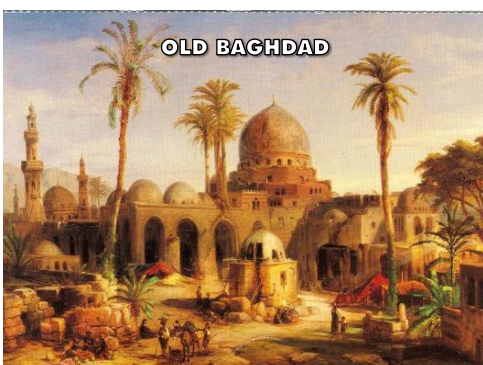
about 500 years a head bishop over all the churches in the area was located in Merv. Missionaries were sent out from this area to evangelize the Huns and the Turks. In 644AD the head bishop of Merv reported that he saw a Turkish King converted to Christianity and all of his army. He said there were lots of Christians living beyond the Oxus River (modern-day Amu Darya).

Nishapur (modern Neyshabur) is in NE Iran and was a major city on the old silk road to Chanan, China. It got its name from the Persian King Shapur 1. In the year 1000AD it was among the 10 largest cities on earth. Today over 200,000 people live here.

Herat City in Herat Province (is the third largest city in modern-day Afghanistan with 400,000 people) also received a bishop in 424AD. And they received a head bishop of the churches in their area in 585AD.



✚ The historian Malech writes, **“During the patriarchate of Mar Ishu Jahb II, 636, Syrian missionaries went to China, and for 150 years this mission was active.... 109 Syrian missionaries have worked in China during 150 years of the Chinese mission....** ✚ They went out from Beth Nahrin, the birthplace of Abraham, the father of all believers. The missionaries traveled on foot; they had sandals on their feet, and a staff in their hands, and carried a basket on their backs, and in the basket was ✚ the Holy Writ and the cross. They took the road around the Persian Gulf; went over deep rivers and high mountains, thousands of miles. On their way they met many heathen nations and preached to them the gospel of Christ.”

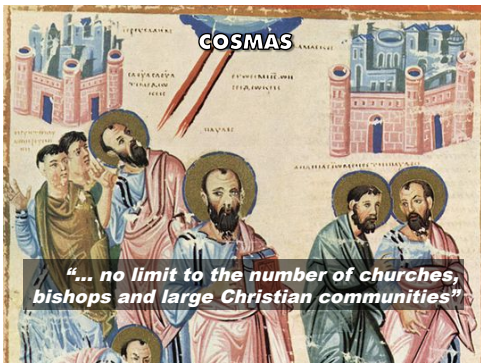


✚ In 781 AD Timothy, the patriarch of Seleucia had just moved to Baghdad. From there he was over the Church of the East from the Mediterranean Sea in the west all the way to the Pacific Ocean in the East. He wrote

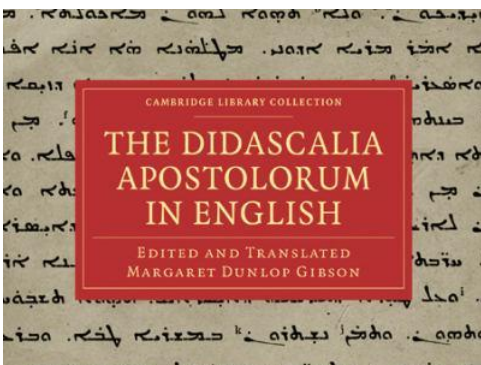
“The king of the Turks with nearly all (the inhabitants of) his country, has left his ancient idolatry, and has become a Christian, and has requested us in his letters to create a Metropolitan (head bishop) for his country; and this we have done.”

At the same time Timothy was planning to ordain a metropolitan or head of all the pastors in Tibet. In another letter he wrote that many missionaries had “crossed the sea and went to the Indians and the Chinese with only a rod and script.” He mentions that the metropolitan or head of all the pastors in China had died, showing that the Christian community in China was significant.

Thomas of Marga (837-850) tells how Timothy selected more than 80 men who he sent east to preach the gospel. There were enough Christians in modern Afghanistan to have at least 5 bishops. Iran had at least 2 bishops. The king of Burma had at least 1000 Christians in his service. There were strong Christian communities all over the north, south and central parts of Asia, even on the island of Sri Lanka, off the tip of India.



➤ The traveler and merchant from Alexandria, **Cosmas**, said that he found Christians in 525 AD not only in Socotra (those are islands that belong to Yemen out in the Indian ocean on the horn of Africa) and Sri Lanka, but in the Ganges Valley (China), Pegu (Burma), Cochin (India), Siam (Thailand) and Tonkin (North Vietnam). He said that among the Indians and throughout the whole land of Persia there was “no limit to the number of churches, bishops and large Christian communities.”



### ➤ Didascalia Apostolorum (The Teaching of the Apostles)

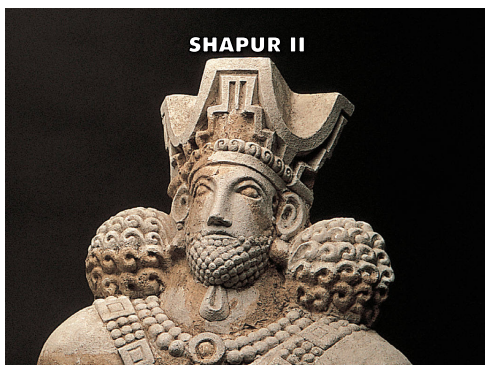
This was a Syriac document written about 230 AD and gives a detailed description of the Christians in the East Syrian Church. It was written by a bishop in northern Syria and was widely used in Persia. Its purpose was to **give instructions to church officers and members on Christian conduct and worship.**

➤ By the end of the second century, missionary expansion had carried the church as far east as Bactria, which is now northern Afghanistan, and mass conversions of Huns and Turks in Central Asia were reported from the fifth century onward. By the end of the seventh century, Persian missionaries had reached “the end of the world,” the capital of the T’ang dynasty in China.





**Asian Church History: Lecture 4 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2011**  
**Steve Nicholes, Professor:**

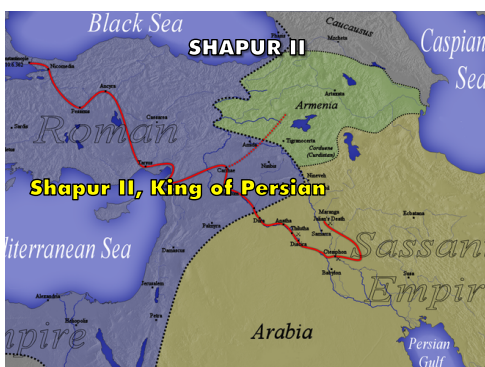


**Persian Persecution**

When Constantine became the emperor of Rome the Roman Empire was declared as officially Christian. During this time the Persian Empire and the Roman Empire were often at war. ↘ Constantine wrote a letter to the king of Persia, Shapur II and asked him to protect all the Christians in Persia. But Shapur was suspicious that they might be spies who were paid by the Romans. Shapur made a decree that all Christians had to pay double tax to help pay for the cost of the war. And he ordered the archbishops to collect it. But the archbishops said that the people were too poor to pay and that he was a spiritual leader, not a tax collector.



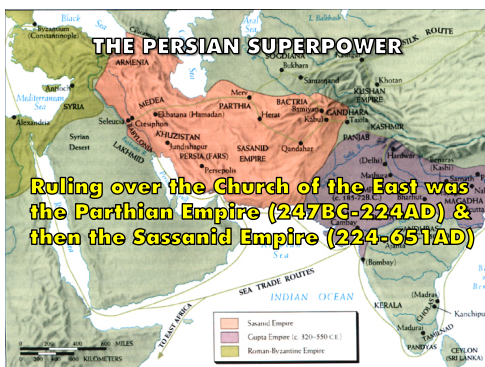
↘ Well, this made Shapur very angry. He ordered the archbishop of Persia, Sadoc, arrested and all the Christian churches destroyed. After 5 months of torture the king offered the archbishop and his people freedom if he would only worship the sun once. He refused and in 339 AD he, five bishops and 100 other pastors were killed. Within the next 6 years two more archbishops were killed as well.



↘ When the war between Rome and Persia over western Asia ended (This did not completely happen until the Battle of Nineveh in 627 when the Romans, Byzantine Empire, defeated the Persians. But in 363 Rome handed 5 provinces that had large Christian populations over to Shapur II). He immediately kicked all the Christians out of their home provinces and moved them to other provinces on the other side of Persia and ordered the leaders there to be harsh to them if they did not abandon (leave) Christianity. For example, he gave one group of 300

Christians the option of apostasy or death. 275 would not apostasize and were killed.

When the persecution began, modern Kurdistan, Khazakhstan and Louristan must have been almost entirely Christian. They had a lot of bishops and almost every important village had elders.



Shapur II died in 379AD and his brother Ardasher II took his place. He ruled for four years and kept persecuting the Christians some. After he died the Christians lived in peace without persecution for about 37 years.

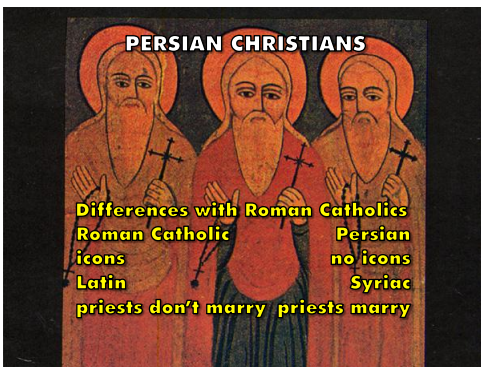
Why have we been talking so much about **Persia** during this time period? Because it **was the superpower that ruled over the church of the East at this time. It was called the Parthian Empire from 247BC-224AD. And it was called the Sassanid Empire from 224AD-651AD).**

↘ In 420AD Bahram 5 came to power and started a terrible persecution against the Christians all over the Persian Empire. He invented cruel new ways to torture them. They would strip the skin off of their face – from the forehead down to the chin. They would dig big



deep pits and then put Christians down in them, with their hands and feet tied behind their back. Then they would get rats and mice that had been intentionally starved for a long time and throw them down into these pits. The Christians were eaten alive by these animals. Bahram ordered the Christian churches to be taken and the wood and metal from these buildings were used to build bridges. Here is a sculpture of Bahram 5 in the capital of Azerbaijan (right next to Georgia and Armenia). He is killing a wild animal. During these persecutions many Christians left Persia went to neighboring lands.

One historian says that when they left “they became enthusiastic missionaries of the gospel.” Their zeal and devotion encouraged the churches and made the great missionary training centers. As time passed by the Persians Kings realized that the Christians in Persia were not really connected to Rome or to the west. So they stopped persecuting them. **One difference between the Persian Christians and the Roman catholic Christians is that the Persian**



**Christians did not have any holy pictures or icons in their houses or churches.** They only used simple crosses. They believed that making icons or images would break the second commandment to not make any graven image and was close to worshipping idols. Another differences were **(2) That the church language for Roman Catholics was Latin – for the Church of the East it was Syriac. And (3) the Roman Catholic priests did not marry but in the Church of the East they did marry.**



### The Church in Arabia

Tradition tells us that **the first guy to preach the gospel in south Arabia was St. Bartholomew.** Qatar, in SW Arabia had a bishop (who??) in 225 AD. That means there were Christians in Arabia within 200 years after Jesus left this earth. When Constantine was Emperor the southern part of Arabia began to believe in Jesus.

Theophilus persuaded the King of Yemen to believe in Jesus. As a result churches were built at Zafar (now called Dhafar), in Aden and in San'a the capital as well as Hormuz.

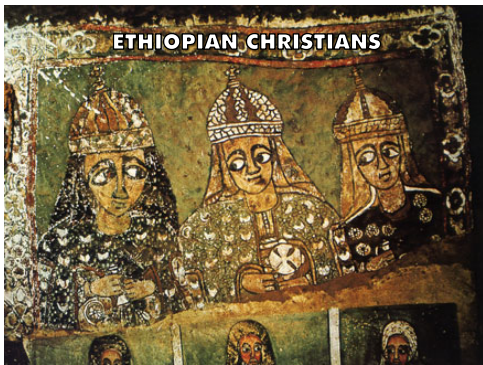


Christianity was first introduced in Northern Yemen and Southern Saudi Arabia around 400 AD. It was an oasis in the desert. It had a large Christian population and their own bishop. However in 523 AD a violent persecution against the Christians broke out again by the king of Yemen, Masruq (a Himyarite Jew). And when the persecution of the Yemen Christians began they sent a note to Kaleb, the king of the Ethiopians (then known as Abyssinians). Kaleb sent an army and defeated Masruq and drove him into the mountains. The Ethiopians went

back to their country except they left 580 men in the town of Zafar. Masruq tricked 300 of the men to come out of the city and killed them at night. When Masruq returned to the town the remaining 280 were in the church. He set the church on fire and burned the 280 Ethiopians to death. After this Masruq was determined to get rid of all the Christians in Yemen. He sent a



command that all Christians must either deny Christ and become Jews or be put to death. Anyone who hid a Christian would have his house burned and property destroyed.



Then Masruq focused on Najran the capital of Ethiopia. This city had a Christian governor, Harith, and most of the people in this city were Christians. He tried to trick the men of the city to come out. But they had heard what had happened in Zafar. But Masrug was very powerful and had 427 pastors killed inside the church of Najran. Most of the persecutions in this city happened between November 20-28, 523 AD. While these persecutions were going on the Christians wrote to the Bishop of Ethiopia and to "Kaleb, the Christ-loving king of Ethiopia." They told him what Masrug had done. King Kaleb came

with an army, chased Masrug to the Red Sea where he drowned. After this Christianity came back in Yemen larger than ever.

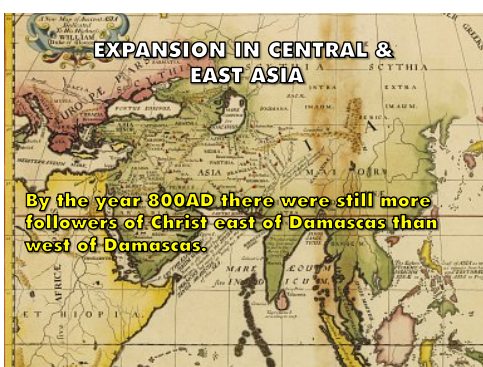
In the year 567 AD Abraha, the King of Yemen built a new cathedral at San'a planning to make it a rival to Mecca (where the Arabs make pilgrimage). On the night of the dedication Arabs from the north came and defiled it. So Abraha went to war against Mecca and was defeated. This story is told in the Koran, chapter 55. However Christians stayed in power in Yemen. At a later date (??) someone from the house of Masrug convinced Persia to send an army and drive the Ethiopians out of Yemen. From that time on Christianity lost their hold on power, which led to anarchy in the country until Muhammad came. At first he had the people in Najran to pay him tribute every year. He said that if they would pay him tribute he would allow them to have freedom of religion. But eventually that changed and he ordered all of the people to become Moslem or be deported to Iraq. By the end of the seventh century (600s AD)

Christianity in Arabia did not have much power. There was, however, one church council of the Church of the East that was held in SE Arabia as late as 676 AD.



### Expansion in Central and Eastern Asia

The golden age of missions in the Asian Church lasted about 500 years, from the end of the fourth century until the end of the ninth century. John M. Neale, in his book, *History of the Holy Eastern Church* wrote, "Eastward from the great school of Edessa (Urfa) the envoys of Christianity went forth. They pitched their tents in the camps of the wandering Tartar, the Lama of Tibet trembled at their words, they stood in the rice fields of the Punjab, and they taught the fisherman by the Sea of Aral ... " They served as secretaries and doctors to Turks, Mongols and others. They invented alphabets for people they worked with. They result of their activity began to change the world. In 196 AD one man wrote, "We are called Christians by the one name of the Messiah. As regards our customs, our brethren abstain from everything that is contrary to their profession. Parthian Christians do not take 2 wives. Jewish Christians are not circumcised. Our Bactrian sisters do not practice promiscuity. Persians do not take their daughters to wife. Medes do not desert their dying relations or bury them alive. Christians in Edessa (Urfa) do not kill their wives or



sisters who commit fornication, but commit them to the judgment of God. Christians in Hatra do not stone thieves.” The power of the gospel changed Asia at this time in history. **By the year 800AD there were still more followers of Jesus Christ east of Damascus than there was west of Damascus.**



### Christian Turks

When you hear the word “Turk” what comes to your mind? What kind of people are Turks? What countries are named for the Turkic people? Turkey, Turkmenistan and one province in western China that has tried to become independent and is sometimes called Turkestan. The Turkic people are a racial mix of white European and Asian. There are about 185,000,000 Turkic people in the world. They are in southern Russia, in northern China, in all the stan countries all the way over to the country of Turkey, which is 75% Turkic. Although a number of the Turkish people groups converted to Christianity, today the majority of Turks are Christian.



Historically they came from where Mongolia, Kazakhstan, China and Russia meet in the mountains of Altai. And they created the Ottoman Empire (1299-1923), which lasted over 600 years..

We are not sure of the exact date when Christianity came to the Turco-Tatar tribes in modern western China but we are sure that it was not later than the seventh century (600s) AD and may have been much earlier. According to tradition from a letter sent by a bishop who lived in the sixth century ... he said that in the fourth century (300s) the head church of the Church of the East moved from Syria to Ctesiphon because of the wars between the Roman and Persian empires. And the Persians started accusing Christians in their empire of being spies and many bishops were getting killed. Because of that the church moved the power of the Church of the East to Ctesiphon.

The next time some Christian Turks came thru wanting to have some more bishops ordained they were confused that this time the leadership had moved to Ctesiphon and was not under Antioch any more. At first they did not accept the new leadership and went back to their own country. Later they returned and asked why they were no longer under Antioch. The new leaders told them it was because of the persecution in Antioch during the wars. This time these Christian Turks accepted the leadership in Ctesiphon and got their bishops trained and ordained there. We know this letter was written before 762AD because that year the headquarters for the Church of the East moved from Ctesiphon to Baghdad. It was also the year that the capital of the Persian Empire moved from Ctesiphon to Baghdad. At that time there were 25 metropolitan (big-city) bishops with 150 bishops. The faraway regions were only required to come to Baghdad and report once every 6 years. **One reason the government moved their capital city was “because it will put us in touch with lands as far as China.” In 814AD Baghdad was probably the world’s largest city.**



The letter also tells how the Christian Turks lived. It says, “They translated the Syriac scriptures into the Turkish language “that all their congregation may understand what is read.” These Christian Turks ‘are true believers and God-fearing folk.’ They dwell in tents and have no



towns, villages or houses. They are very wealthy and are divided into large and small clans who journey from place to place.”

And then comes the most important part of the narrative in which we are told that they had four great and powerful kings who lived during the same time period but a long distance from each other. Their names are given as Gawirk, Girk, Tasahz and Langu. They were all called Tartars and the name of their country was Sericon, the name by which Ptolemy called China. They called themselves Tartars after a river called Tartar, which flowed thru their country (Tartarstan). Each of these kings are said to rule over 400,000 families. If you calculate 5 people to each family that would be a total community of 2 million people under each king, all, or almost all who followed a king and a rule that was based on the gospel of Christ.

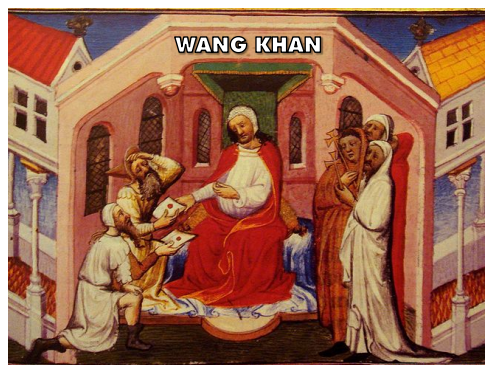


✎ The exact location of the Christian Turks was said to be 5 days away from Karakoram, which was called a ‘border town.’ These 4 kings may have been the heads of the four powerful Turco-Tartar people groups known as the Keraites, Uigurs, Naimans and Merkites. Have you heard of any of these groups before? They are from western China today. Some missionaries had gone into this area as early as 499AD and before 781 the Patriarch Timothy had sent 80 missionaries into this area. Let me talk about these groups.

## Keraites

The strongest among the five groups were the Keraites. They lived in modern Mongolia, centered in today’s capital city Ulan Bataar.

About 1007AD a king of the Keraites was out hunting in the high mountains when he lost his way in the snow and thought he was going to die when suddenly a man appeared to him and promised to lead him to safety. And he did. He said his name was Mar Sergius and he earnestly pleaded with the king to become a Christian. When the king returned to camp he immediately asked to meet with some Christian businessmen and asked them to instruct him in the Christian faith. He received the gospel and began worshipping with them. He then asked the head bishop in the area to come with his preachers and baptize he and his people. The story says that 200,000 of the Kerait people were baptized at this time. Even Rashid-ud-din, the Muhammadan historian of the Mongols said that **‘the Keraites had their own rulers and professed the Christian faith.’**



✎ Here is Wang Khan (who was like the godfather of Jenghis Khan) wearing the gown of a cardinal with people in his court holding crosses. He is receiving two representatives from Jenghis Khan.

## Naimans

Another group of Turkic people who were a part of the Mongolian Empire were the Naimans. ✎ They lived in the mountains of Tarbagatai, where Mongolia, China and Kazakhstan meet. Today 400,000 of their descendants live in Eastern Kazakhstan. By tradition the Naimans and the Keraites believed themselves to be descendants of the wise men who went to see baby Jesus.

The commander of the Mongol army who invaded Syria in 1259, Kitbuqa, was a Naiman; he is recorded to have “greatly loved and honored the Christians, because he was of the lineage of the kings who came to Bethlehem



to adore the nativity of our Lord” (Monk Hayton, The history of the Stories of the land of the Orient).

The Niamans had a Christian ruler who ruled their tribe and they called themselves Christians.’ One author records that the gospel was brought to these people by Christian merchants.



## Uigurs

Next to the Keraites and the Naimans one of the most important Christian Turco-Tartar tribes was the Uigurs. This whole people group seems to have converted to Christianity at an early date and were Christians for a long time, over many generations. Then about 300 years later when the Muslims came Christianity mostly disappeared. In 1930 the small percentage of Christian Uigurs were forced to become Muslim or die.

Christian missionaries who worked among the Uigurs created a written alphabet for them using the letters of the Syriac alphabet adding a few letters for new sounds they had. Later, the Mongols adopted the Uigur script and used that for themselves.

The Christians, at their linguistic headquarters in Merv, tried to have the languages of all the tribes put into writing so that they could translate the Bible into a language they could read and thru this share the gospel. How effective were they? Well, there is an inscription, found at Kara-Balsaghun in this Uigur writing, which tells about an astonishing transformation brought about

through the conversion of the Uigurs. It states, "This land of barbarous customs, smoking with blood, was transformed into a vegetarian state, and this land of slaughter became a land devoted to good works." Throughout the reign of the Khans, the Uigurs were used as their secretaries.

## Merkits

These were a Turkish people who were a mixed with Mongol blood and were probably Christians as well. The word Merkit literally means “the skillful ones.”

## Uriyan-Gakit

This group was largely if not completely Christian. In 1298AD they had a Christian queen. Queen Arungal was the sister of Georges, king of the Christian Turks.

## Samarkand

As early as the fifth century (400s) the city of Samarkand was a great mission training and sending center for this region and especially going further east. By the eighth century (700s) they had their own metropolitan (big city) bishop. And this continued until the 15<sup>th</sup> century (1400AD). In 1265 Marco Polo visited here and estimated that 10% of the population was Christian.





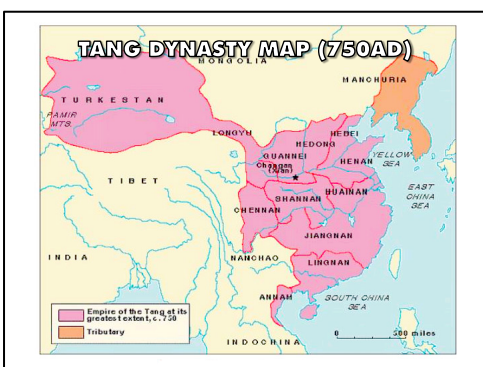
## Asian Church History: Lecture 5 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2011

Steve Nicholes, Professor:



➤ Of all the evidence of activity of Christian missionaries in China before 1000AD, none has been more dramatic than the discovery of the Christian stone monument. In the province of Shaanxi, east-central China, is the city of Changwu (formerly called Hsian-fu; today called Xian). That is where the famous terracotta warriors were found. Has anybody heard about them?

➤ For about 1000 years this was the capital of northern China. The golden age of Changwu was **during the T'ang dynasty (618-906AD)**, one of the most brilliant periods in Chinese history. Also during this time the T'ang dynasty had a close relationship with Japan. **The things that were being done in Changwu were also copied and taken to the Japanese capital of Nara.** It was not until the invasion of Japan by Kublai Khan in 1268-1281AD that Japan became spiritually and materially independent.



One of the stories that the Chinese tell is that in 64 AD, the Chinese emperor, Ming-ti, had a dream that caused him to send messengers along one of the roads

which leads to the west. They were sent to find out who the great prophet was who had arisen to the west of China. On the way, the messengers met two missionaries who were on their way to the emperor's court. They all returned to the court together and the missionaries stayed there until they died six years later.

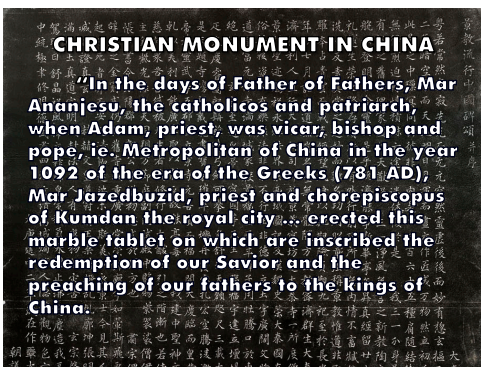
In February of 1924 *The Chinese Recorder* (what is that a newspaper??) shared a story from the work *Shen Hsien Kang Chien*. First it tells how western tribes invaded China during the reign of Emperor Kuang-Wu-Ti (25-28AD). It says, **"During the winter time the western tribes rushed in but Ma-Yuen, one of the great generals of Kuang-Wu-Ti, dispersed them and drove them away. People from those western countries give the following account"** ... and after that section it gives the narrative of the life of Christ. It tells about His crucifixion, His resurrection on the third day and His ascension 40 days later. It seems to be saying that in the first century these western tribes invaded China and after that they brought the story of Christ to China. In the book *Adversus Gentes*, written about 303AD, the author speaks of Chinese people having faith in Christ.



### Ancient Monument in China

➤ In 1625 a Christian monument was found about 50 kilometers (30 miles) from ChangAn next to the site of a church and Christian school. The school is mentioned by eleventh century Chinese poets as the TaChin Su (temple). The people of the area still called it by that name in 1933. It stands over 3 meters (9 feet) tall, 1 meter (3 feet) wide and 30 centimeters (1 foot) thick. It has a cross at the top and 9 large Chinese letters under it that read, "A Monument Commemorating the Propagation of the TaChin Luminous Religion of the Middle Kingdom." The

middle kingdom is what China is called, even today. It is the idea that China is the center of the world.



✎ It tells how a guy named Alopen (Abraham) was welcomed by the emperor of China in 635AD. The emperor listened carefully to the reading of the Scriptures and after hearing its message gave permission for public preaching of this message. He also instructed them to translate their sacred writings into Chinese. On the 2000 word monument 67 names are listed, including one bishop and 28 elders. It says, ✎ **"In the days of Father of Fathers, Mar Ananjesu, the catholicos and patriarch, when Adam, priest, was vicar, bishop and pope, ie. Metropolitan of China in the year 1092 of the era of the Greeks (781 AD), Mar Jazedbuzid, priest and chorepiscopus of Kumdan the royal city ... erected this marble tablet on which are inscribed the redemption of our Savior and the preaching of our fathers to the kings of China. Adam, deacon, son of Jazedbuzid the chorepiscopus; Mar Sergius, priest and chorepiscopus; Sabarjesu, priest; Gabriel, priest and archdeacon, church rulers of the cities of Kumdan and Sarag."**

On this monument the names of several emperors of the Tang dynasty are mentioned. And they are praised for supporting the mission. Some sent their pictures to be hung inside the monastery and some provided a generous amount of money for their work. In return the missionaries prayed for them daily. In 744AD 17 new missionaries came from Persia to help. It is also mentioned in the Syrian church records that they sent 17 missionaries to China about this same time.

So we can see that the gospel came and spread throughout China certainly by 635 AD and by the year 780 AD a large group of Christians lived in China. As we said, this monument was found in 1625. When it was found the Emperor of China could no longer say that Christianity was a new foreign religion. It proved that the gospel had come to China 1000 years before. The discovery of this monument helped these Catholic Jesuit priests so much, that 12 years after this discovery, in 1637, there were 40,000 Christians in seven provinces of China.

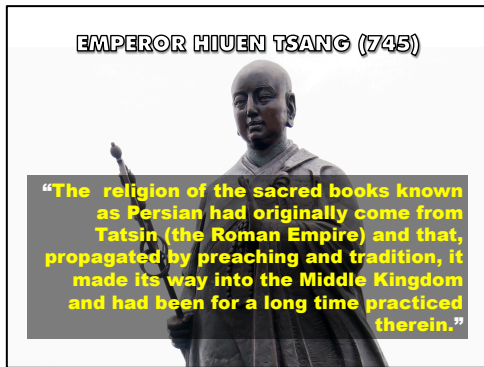


✎ In 1907 Danish scholar Frits Holm came to Xian with plans to take this monument to Europe. Here is a picture of it in its original location, sitting on a turtle pedestal. But the local authorities would not let him do that. And they moved the monument into the Beilin Museum. They also have put another copy of this monument in Xian next to a pagoda that some scholars say is the remains of a church and school that were built on that site in 640AD. ✎ **There is also a copy of this monument in the Vatican museum in Rome, another copy on the campus of Georgetown University in Washington DC and one more copy in Japan at the Shingon Buddhist Temple on Koyasan.**

Three years after the monument was built, the emperor T-ai-tsung (627-649AD) gave an Edict of Toleration for the Christians. He asked the missionaries who came to stay and teach and to establish a Bible school just outside the city. In general the emperors after him favored the Christians, many who rose to high positions in



society. Churches and monasteries were built. This continued for about 200 years.



### Evidence of Christian Activity in China (635-845AD)

✎ Also in 745AD the emperor Hiuensang made a declaration that **"the religion of the sacred books known as Persian had originally come from Tatsin (the Roman Empire) and that, propagated by preaching and tradition, it made its way into the middle kingdom and had been for a long time practiced therein."** That is the same Tatsin that we talked about before, also called Tatchin and Likan. And the early Christians in China called the TaChin Chiao, the TaChin religion on this monument.

✎ One early Chinese record says this: **"The country of Ta-ts'in is called Li-chien (Li-kin) and, as being situated on the eastern port of the sea, its territory amounts to several thousand li. . . Their kings always desired to send embassies to China, but the An-Shi (Parthians) wished to carry on trade with them in Chinese silks, and it is for this reason that they were cut off from communication. This lasted till ... (166 A.D.) when the king of Ta-ts'in, An-tun (Marcus Aurelius), sent an embassy who, from the frontier of**

**Jih-nan (Annam) offered ivory, rhinoceros horns, and tortoise. From that time dates the direct intercourse with this country."** So you can see there was Persia from at least the second century, if not earlier.

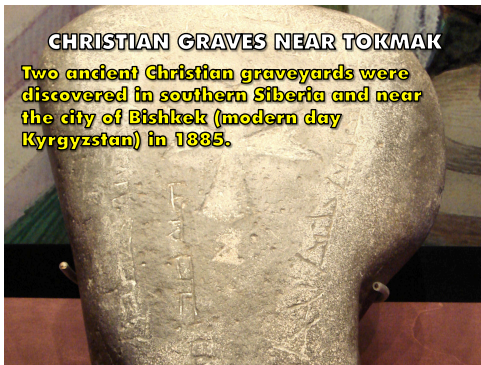
In 638 there is an ancient Chinese document with the title, *"The Jesus Messiah Discourse."* It says, "Just about that time, the One (Jesus Messiah) was born in the city of Jerusalem in the country of Fu-lin (Ephraim)."

In 732AD in the ancient Chinese Imperial records it says, "In the 9<sup>th</sup> month of the 20<sup>th</sup> year Kaiyuan (October 732) the King of Persia sent the chief Pan-na-mi (Barnubi) with the monk of great virtue, Chilieh (Cyriacus) as ambassadors with tribute." There are many many statements like this in the Chinese records to show that the evidence that here were Christian missionaries in China is not disputed.

In 845AD an edict from Chinese Emperor Wu-tsung came against all religions except Confucianism. It said, **"As to the monks and nuns who are aliens and who teach the religion of foreign countries, we command that these - over 3000 - from Ta-Chin (Syria, Christian) and Mutrufu (Mohammed) return to secular life and cease to confuse our national customs and manners."** A letter back to the teachers shows that over 2000 religious teachers went back to secular life and it appears that most of these were Christians. With that many teachers you can imagine that the number of Christians who lived in China at that time was quite large. Monasteries were closed or destroyed. All Christian leaders were forced to get other jobs. The T'ang dynasty collapsed about 60 years later in 907AD. Some travelers said they did find Christians, churches and even monasteries when they visited China after this. But it wasn't until the time of the Mongols that Christianity grew again in China.

In 852-858 Patriarch Theodore still refers to the metropolitan bishops of Samarkand, India and China.

Before the Mongols took over China the famous Ma Ching-Hsiang and governor of Hengzhou. In their genealogy records it says that "the ancestors of the Ma family were the descendants of the Niessuto'o-li (Nestorian) noble family of the western lands." So we see that the Nestorian Christians even had people who were high up in government.



**CHRISTIAN GRAVES NEAR TOKMAK**

Two ancient Christian graveyards were discovered in southern Siberia and near the city of Bishkek (modern day Kyrgyzstan) in 1885.



**LAKE ISSYKKUL**



## Ancient Graves in East Asia

Two ancient Christian graveyards were discovered in the province of Semirychensk in southern Siberia in 1885. The smaller grave was discovered south of the village of Great Tokmak. All of the headstones in this grave has crosses on it and some include writing. The second graveyard is near the city of Bishkek (in modern day Kyrgyzstan) and has 611 headstones.

Both of these graveyards are close to Lake Issykkul, which is also called the Dead Sea of Central Asia. It is 120 miles long and 40 miles across. But instead of being in a valley below sea level like the Dead Sea Lake Issykkul is up in the mountains, 5300 feet above sea level. It is known by the people of west Turkestan as Tuzkul, which means "the salt lake," as we Issykkul, which means, "the hot lake." As a result of the hot springs the temperature is as high as 85-95 degrees Fahrenheit. It is hot enough that even though this is in a very cold area the water never freezes.

The Kirghiz people in live in this area say that there are other large stones with crosses on them near the ruins of ancient villages in the valley of Chu, north of Pishpek. The dates on these graves were between 1249 and 1345AD and include Christians from the neighboring village of Almalig. Most of the writings show that these were Turkish Nestorian Christians.

Graves with crosses on them have been found in different areas of China and gravestones in the form of a cross have also been discovered in Manchuria (since 1910 this is NE China). A ancient tomb found in Manchuria in 1927 contained crosses and coins from the early eleventh century. Historical records show that those buried there were Uigurs.

It is believed there were several million Turkish Christians but only a few Christian graves with real grave descriptions. One such grave description reads, "This is the grave of Pasak – the aim of life is Jesus our redeemer." Another one says, "This is the tomb of Shelicha, the famous Exegete and Preacher who enlightened all the cloisters with Light, being the son of Exegete Peter. He was famous for his wisdom and when preaching his voice sounded like a trumpet." Among 300 gravestones there were 9 archdeacons, 8 doctors of Biblical interpretation and church leaders, 3 commentators, 46 scholars, 2 preachers and a number of priests. Often the word "believer" is added at the end of their name of the gravestone.



## Mogao Caves near Tun-Huang

The Mogao caves of western China, was sealed in 1036. It was not opened again until about 1900. When opened they found over 2,000 manuscripts, including



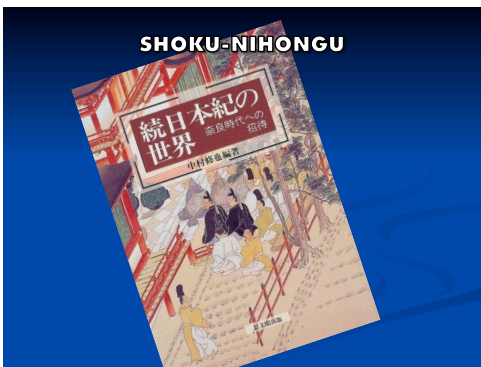
some Christian ones. Also it had a painting on its walls of a Christian bishop on horseback, carrying a bishop's rod with a cross on the end.



Also there was in the cave this silk screen painting of a robed man wearing a crown with a gold cross, with two other crosses around his neck, holding a bishop's rod. This painting is now in the British Museum in London. It seems to be beyond doubt a painting of an Oriental Christian bishop of the pre-1000 A.D. era. One thing we notice in the painting is that the right hand is held up with the thumb touching the tip of the second finger. Some people say this was an ancient sign of the Trinity with a circle representing one God without beginning or end and the remaining three fingers pointing

upwards. Buddha images and paintings of earlier centuries usually show him with hands clasped in his lap or an upraised hand with open palm. In later centuries, however, it is not unusual to see Buddha figures with the right hand raised in the posture of this painting of a Christian bishop.

Marco Polo speaks of many Christian communities scattered across the Chinese empire. At Fuzhou, a Muslim told Marco Polo about a religious community whose religion nobody understood. Marco Polo traced them and found that they were Christians. They had books and they had preserved their faith for 700 years. They had a temple, which was dedicated to three persons, painted on its walls. The three apostles celebrated were Addai, Aggai and Mari. Polo also reports of Christians churches in at least eleven other Chinese cities. The largest concentration of Christians was in the NW along the old silk road. Another area with many Christians was on the SE coast of China. There was a strong Christian community at Chinkiang between Nanking and Shanghai. At one time there were seven schools there, all of them founded about the year AD 1279 by Mar Sargis, a devout governor of that city. But after Kublai Khan died, between AD 1309 and 1333, Buddhist put pressure on the imperial court and made the Christians to surrender these schools one after the other to the Buddhists.



### Evidence of Christian Activity in Japan and Korea

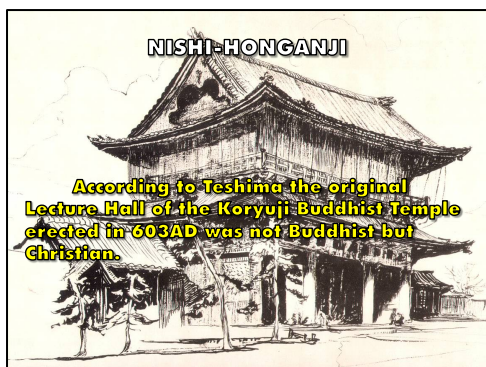
In Japan and Korea also, there is evidence of a past early Christian presence. The *Shoku-Nihongi* is an ancient history of Japan and was published by the Japanese government in 797AD. In that book it talks about the return from China in 736 of an official representative who brought with him "a Persian by the name of Limitsi and another dignitary of the church of the Luminous Religion called Kohfu." In other historical writings this guy is called Rimitsu, the physician and that he served in the court of the Japanese Emperor Shomu. The empress Komyo was very much influenced by his teaching and appears to have become a Christian herself. She later built a hospital, an orphanage and a leprosy hospital, which were common works that the traveling missionaries were doing at this time all over Asia. There is no record of Buddhist leaders or followers doing this kind of work at that time.



One of the most sacred objects of the Shingon sect of Buddhism at the Nishi-Honganji Temple in Kyoto, established by Kobo Daishi after he returned in 806 from

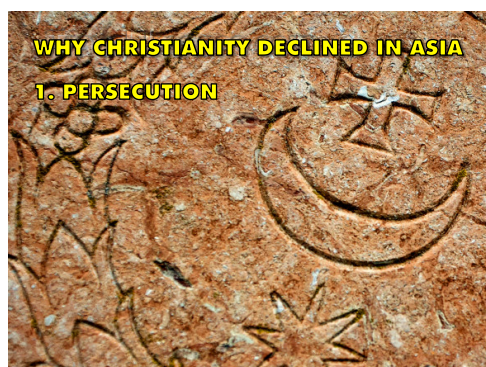
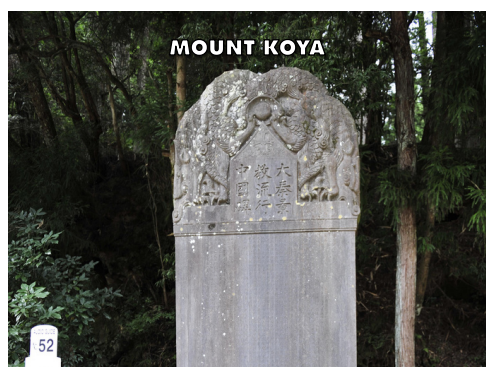
China's capital and had contact with the Christian school there, is a copy of the early

missionary manuscript, "The Lord of the Universe's Discourse on Almsgiving," a commentary on the Sermon on the Mount and other Matthew passages.



✎The oldest structure in ancient Kyoto is **the Lecture Hall of the Koryuji Buddhist Temple** (also called Uzumasa-dera), rebuilt in 1165. **According to Teshima, the original building was not Buddhist but Christian, erected in 603.** ✎It burned down and was rebuilt about 818 as the Koryuji Buddhist Temple. There are two beams from this temple, dating to the late seventh century, with crosses on them and with writing that is very similar to Syriac. These are in the Tokyo National Museum today.

✎Also every year on Mount Koya, apan the August Festival of Obon is similar to a festival that the Church of the East celebrated called the Christian All Souls Festival. Today Japanese priests still make the sign of a cross in their ceremony. Another very interesting thing is ... do you remember the Christian Monument that was made in 781 and set up in Xian China? Well, guess what? There is a copy of that same monument here on Koya-san (Koya mountain) in Japan. There are reports that many temples in Japan have "hidden treasures" that have been kept secret which include items from their ancient history. It is reported that some of those items have crosses engraved on them from this time period.



### Why Did Christianity Decline so Much in Asia?

But then after 1345 there are no more Christian gravestones in Central or East Asia. In Turkestan and China it seems that Christianity just disappeared. What happened? There are several reasons why Christianity declined so much, especially between 1000-1500AD.

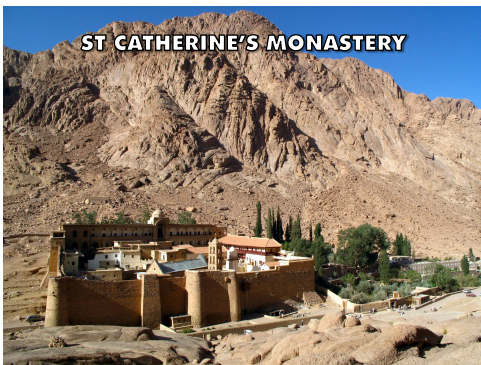
✎**1. Persecution:** One reason was because of the persecution by the followers of Islam. When Islam first came to Persia in Central Asia it did not come with sword or threat of death. First with Muhammad and then with Caliph Omar they promised safety to all the Christians living in the areas they controlled. In fact in the beginning the Christians had more peace and freedom under Mohammed then they recently had under the Persians. The Christians signed an agreement that they would pay tribute. In time of war they agreed to protect followers of Islam who were in danger. They did NOT have to fight for Islam but they agreed to NOT help the enemy. They would be loyal and obedient citizens.



✎Mohammed promised to protect the Christians and also guaranteed them complete religious freedom and to protect them from attack by their enemies. But the Christians were not allowed to evangelize the followers of

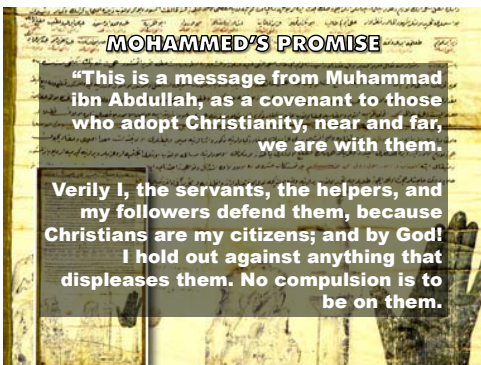


Islam. In those early days the Christians were leading citizens and businessmen and had a close relationship with government officials. One of the reasons that Mohammed was so kind to the Christians is that at one point one of his teachers had been a Christian.



ST CATHERINE'S MONASTERY

✚ In 628 AD, a group from St. Catherine's Monastery came to Muhammed and requested his protection. He wrote a document. St. Catherine's Monastery is located at the foot of Mt. Sinai. It is the world's oldest monastery. It has a huge collection of Christian manuscripts, second only to the Vatican, and is a world heritage site. It also has the oldest collection of Christian icons. It's a treasure house of Christian history that has remained safe for 1400 years under Muslim protection.

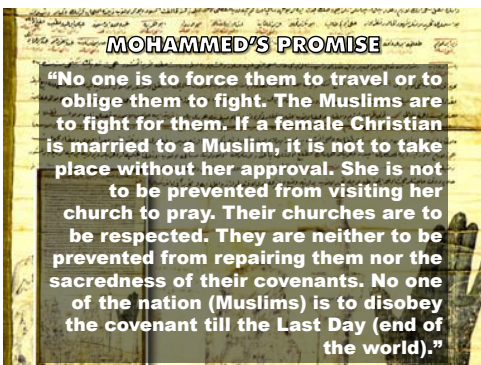


MOHAMMED'S PROMISE

"This is a message from Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them. Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by God! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them.

✚ Here is what he wrote: *"This is a message from Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them. Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by God! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them.*

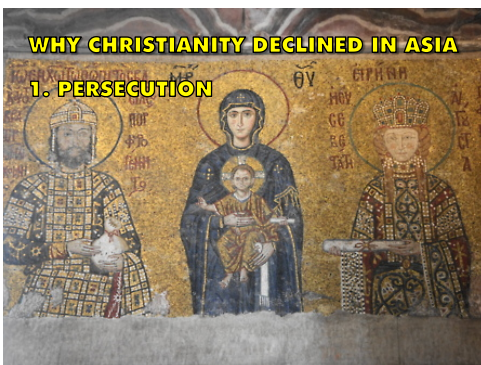
✚ *Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or carry anything from it to the Muslims' houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God's covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies & have my secure charter against all they hate.*



MOHAMMED'S PROMISE

"No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world)."

✚ *No one is to force them to travel or oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are not to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day."* The first and last sentences tell us this promise wasn't just for St Catherine's Monastery. It's for all Christians for all time.

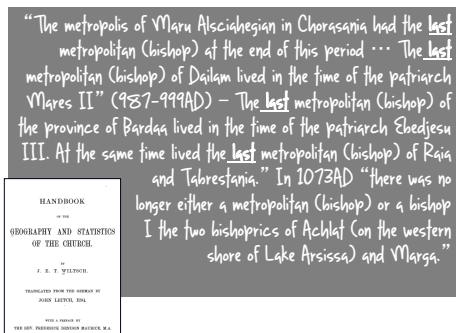


WHY CHRISTIANITY DECLINED IN ASIA

1. PERSECUTION

their large homes into Islamic mosques. The rich were strongly opposed to Islam but the poor were won over by gifts. Arabic became the main language they used instead of Syriac. The Islamic leaders took over all top government jobs and made it easy for Islamic businessmen to succeed while those who did not follow Islam had a more difficult time. For example, they had to pay more taxes. Eventually there were mosques in almost every town along the major trade routes even though the majority of the people were NOT Muslim. But after 1000AD Islam began to be favored over Christianity.

**Asian Church History: Lecture 6 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2012**  
**Steve Nicholes, Professor:**

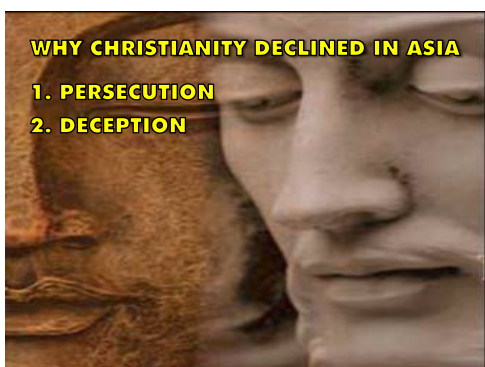


➤ One significant comment of how Christianity declined in Central Asia during this time is by a guy named Wiltsch in his book *Geography and Statistics of the Church*. He writes, **“The metropolis of Maru Alsciahegian in Chorasania had the last metropolitan (bishop) at the end of this period ... The last metropolitan of Dailam lived in the time of the patriarch Mares II” (987-999AD) - The last metropolitan of the province of Bardaa lived in the time of the patriarch Ebedjesu III. At the same time lived the last metropolitan of Raia and Tabrestania.” In 1073AD “there was no longer either a metropolitan (bishop) or a bishop I the two bishoprics of Achlat (on the western shore of Lake Arsissa) and Marga.”**

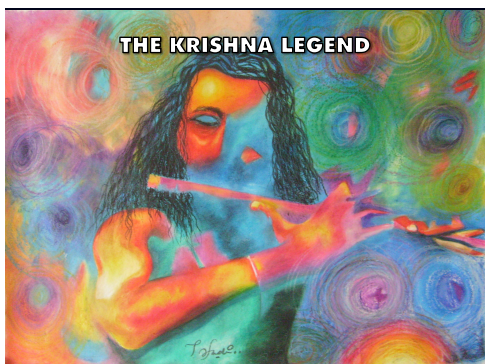


➤ About this same time in 1001AD Islam invaded India under Mahmood of Ghazni. The bloodshed was huge. Hundreds of thousands lost their lives. By 1344AD Christianity almost disappeared from all India north of the Vindhya mountains. The persecution continued and by 1784AD in central India 30,000-50,000 Christians were forced to be circumcised and removed from the country. Many Indian Christians had their ears and noses removed.

Buddhism started in India but mianly was driven out of India about 1000AD. 500 years after Buddha died Buddhism divided into two main parts (just like there are Catholics and Protestants in Christianity and just like there are Shiites and Sunni). In Buddhism there are the Theravada Buddhists that are in Shi Lanka and SE Asia and there are the Reformed Buddhists in Korea, Japan and China.



**2. Deception:** ➤ A second reason for the decline of Christianity in Asia between 1000-1500AD is the way that other religions in Asia, mainly Buddhism and Hinduism changed their teachings and history to seem to be similar to Christianity. Buddhists claim to have writings on paintings and pillars and tablets in India dating back before 300BC. But there is good reason to believe that many of those that are of Buddhist origin cannot be proven this far back. And some of what they call Buddhist writings have phrases of Christian origin and may have been written by Indian Christians.

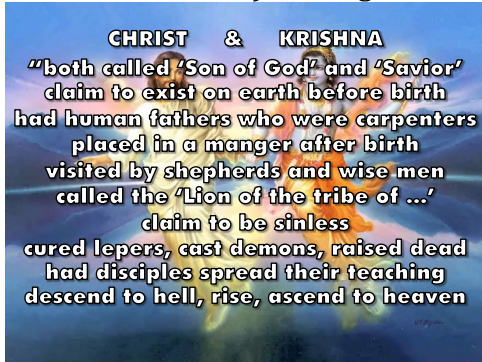


**The Krishna Legend**

➤ Along with this is the Krishna legend. When the Brahmins saw that the Christians believed in a Christ who was God becoming man and that God the Father sent Christ down to the earth to show special favor to man and to redeem man from sin, “the Brahmins invented, not one but several incarnations” (or Christ-type) “making it appear that they” (were greater than) “the Christians and all other nations” proving that they received the greatest favor from God. The idea of Krishna began and grew between 600-750AD (even though they



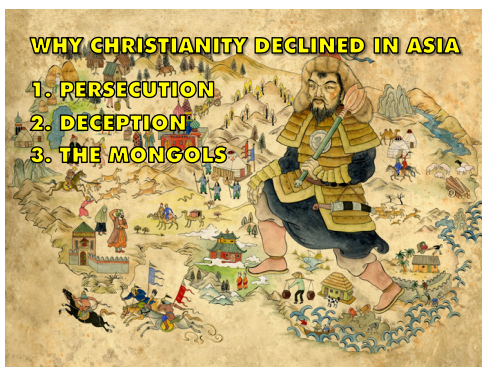
claim Krishna himself came into existence about 3000BC, but very hard to prove the historical dates in Hinduism). During this time Christianity was growing rapidly in India.



And the story of Krishna and the story of Christ are very similar. Even the name Krishna is similar to Christ. Krishna is the second person in the Hindu trinity (Brama, Vishnu and Shiva). They are both called the Son of God. Both are called Savior. Both claimed to exist before their birth on earth. Both had human fathers who were carpenters. The father of both took their mothers when they were pregnant to a place to pay taxes. Both were placed in a manger basket after birth. Both were visited at birth by wise men and shepherds. Both were warned by

an angel that a local leader had decreed for him to be killed. Both are called “the seed of the woman bruising the serpents head.” Both are called “the lion of the tribe of.” For Jesus it is the tribe of Judah. For Krishna it is the tribe of Saki. Both said, “I am the Resurrection.” Both claimed to be without sin. Both were said to cure lepers, cast out demons and raise the dead. Both had disciples spread their teachings. Both celebrated a last supper. Both claimed to descend into hell, be resurrected and ascend into heaven.

In 845AD when Emperor Wu Tsung was on the throne in China he destroyed Buddhism, demolishing 4600 monasteries and made 265,000 monks and nuns get another job in society. It was during this time that he also expelled all the Ta-chin monks as well. By 987 there is a record that 7 years before a Christian monk and 5 others had been sent to China to check on how the church was doing. He wrote, “Christianity has become quite extinct in China. The Christians have perished in various ways. The church has been destroyed.” This does NOT prove that it was that way all over China. But in some parts of China this did happen.



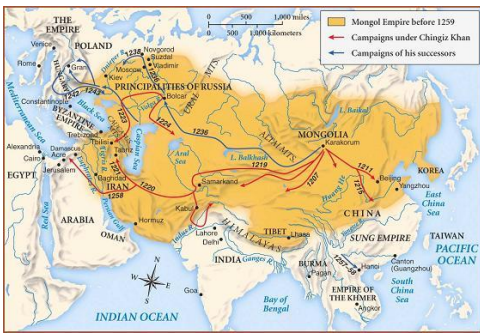
**3. The Mongols:** To understand why Christianity almost disappeared between 1000-1500AD in Asia, especially in East Asia you have to know about the Mongols. The Mongols came to power in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century (early 1200s) AD under the leadership of Jenghiz Khan. They were not against Christians. In fact there were many of the Mongols, even the leaders, who said they were Christians. One writer said that the Mongols had a standing army of 600,000 and that he saw 800 chapels on wheels in their camp. Westerners say that the Mongols came from the Scythians or Huns. They themselves were called Mongols, Turks or Tartars.



The people usually called Mongols were not all members of the same tribe but a mixture of people from the Tartars, the Uigurs and the Turks. There was many Christians among the Mongols and more than one of their emperors were known as followers of Jesus of Nazareth.

The most famous of the Mongols was Jenghis Khan. **There were four great Khans of the Mongol Empire:** The word Khan means “emperor.” After him his son, Ogotai rules. And after Ogotai Guyuk. Gengis and Ogotai were

not Christians. But they allowed Christians to worship freely. But **Guyuk “was a true Christian and in his day”** was very proud of how many Christians were in his kingdom. After Guyuk, his



cousin Hulaku ruled. And after him his brother, Mangu. **Mangu was called, “a follower and defender of the religion of Jesus.”**

➤ During the eleventh and twelfth centuries went all thru Turkestan and Mongolia and had bishops in the provinces of Kashgar, Nuakit, Turkestan, Gunda, Tangut and Mongolia

### Jenghiz Khan

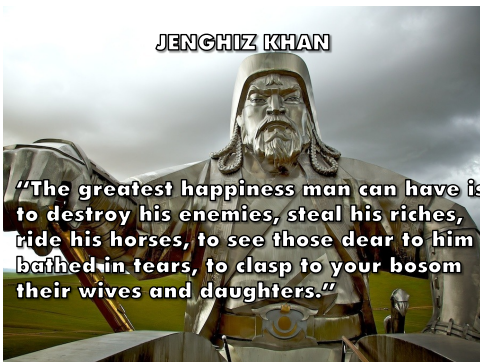
➤ He was born Timujin (which means finest steel) in 1167. He was the son of a Mongol tribal chief. His father was poisoned by a rival tribe when he was 9 years old. After that in his own words, he would never be a child again. By the time he was 20 years old he had defeated the Merkite tribe. Starting in 1206 he was called Jenghiz Khan (means universal emperor). He conquered many lands and united the nomadic tribes around NE Asia into the Mongol Empire. This is a picture of his statute in Mongolia today.

For the next 6 years he went to war with China. When the emperor of North China heard that Genghiz Khan was coming he sent this message, “Our empire is as wide as the sea. Yours is only a handful of sand. How can we fear you?” Genghiz Khan took his troops around the great wall of China.

He was famous for being cruel. When he took a city he normally killed all the men and boys and kidnapped the woman and girls. ➤ His answer on how to be happy: **“The greatest happiness man can have is to destroy his enemies, steal his riches, ride his horses, to see those dear to him bathed in tears, to clasp to your**



JENGHIZ KHAN



JENGHIZ KHAN

**“The greatest happiness man can have is to destroy his enemies, steal his riches, ride his horses, to see those dear to him bathed in tears, to clasp to your bosom their wives and daughters.”**

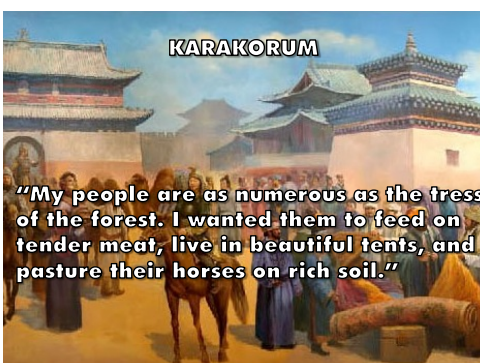
**bosom their wives and daughters.”**



JENGHIZ DEGEATS BEIJING

➤ After taking the villages in his way he set his sites on Yanjing (modern Beijing), with a population of 350,000. It was surrounded by a wall 12 meters (36 feet) high with over 900 guard towers. At first Kenghiz surrounded the city and would not let any supplies in. Thousands starved to death. Then he attacked and destroyed Beijing leaving a mountain of bones.

➤ After China Jenghiz Khan made the city of Karakorum in central Mongolia into a great trading and cultural center. He wanted his people to benefit from his victories. He said, **“My people are as numerous as the trees in the forest. I wanted them to feed on tender meat, live in beautiful tents and pasture their horses on rich soil.”** He brought medical knowledge into his kingdom from the Christian Nestorian missionaries. He advanced education (reading and writing) and had scholars write a historical record. He set up a legal court system. He set up trade routes, a postal system with horses every 25 kilometers and hotels every 100 kilometers.



KARAKORUM

**“My people are as numerous as the tress of the forest. I wanted them to feed on tender meat, live in beautiful tents, and pasture their horses on rich soil.”**

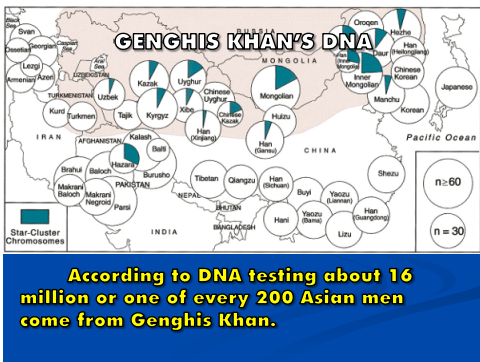
He sent ambassadors to Persia. In the summer of



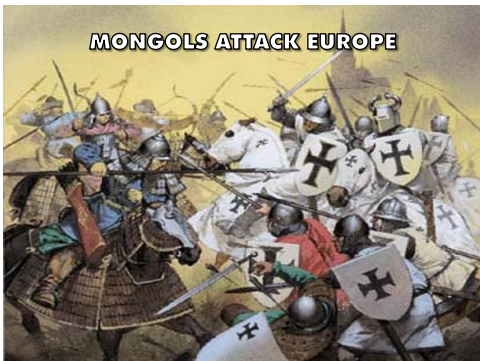
1218 one messenger brought back a package that changed the future of the Mongols. It was the head of Genghiz Khan's ambassador. Jenghiz responded by sending an army of 200,000 to invade Persia. Every Persian town that did not submit was burned to the ground. He killed over 1,000,000 men, women and children.



After China he conquered Tibet, Manchuria, Turkestan, Kurdistan, Khuzistan, Iran, Iraq Azerbaijan and Afghanistan. And they killed large amounts of people – 1,600,000 died in Herat. 1,200,000 were killed in Khwarizm. After Jenghiz Khan's son-in-law was killed in Nishapur, his daughter ordered that everyone in that city must die. 1,747,000 died in Nishapur. And the skulls of all men, women and children were piled there in pyramids. 1,300,000 died in Merv. All of these cities had strong Christian communities, with head bishops. He killed about 75% of the people of Iran, possibly 10-15 million people. In a few short years the Mongols conquered about 25% of the world – from Japan to Germany. **His empire was 4 times the size of Alexander the Great and twice the size of the Roman Empire. And 1.5 times larger than the USA.**



**One interesting statistic is that according to DNA testing about 16 million or 1 of every 200 Asian men come from Jenghis Khan.** In Mongolia it is 1 in 10. One reason he had so many descendants is he killed so many of the males in the Asia region. Another reason is that he had so many wives and concubines, 2000-3000. And his sons after him also had harems like this.

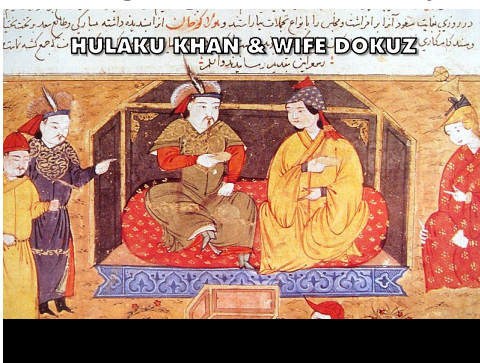


### Ogotai Khan

When Jenghiz died (1227AD) his son Ogotai took his place. In 1230AD his armies invaded Korea (1230-1255), South China and all the way to Europe, including southern Russia, Poland, Moravia, Bohemia, Austria and Hungary. They wiped out the great Hungarian army, which had 100,000 troops. He did all this in Europe in about 2 months. Ogedai had doubled the size of the empire and established Karakorum in NW Mongolia as the official capital city. Ogotai was poisoned by a mistress and died in 1241AD. According to their rules and culture they all had to return back to Mongolia to the capital of Karakorum for a council to elect the new khan. Because of that Europe was saved.

### Guyuk Khan

Ogotai was succeeded by his son Guyuk who immediately stopped the killing of masses of people. Guyuk's mom was a Christian. His camps were full of bishops, priests and monks. He had a chapel with a cross on it in front of his tent. Many people thought that the whole Mongol Empire would become Christian.

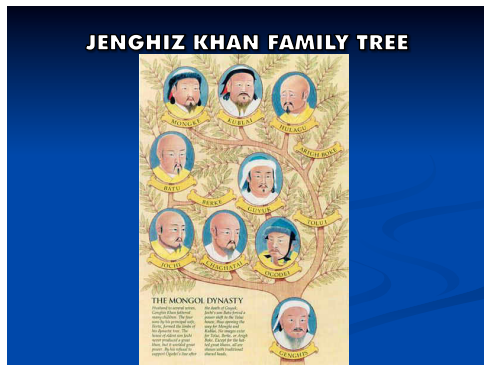


### Mangu Khan

Guyuk died in 1248AD and was replaced by his cousin Mangu. Mangu's brother, Hulaku Khan captured the city of Baghdad (1258) and killed more than 200,000 people. But his wife, Doqus, was a Christian and so he was

not antichristian. Mangu's wife would go to the Christian chapel with all her children for Christian services and sometimes Mangu would attend with her.

Hulaku's grandson, Ahmed, followed Islam. He became a violent persecutor against Christians.



## Kublai Khan

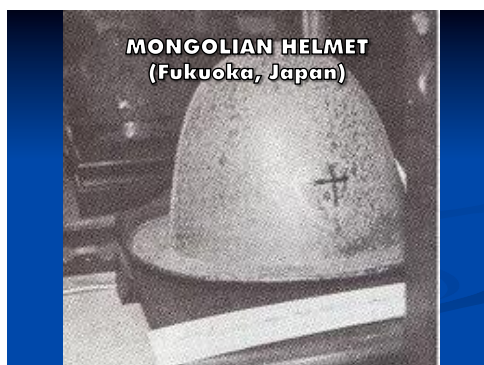
➤ The first group were called the great Khans. The next group were called the Heathen Khans. There was 8 of them. Hulaku's other brother, Kublai who was a leader for the Mongols in China (1259-1294). He somehow became the new supreme leader of all the Mongols in 1259AD, even over Ahmed. ➤ **Next to Jenghiz Kublai was the next most famous of all the Mongols. He was also the first ruler of a united China.** ➤ **Kublai Khan controlled Korea by 1259AD.**

➤ **Kublai Khan tried to conquer Japan twice.** He first sent emissaries to the Imperial Court in Kyoto asking for Japan to pay tribute or taxes to them. But Japan's military refused. And to make their message clear they beheaded 5 of the emissaries.

➤ **The first time (1274)** he prepared to attack Japan from Korea with 900 ships. But **the winds were so strong they decided to turn back.**

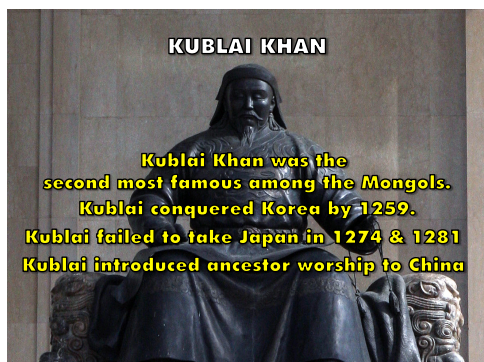
Then **the second time (1281)** they sent two armies - one with 900 ships with 40,000 troops sent from Masan, Korea. The second group came from southern China with 3,500 ships (each about 73 meters (240 feet) long. With a total of 100,000 troops. Then **a typhoon came and all of these boats were shipwrecked and 100,000 men died ... so he did not conquer Japan.**

➤ Here is a picture of a Mongolian general's helmet that was found on the beach after they Mongol army retreated in the battle of 1281. You can see on the helmet there is a Christian cross. This is displayed in the Nichiren Museum in Fukuoka, Japan.



The Mongols controlled Korea to about 1350. During this time the Korean royal family married into the families of the Mongol Khans. The Mongols used Jeju Island to raise horses.

Kublai Khan did however have many countries under his control including Korea, China, India and Tibet. He tried his best to conquer nations thru peaceful ways, not thru war. He loved literature. He became a Buddhist. ➤ **And it is said that he was the one who introduced ancestor worship to China.** He moved the Mongolian capital from Karakorum to Khanbalik (modern Beijing).



Ahmed grabbed him and put him to death in 1294AD after ruling for 35 years. Baydu was the fifth son of Hulaku and was a Mongol commander and khan in Iran. He liked Christians, allowed churches to travel with their camps and wore a Christian cross around his neck. He was killed in 1295 mainly because he liked the Christians and hated the Muslims.

➤ Ghazan Khan took over after Baidu. He publicly declared he was a Muslim. He began to destroy all Christian churches and Buddhist temples. Within 10 years





Islam was the dominant religion in Persia. The Mongol dynasty lasted until 1369AD. It was because the grandsons of Jenghis Khan started fighting each other that brought about the end of the Mongol Empire.

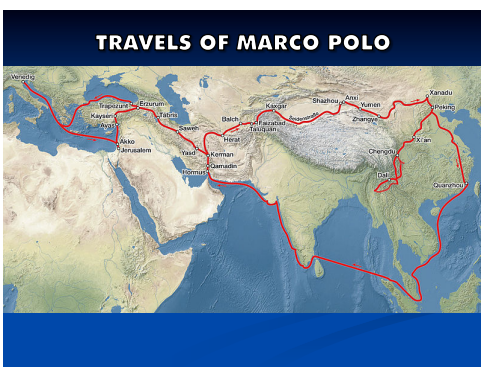
### The Monks of Kublai Khan

✚ In the last 1270s, two Christian monks (Rabban Sawma and Markos) of the Uigar tribe of Inner Mongolia (northern China) set out from Beijing to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Beijing was known to them as Khanbalik, the capital of Kublai Khan (1260-1294). The direct route to Jerusalem was blocked because of a war. And they ended up going thru Azerbaijan to a monastery in Baghdad. Markos became the head of the Church of the East until he died in 1317AD and Rabban Sawma was sent as an ambassador from Khan Argon of the Mongols in China to Byzantium, Rome, France and England.



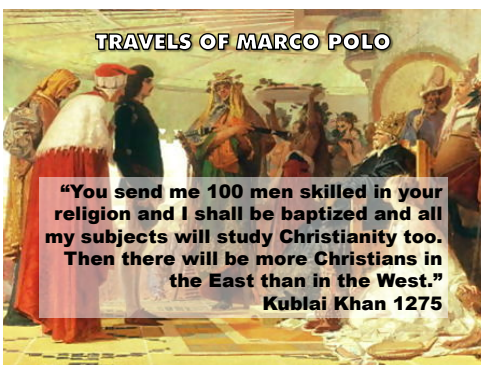
### Marco Polo

✚ The famous traveler Marco Polo reached the Mongol capital of Khanbalik (modern-day Beijing) in 1275, encountering many Christians on his way from the Middle East. He speaks of Christians amongst the Kurds and Christians living further east in a number of Silk Road cities. In Samarkand, he describes the building of a great church dedicated to John the Baptist, which was erected to celebrate the conversion of one of the khan leaders to Christianity. Christians are also mentioned in Chinese Turkestan. In China proper, Polo tells us of Christians in many cities, as well as in Tenduc (modern-day Inner Mongolia), in a Chinese province, near Burma, in modern-



day Hangzhou. He also describes Christians in India, as well as those living on the Maldiv Islands, all under the Christian head bishop in Baghdad.

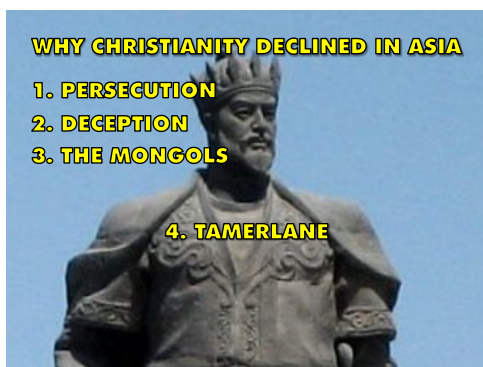
✚ When Marco Polo visited Kublai Khan the Mongol leader was so interested about what Marco Polo said about Jesus that he said, **“You send me 100 men skilled in your religion and I shall be baptized and all my subjects will study Christianity too. Then there will be more Christians in the East than in the West.”** When Marco returned to Venice, Italy he brought this request from Kublai Khan to Pope Gregory X for missionaries to instruct his people in Christianity.



Marco returned with his brother, his son and two Roman Catholic (Dominican) missionaries. Kublai Khan warmly welcomed them. They stayed in China 17 years. Marco wrote that he was like the governor of the city of Yangzhou. He said that he saw hundreds of Christian churches.

# Asian Church History: Lecture 7 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2012

Steve Nicholes, Professor:



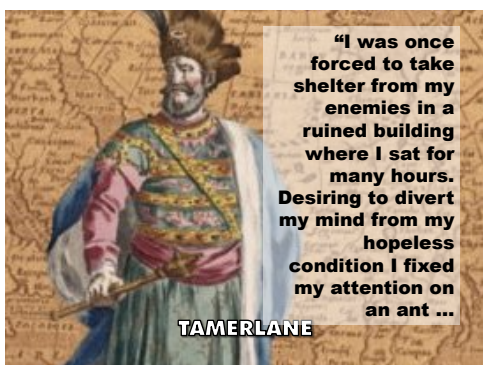
**4. Tamerlane.** The final cause of the disappearing of Christianity from Central and northern Asia and Mongolia is to be found when a guy named Tamerlane came to power.

He was born in Subz, a city of Kesch, in the year 1336AD. His name was Timour (which means “iron”) and he was the son of a chief of a Turkish tribe that were serving under the Khans. When he was 30 years of age, he worked his way up to become the leader of his area, of Transoxania, where he made Samarkand his capital.

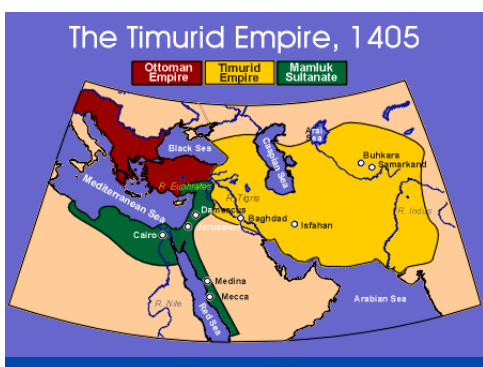


In one of his battles he was wounded and had a bad leg for the rest of his life. So he was known as Timour the lame, which became Tamerlane. He was a very large man with a big head, his skin tone was red and white. He had long white hair. That was the color his hair was from birth. In his ears he wore two very expensive diamonds. And he always had a very sad and serious look on his face that no one forgot.

One of his characteristics was her perseverance. He explained this himself by telling a story from a time when he was young. He said, “I once was forced to take shelter from my enemies in a ruined building where I sat for many hours. Desiring to divert my mind from my hopeless condition I fixed my attention on an ant that was carrying a grain of corn, larger than itself, up a high wall. 69 times the grain fell to the ground, but the insect persevered and the 70th time it reached the top of the wall. This sight gave me courage at the moment and I have never forgotten the lesson it gave.”



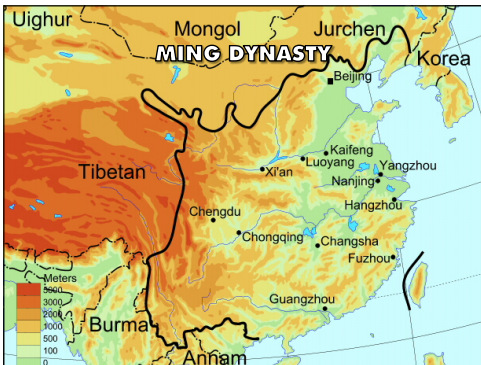
Tamerlane was a follower of Islam (Sunni) and bitterly opposed everything Christian. In 1390 Timour invaded Persia with a large army and overthrew the descendants of Hulaku and destroyed their capital city. When he conquered a city, like the Mongols he was very brutal and killed lots of people. Then he was famous for collecting all the heads, the skulls of the people he killed and stacking them into a pyramid outside their city. In 1401 outside Baghdad, the capital city of the Church of the East at this time, he made a pyramid from 90,000 heads. He conquered NW India, the Stan countries, Persia & Syria. He conquered areas of Russia, including Moscow. When what he called “obnoxious Christians” sought refuge in the caves of the mountains, it was immediately decided to hunt them from their dens and to destroy them. Every church built of stone was completely leveled to the ground (over 700 of them).





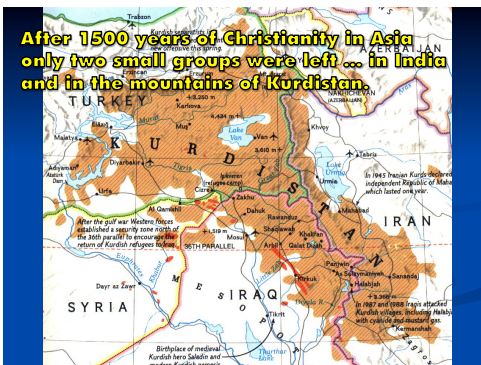
When he invaded Georgia, he compelled the Christian prince, Isocrates, to declare himself a follower of Muhammad and most of his people to follow. The Christians who refused were killed, their churches destroyed and all the sacred vessels and furniture were burned. In Anatolia (present day Turkey) the Christians basically became slaves.

He was in the middle of conquering China with an army of 1,800,000 men when he suddenly got very sick and died in 1405AD. He is buried in a large tomb in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. But under he reign Christianity was almost completely destroyed from the greater part of Asia and Islam was established in most of this area. Basically Christians either converted to Islam or died. Between 1200-1500AD, according to one estimate, the number of Asian Christians fell from 21 to 3.4 million.



### The Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

➤ In 1369, after the Tartars the Ming dynasty came to power. They were very anti-Christian. Christianity was a foreign religion to them. **One of the big reasons they were against Christians was that the Christians would not practice ancestor worship.** One year after the Mings came into power the Christians living in China, whether Roman Catholic or Nestorian, either had to flee the country, publicly deny Christianity or hide in a secret society. The Mings ruled China for more than 250 years.



### The Remnants

After 1500 years of Christianity in Asia only two small groups were left ... in India and in the mountains of Kurdistan.

After 1500 years of Christianity there was only two main pockets of Christians left to be seen. ➤ One was in the mountains of Kurdistan and the other in India. This is almost back to the way it was in 100AD when the first missionaries went to Edessa and India. At this time Christian mission work in the west was exploding and in the east it was so small. Who would ever have guessed that 500 years later Christianity in Asia would come back as larger or larger than the churches in the west.

SHIMUN FAMILY				
Apostolic Succession Of The Catholicos Patriarchs of the Church Of The East From the House of d'both Mar Shimun (Starting with Mar Timotheus II - 1383 Until Mar Eshai Shimun XXII - 1975)				
Mar Timotheus II 1328-1329	Mar Theodos II 1329-1339	Mar Theodos III 1339-1364	Mar Shimun III 1364-1392	Mar Shimun IV 1392-1407
Mar Eshai III 1407-1423	Mar Shimun V 1423-1441	Mar Shimun VI 1441-1459	Mar Eshai V 1459-1519	Mar Eshai Shimun VII 1519-1551
Mar Eshai Shimun IX (the Elder) 1551-1584	Mar Theodos Shimun X 1584-1590	Mar Theodos Shimun XI 1590-1600	Mar Eshai Shimun XII 1600-1633	Mar Eshai Shimun XIII 1633-1689
Mar Youkhal Shimun XIV 1689-1692	Mar Eshai Shimun XV 1692-1700	Mar Shimun (Catholikos) Shimun XVI 1700-1740	Mar Eshai (Catholikos) Shimun XVII 1740-1760	Mar Youkhal (Catholikos) Shimun XVIII 1760-1829
Mar Youkhal Shimun XIX 1829-1900	Mar Youkhal Shimun XX 1900-1918	Mar Youkhal Shimun XXI 1918-1918	Mar Eshai Shimun XXII 1918-1975	

There is a record that two Christians from India traveled all the way to the mountain village of Gagarta (modern city of Cizre), NW of Mosel. They wanted to meet the head of the Church of the East, Shimun V. They came to ask for bishops who could help restore the relationship of the church between India and Persia. These two were ordained as bishops and brought two monks (John & Thomas) from the monastery back to India with them.



There was a group who escaped Tamerlane's killings and hid in the mountains of Kurdistan for several hundred years. An estimated 100,000 of them are still alive in that part of the world today.

➤ The Church of the East in Kurdistan traces their church fathers back for 600 years. Most of them take the name Shimun and come from the same family line. Here is a chart showing all the church fathers from Kurdistan for 600 years. ➤ Here are pictures of the last couple of leaders – Shimun the 22<sup>nd</sup>. ➤ And Shimun the 23<sup>rd</sup> when

he went on a trip to India.

Even in that late 15<sup>th</sup> century (1400s) Mar Shimun sent four bishops as missionaries back into China. In 1551AD they split into two groups, each with a patriarch or head leader. One group was recognized by Rome and called **the Chaldean Christians**. The other group was called **the Nestorian Christians**.

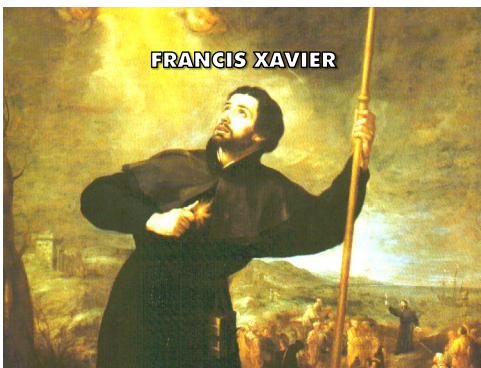
They live in NE Syria, SE Turkey, and NW Iran but are NOT a missionary-type group at all these days. In 1842 about 10,000 of these Christians were brutally killed by the Turks.

In Malabar, India in 1798AD The Islamic ruler Mysore went into Travancore as far as Alwaye and destroyed 27 of the most ancient churches destroying Christians and Hindus alike. It is said that 10% of all Christians in that region died in this persecution.

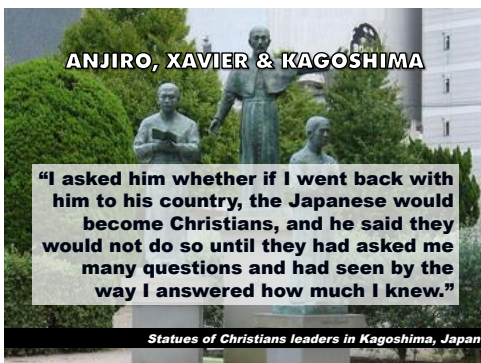
We have seen that **Christianity was almost eliminated** from north and central Asia as a result of persecution and invasion **by Islam, the Mongols and Tamerlane**. The elimination was so **complete that except for a few tombstones and ruins of cities there is almost nothing else left to see**.

Cosmas in his *Christian Topography* tells us that the early missionaries had made it to Burma and Thailand even before the 6<sup>th</sup> century (500sAD) so that he was able to report Christian churches in those countries at an early date.

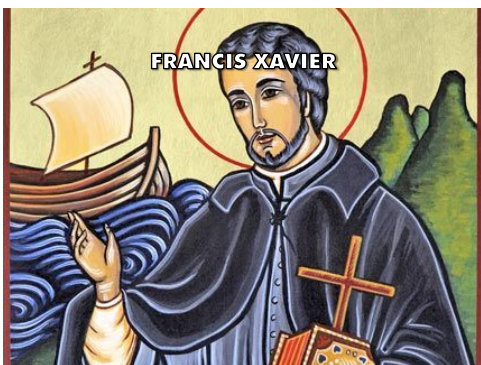
### **The Christian Century in Japan (1549-1650): Xavier**



A Japanese guy by the name of Anjiro was accused of killing someone, probably by accident, and went and hid in a Buddhist temple. Then he got on a ship going for Malaysia. On the ship he told his story to the ship captain who was a Christian. ↘ The ship captain told him he needed to tell his story to Francis Xavier. When he arrived in Indonesia Anjiro got on another ship going back to Japan but that ship was in a storm. Because of that he ended up going to the East Indies and meeting Francis Xavier. And because of that meeting Francis Xavier, a Jesuit priest, ended up going to Japan.



↘ Before going Xavier questioned Anjiro about the possibilities for Christian mission in Japan. And it is interesting to read him tell what happened: "I asked him whether if I went back with him to his country, the Japanese would become Christians, and he said they would not do so until they had asked me many questions and had seen by the way I answered how much I knew. ↘ Most of all, they would want to see if I practiced what I preached and believed ... then, after watching me for 6 months, the king, the nobility, and all other people of discretion would become Christians, for the Japanese, he said, are totally guided by the law of reason."

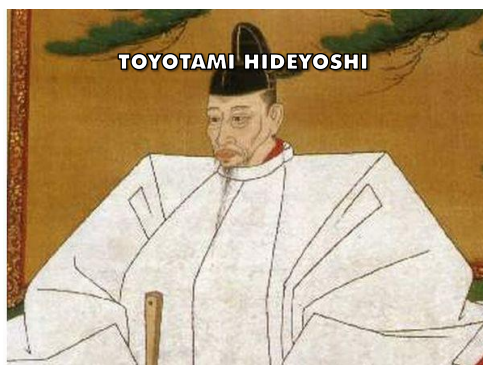


↘ Xavier spent only 2 years and 3 months in Japan (1549-1552), but in that short time he laid the foundation for the next 200 years of Catholic missions in Asia and especially the Jesuit missionary methods.

In 1552AD when Xavier left Japan the number of Christians was somewhere between 800-3000. **In 1563 a governor of Kyushu, Omura Sumitada became a Christian**. During the next 10 years 20,000 in his area professed faith in Christ and were baptized. And then **the**



governor gave the Jesuits the whole fishing village of Nagasaki as a gift. It became the center of the Jesuit Catholics. By 1579 over 50,000 Christians were from that area. By 1582 there were over 150,000 Christians in all of Japan.



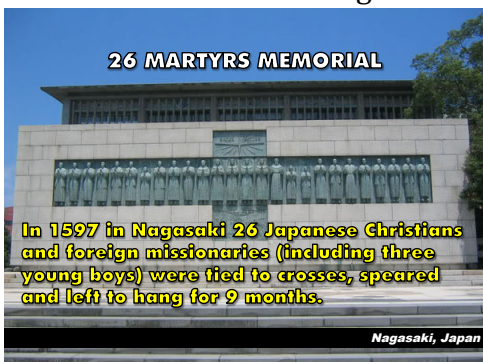
### Hideyoshi

➡ Then in 1582 Toyotami Hideyoshi, called the greatest military commander in Japanese history, unified all the clans of Japan into one nation for the first time. In the beginning his court and army were filled with openly Christian advisors and generals. His personal doctor, his treasurer and his administrative secretary were all Christians too. He once told one of the Jesuit leaders that he might even give an order that the western half of all Japan, including Kyushu become Christian. **Two of the**

**most famous Japanese generals (Takayama Ukon and Kuroda Yoshitaka) were Christians and they would lead their troops with crosses on their helmets and on their banners.** It was popular in that time and place for people to say they were Christian. In central Japan two sons and a grandson of the governor of Kyoto became Christians. A son of the emperor surprised everyone and was said to have become a Christian.

Then suddenly in the summer of 1587 Hideyoshi gave an edict ... a decree. He declared that the Christian priests were as deceitful and treasonous as the Buddhist monks. He said that all missionaries had to leave the country. Only the foreigners who were businessmen could stay. He said that any Jesuits who did not leave within 20 days would be executed. Mission property, especially in the Christian centers of Takayama Ukon and Kuroda Yoshitaka would be taken by the government. All Japanese Christians were commanded to deny the Christian faith. The popular Christian generals were sent away into exile. But then Hideyoshi never did any of these things. There were 120 foreign Catholic priests in the country. 117 of them stayed and nothing happened to them.

In 1590 a leader of the Jesuits brought gifts from Europe including an Arabian stallion and a printing press. But even though they published Christian materials one thing the Catholics did not do during these 100 years was to print a Japanese Bible.



**In 1597** a ship called the *San Felipe* traveling from Manila, Philippines to Acapulco accidentally got blown off course and stuck on the island of Shikoku, Japan. That ship was loaded with guns, ammunition and 7 Catholic missionaries. And word came to the king that the pilot had said, if the Japanese tried to take the ship it would start a war. Hideyoshi was angry and demanded that the **missionaries** plus 19 others, including some local **Japanese Christians** be arrested. ➡ In Nagasaki these **26 were tied to crosses** and were **pierced with spears** so they would die quickly. Included were 3 young boys, ages 12, 13 and 15 years old. Their bodies were **left hanging on these crosses for all to see for 9 months.**



➡ Within one year Hideyoshi died and Tokugawa Ieyasu took his place. In the beginning Christians had freedom again. In the next 2 years another 70,000 Japanese were baptized as Christians. And in some areas where there was a Christian governor the Christians were multiplying so fast that there was a fear that this would threaten the national unity of Japan. Ieyasu said that no

more governors could become Christian.

## The Beginning of the End

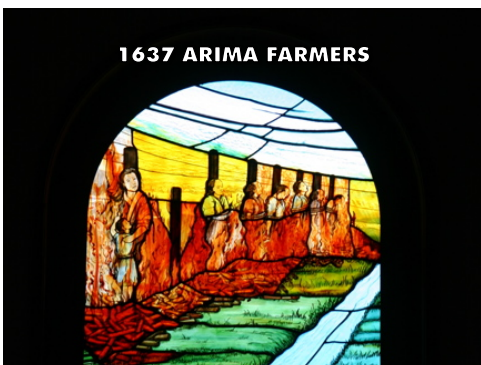
The year 1614 is often called the beginning of the end of early Japanese Christianity. In January Ieyasu ordered all Christian churches had to close, all foreign Christian missionaries had to leave Japan, all practice of Christianity both public and private had to stop immediately. The reason, he said, was that Christianity opposes all of Japan's great religions: Buddhism, Shinto and Confucianism. He also said that Christianity was threatening Japan's possession of its own land and its aim was to overthrow the Japanese government. By this time there were 300,000 Christians in Japan. That year churches were burned, demolished or closed. Most of the foreign missionaries left Japan. During the next 30 years the Japanese Christians were systematically burned, strangled, starved, tortured or driven underground.



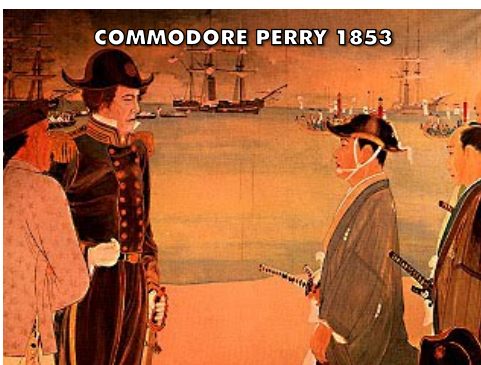
One historian writes that under Ieyasu the foreign missionaries were expelled but no one was killed. Ieyasu died in 1616 and under his son, Hidetada about 100 Christians were killed every year (about 1 every 3 days) but usually not tortured. Only one time in 1622 back in the Christian city of Nagasaki 23 Christians, mostly Japanese, but some Koreans were slow roasted to death on stakes. The wives and children of these men were beheaded nearby.



The next year Hidetada died and his son, Iemitsu, became the worst. He enjoyed watching to see if torture would make a Christian deny his faith or not. By 1651 there were at least 4045 publicly documented martyrdoms and the governor of Nagasaki made sure that there was no visible sign of Christianity left in his city – the same city that had been an openly Christian city before. Some Christians were forced to wear a straw raincoat with their hands tied behind their back and then the raincoat was set on fire. Some were hung upside down in a pit of dung for hours or even days until they died.



In 1637 a group of 37,000 farmers in the Christian province of Arima, whose wives and daughters had been tortured, revolted against the government. 100,000 Samurai troops came against them. They carried banners with small red crosses and shouted, "Jesus." When they ran out of ammunition and food the samurai army massacred them – men, women and children. But this victory became humiliating to the Japanese military. In 1639 an edict was given that Japan was closed to Portugal, where the Catholic missionaries had come from and this was the end of the Christian century in Japan.



Japan didn't open to the west for over 200 years. Then in 1853 Commodore Perry came with four ships into Tokyo and asked Japan to open a port and allow them to set up a trade office and to trade with the US. It shocked the people but finally Emperor Meiji agreed. Within 5-10 years missionaries came again. This time it included many Protestant

Within 5-10 years missionaries



missionaries. In 1858 The Japanese government allowed foreigners to have freedom of religion but they were NOT allowed to preach this faith to Japanese.

### Christianity Reappears in Japan

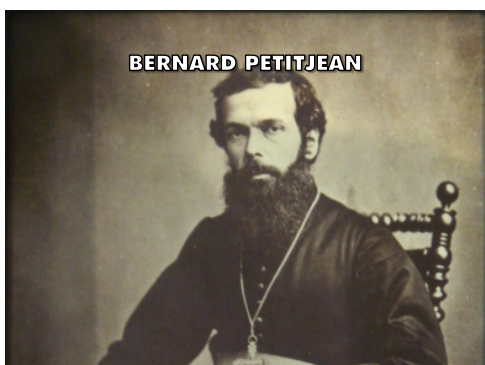
In 1863 Roman Catholic priests returned to Nagasaki, where 250 years before had been a Christian center of Jesuit missions in Japan. ↘



URAKAMI CHURCH REBUILT

↘ In 1865 they built a church but no Japanese attended the dedication ceremony for public worship was not allowed by the police.

Four weeks later, in March 1865 Father Bernard Petitjean saw a group of 12-15 people standing in front of the closed door of the church in a very silent and respectful way. He went and opened the church door and the Japanese followed him in. ↘ He knelt to pray, and a woman whispered to him, “All of us have the same heart as you.” “Where do you come from?” asked the astonished priest. “From Urakami,” they said. “Nearly everyone there has the same heart.” When they found that the priest celebrated the same feast days, had the same statutes and was unmarried (the three things they believed was required of a true priest) they trusted him. Very quietly at first, for fear of persecution, the missionary made contact with hundreds of secret Christians, then with thousands as the word spread that the Fathers had returned.



BERNARD PETITJEAN

In 1866 a year after the hidden Christians were known, Father Petitjean was made vicar or head of the church in Japan. ↘ Of the 30,000 or so “hidden Christians” (*kakure krishitan*) only 10,000-14,000 rejoined the Roman Catholic Church. But the reappearance of so many Christians alarmed the Japanese authorities. And the persecutions began again. **During the last 200 years the Japanese Christians had accepted Buddhist religious rites that included how to bury and treat their dead ancestors.** Now the catholic missionaries told them that was wrong. The Christians in Urakami told their mayor they would not let Buddhist priests to bury their dead.



JAPAN'S HIDDEN CHRISTIANS

In 1866 30,000 'hidden Christians' came out and almost half joined the Catholic Church again.

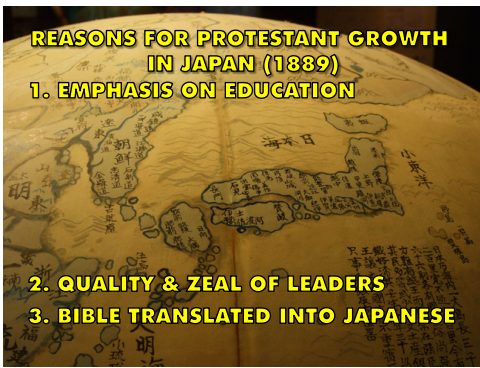
The Buddhist leaders brought armed groups to their chapels and carried away 60 Christian prisoners and destroyed the chapels. The government ignored this event.



Original sign declaring Christianity was being outlawed

In 1868 the Emperor took control of the country and became its ruler. But this made it even more difficult for Christians. ↘ The government repeated the edict of 1614 against the “detestable sect of Christians” and proclaimed Shintoism as the national religion. Over 4000 Christians were taken from their homes and put in prison. But the USA would not have friendly trade relations with Japan while they were persecuting Christians. Some years later they removed this edict and allowed the Christians to return home. In 1873 there were 15,000 Catholics with 3 churches and 2 seminaries with 70 students and 29

missionaries. At that time there were only about 1000 Protestants. 10 years later in 1883 there were 93 Protestant churches. And by 1889 there were 40,000 Protestant Christians, 249 churches, 451 missionaries and 14 seminaries with 287 seminaries.



➤ The top 3 reasons for the growth were (1) the Protestants emphasis on education; (2) the quality and the zeal (desire) of the Japanese leaders; (3) the Protestants quickly translated a Japanese Bible and put it into the hands of the people. For 30 years, between 1859 (when the first seven Protestant missionaries arrived) and 1889 the church in Japan was growing so fast that many missionaries predicted that Japan would soon become a Christian nation.



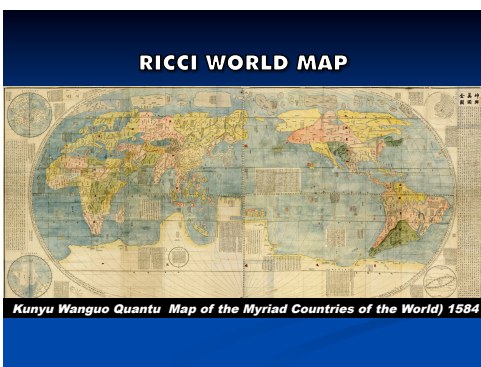
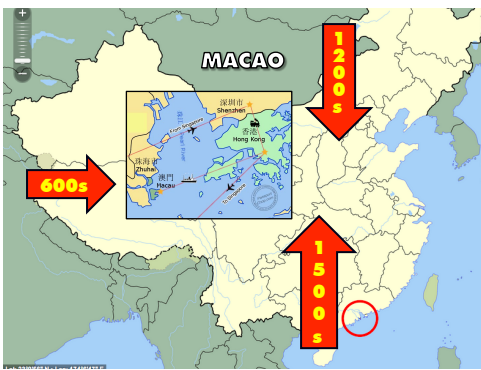
### **The Sino-Chinese War of 1894-95**

➤ When Japan quickly and easily defeated the Chinese Empire in the Sino-Chinese War in 1895 Japanese nationalism was exploding and Japan's attitude cooled toward Western countries. They felt Japan had been treated unfairly, not as an equal partner in the world. At the same time Buddhism and Shintoism became more popular. In 1900 about 80% of the country said they were Buddhists, 15% said their were Shinto and 1% 400,000 said they were Christian. In the year 2000 3.6% of the country (about 4.6 million) say they are Christian.



# Asian Church History: Lecture 8 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2012

Steve Nicholes, Professor:



✚ Until 1900 China did not have a united or national religion. In the 1500s traders from Portugal were establishing trading centers around the world. And they set up one in southern China, in Macao. And catholic Jesuits soon came too. In 1565 there were over 5000 people in this city who were Roman Catholics. In 1583 they began to go outside Macao and into the province of Guangzhou. **This is the third time Christian missionaries had come into China. First they came from Persia (west) in the 600s. Then they came from Central Asia (north) in the 1200s. Now they come from Macao (south) in the 1500s.** The first two groups were from the Church of the East. This third group was Roman Catholic.

## Matteo Ricci

✚ During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) in 1582 one of the most famous Catholic missionaries in China, Matteo Ricci, came to Macao. He was a brilliant scholar. Within 2 years he had mastered reading and writing in Chinese and understood Chinese culture. He memorized long sections of Chinese classical literature. He made the first Portuguese-Chinese dictionary. ✚ And he became the leader of the group who entered China from Macao. Ricci understood that the Chinese loved learning. He wanted to see China become a Christian nation. **He believed they should focus on reaching the intelligent, the wealthy and the leaders of China first.** Then they would influence the rest of China. The Jesuits dressed like Confucian scholars—who were respected scholars. They did not criticize Confucius, who the scholars all respected.

They **taught new concepts of math, science, astronomy and technology.** ✚ They made accurate maps of the world and taught the Chinese how China fit with the rest of the world. They made and repaired clocks and gave these to the Emperor. They wrote books and articles explaining Christianity in a way that Confucian scholars could understand it, even wearing a white robe like the Confucian scholars. He built churches using Chinese architecture. They held religious services in Chinese, and they **allowed converts to continue to keep their shrines to their ancestors.** Ricci also moved the base of the Jesuits further north to Nanjing, China's southern capital city.

By 1605, Ricci claimed there were more than 1000 Chinese who had become Christians inside of China. It grew to 5000 in 10 years. ✚ One of them was a famous scientist, Xu Guangqi, who later was appointed grand secretary to the emperor. The Cathedral of St. Ignatius or

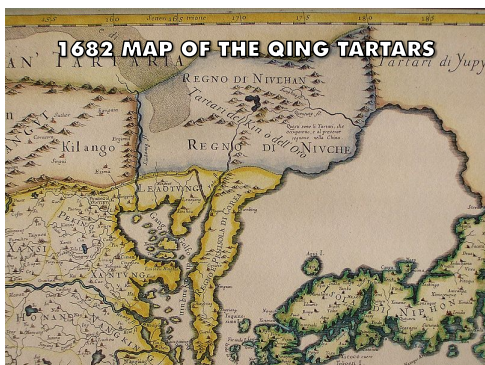
Xujiahui Church in Shanghai, which stands in the center of the city today, was built with Xu Guangqi's help.



Ricci himself never did meet the Emperor, Wanli, but his fellow Jesuits, who carried on his work following his death in 1610, came close to converting the Chinese Emperor, Kangxi. ↘ Ricci's famous book, *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* was the first Christian book to go to Korea.

When he died it was estimated that there were 2500 Chinese Catholic Christians in China. After Ricci and the Catholics had been in China 150 years later there were about 200,000 Chinese (out of a population of 225 million) said they were Christian. The Jesuit mission ended after the pope became alarmed by the comparisons between Confucianism and Christianity and ordered the priests to ban ancestral worship and conduct services according to accepted European practice. The Chinese emperor responded by ordering a ban on Christian evangelism. Although the priests did not stop, the mission was weakened, since neither the pope nor the king supported them. Although the Jesuits failed in their primary goal of creating a Christian China, they did open the country to European influence, primarily through their writing and technology.

This was the time that the Christian monument was discovered (1625) near Xian in China. And the Jesuits were excited to say, "We are NOT bringing a strange, new, foreign religion into China. This same teaching was here 990 years ago." Also about this same time (1624) Jesuit missionaries entered Tibet and started a church there.



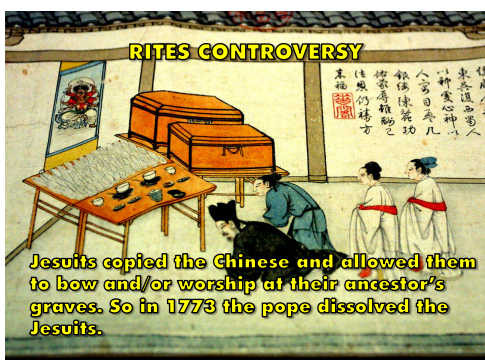
### The Manchu (Qing) Dynasty (1644-1912)

↘ In 1644 the Ming Dynasty watched helplessly while barbarians from the Jurchen tribes NE in Manchuria (north of Korea) broke thru the wall like their western relatives, the Mongols, had done 400 years before. They took over the capital, Beijing, and the last Ming rulers went south to Guangzhou where the Christian Jesuits were. The whole royal Ming family began to turn Christian including about 50 high-ranking women in the royal court. But within 20 years the last royal princes were killed. These new rulers were not the Han Chinese, who are the majority group in China. Qing and Manchu means "golden." ↘ They also are said to have forced the men they conquered to shave the front of their forehead and braid their long hair in the back.



### ↘ The Rites Controversy

As Dominican and Franciscan Catholic missionaries came into China they were shocked with how the **Jesuits** adapted so much to **Chinese** ways, even **allowing them to go and perform a ceremony, that at least looked like worship, at their ancestor's graves.** They said the Jesuits were spending too much time adapting and not enough time evangelizing. In 1643 they wrote a document back to Rome with 17 questions asked why this was happening. Rome was not happy and tried to get them to stop. This made the Chinese rulers upset.



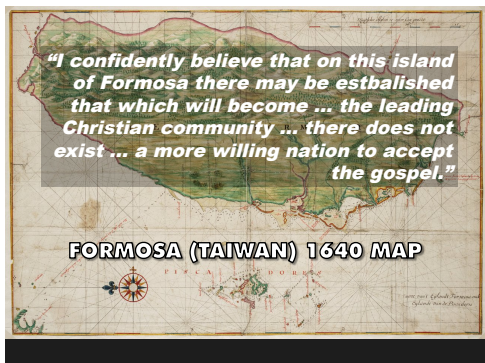


**Finally in 1773 Rome called all the Jesuits home and dissolved (did away with) the Jesuits.**



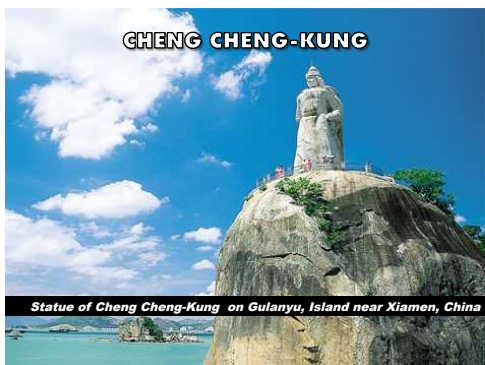
By this time Beijing had four famous Catholic cathedrals. In 1811 two of these were destroyed. In 1827 the great North Church was destroyed. And by 1837 the doors of the South Church were also closed and locked. From 1700 to 1838 the Catholic community had declined from 300,000 to 200,000.

In 1858 Harvey Newcomb wrote *A Cyclopedia of Missions*. He said Asia was 48% Buddhist, 20% Hindu, 17% Muslim and 7% Christian with only 28,000 Protestants and including Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians had about 50 million out of the 753 million who lived in China then. The Roman Catholics had come to Asia in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (1500s) and the Protestants came in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (1600s).



**Formosa (Taiwan): Gateway to China (1642-1661)**

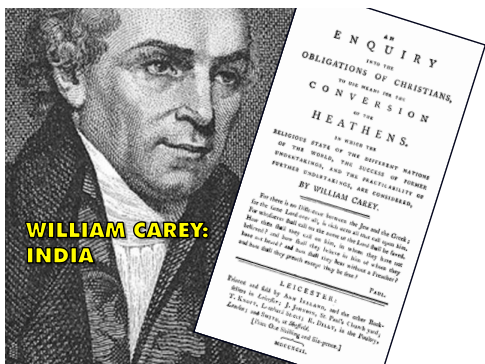
In 1642 the Dutch took over Taiwan for 35 years. And with the traders they did not desire or plan to do this BUT they made it possible for missionaries to go to these new lands, to learn the language and begin to translate the Bible. In Taiwan they completed the gospels of Matthew and John. Most of the people who accepted Christ were the non-Chinese tribal islanders. One missionary chaplain back then wrote, "I confidently believe that on this island of Formosa there may be established that which will become ... the leading Christian community ... there does not exist ... a more willing nation to accept the gospel."



But a Chinese pirate by the name of Cheng Cheng-Kung brought 25,000 men and took over the island. When the Dutch didn't surrender they were killed.

Several of the missionaries were publicly beheaded. It was 200 years later (in the 1800s) before Protestant English missionaries were able to return to Taiwan.

**William Carey (India)**



In 1785 William Carey was a 24-year-old pastor of a small Baptist Church in England. He had been reading the missionary biography of David Brainerd and the journals of captain John Cook.

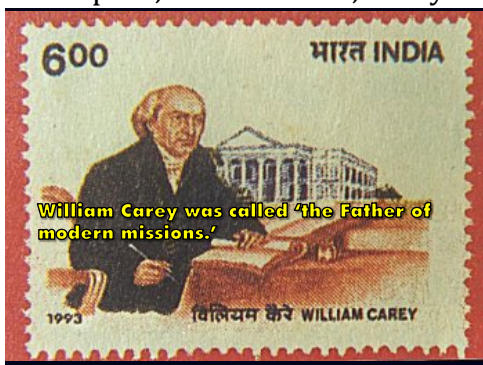
When he was 31 he wrote a groundbreaking missionary book entitled, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. This book had five parts. 1. Jesus command in Matthew 28:18-20 to make disciples of all the nations is still for us today. 2. He gives a history of missions starting in the

early church and ending in his day. 3. He gives 26 pages of statistics of population and religion for every country in the world. 4. He answers objections about getting involved in missions (like the difficulty of learning another language or the danger to your life or family). 5. He calls to set up a mission society to help support missions financially. You can find a copy of this 87-page booklet as a .pdf for free at: <http://www.wmcarey.edu/carey/enquiry/anenquiry.pdf>.

📌 **INTERACTIVE PROJECT:** At this point in the class I give the students the “Asia Spreadsheet” which collects up-to-date data about all the countries in Asia. This includes statistics on population, average income, # of Christians and evangelicals, etc. This is a similar project to what William Carey did 225 years ago. Explain how this data has been/is powerful to recruit prayer, finance and personal support. Go thru the web sites listed at the bottom of the page and walk thru an example (Afghanistan) of how to do this. Divide the list among the

students so that at least two people are looking for the same data to make sure it is correct.

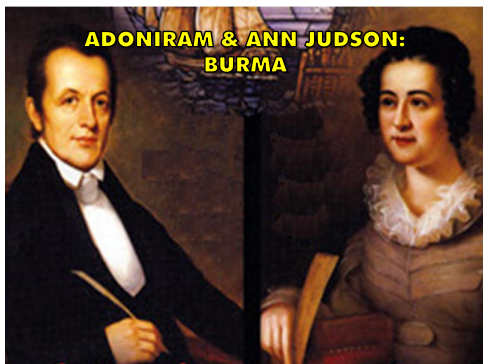
The next year, 1793, William Carey sailed with his wife and daughter to India. 📌 At Serampore, near Calcutta, Carey set up his mission station, translated the Bible into at least 35 languages, composed grammars and dictionaries, set up a printing company, published the first Bengali newspaper and opened the first accredited college in India, actually the first in Asia, to train evangelists and church planters. In 1993 they made a postage stamp commemorating him.



One interesting story from William Carey’s life tells how he tried to share the gospel cross culturally. Hindu ballad singers were commonly seen on the streets and in the marketplaces of that day. When William Carey saw this, he and a couple other of his coworkers went to a

busy 4-way intersection and began to sing a Christian ballad. Many people looked out of their houses, stopped their business activities and gathered around to watch and listen to them. The song they sang was a story about an Indian man who renounced various Hindu gods and put his faith in Christ. They then passed out printed copies of this story with the gospel message included.

Carey stayed in England over 40 years. He influenced lots of others to go into missions as well. He was one of the first Protestant missionaries to make a big difference in a country on the other side of the world. He is called “the Father of Modern Missions.”



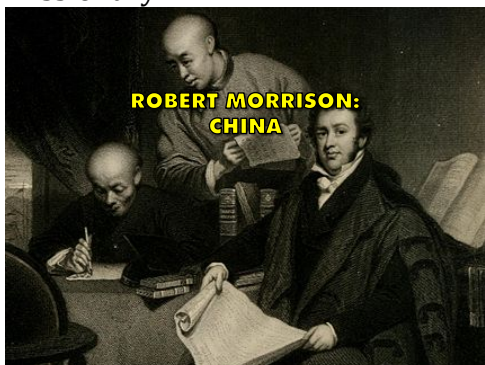
### Adoniram and Ann Judson (Burma)

📌 One of the guys who read about what William Carey was doing in India was Adoniram Judson. And he became one of the first American missionaries to travel overseas.

Judson was a pastor’s son but when he went to college he became a good friend with another guy Jacob Earnes who believed there was a God who created the world but pretty much doubted everything else the Bible teaches. Through this friendship Judson also left Christianity. But one night he stopped at an inn to stay but the innkeepers said he was sorry that the only room he had was next to a man who was very sick. But Judson was so tired he took it anyway. He got into bed and tried to go to sleep but he could not because on the other side of the wall was a man who was groaning and crying out in pain. This went on for hours until Judson finally went to sleep. The next morning when Judson went to pay his bill and leave he asked the innkeeper how the sick man was doing. The innkeeper told Judson that the man had died during the night. Judson asked who the man was. The innkeeper replied, “A young man from college. His name is ... uh ... Jacob Earnes. Judson was shocked. It was obvious by the way his friend died that he died, lost without hope. Judson believed this did not happen by



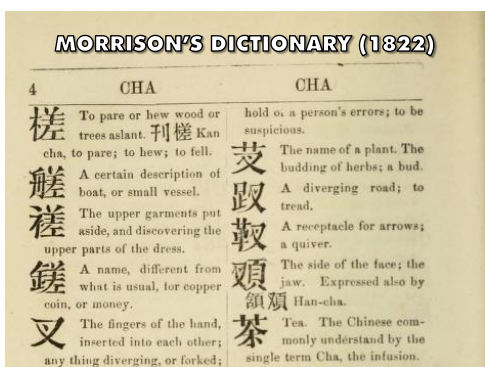
accident. He gave his life to Jesus Christ, went to seminary and prepared to become a missionary.



He served in the country of Burma for 38 years. Starting in 1812 he worked there and ended up leading almost 12,000 Karen Christians to Christ. He also translated the Bible into the Burmese language. He would translate 25 verses a day from Hebrew into Burmese. By the time he died there were 63 churches planted and 123 missionaries and pastors trained. 100 years after he died there were 200,000 Christians in Burma. It is interesting that when he went into the Karen tribe he found that they were prepared for his preaching. They had what they

called their “Tradition of the Elders” that had been passed down by word of mouth for many generations. They believed in an unchangeable, eternal, all-powerful God, creator of heaven and earth, of man, and of woman formed from a rib taken from the man. They believed in humanity’s temptation by a devil, and its fall, and that some day a messiah would come to its rescue. They lived in expectation of a prophecy that white foreigners would bring them a sacred scroll. 📌 Here is a picture of people from the Karen tribe who moved to Canada and are celebrating a Karen New Year’s Festival.

### Robert Morrison (China)



📌 In 1807 Robert Morrison sailed from England to China as a missionary with the London Missionary Society. He was 25 years old and the first Protestant Missionary to enter China. . It was illegal to evangelize so Robert tried to dress and look like the Chinese as much as possible. He even wore a fake pigtail. He learned Chinese well enough to become a translator. Then in 1812 a new rule came out that if any Chinese were caught teaching a foreigner the Chinese language the penalty was death.

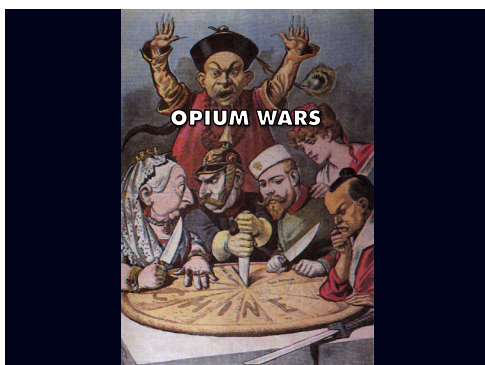
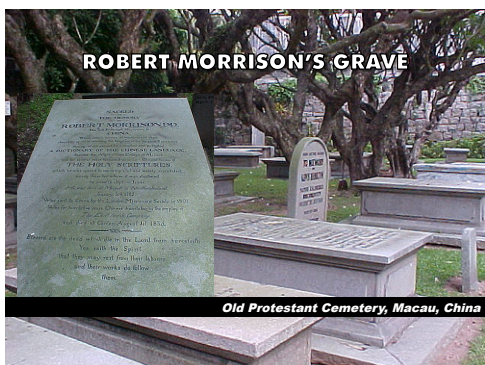
Morrison’s main ministry was to translate the

Bible into the Chinese language. Morrison’s Chinese Bible was the first published translation of the complete Bible into Chinese (1819). 📌 He also wrote a Chinese grammar book (1815) and a Chinese-English dictionary (1821-22).

Because it was too hard/risky to evangelize inside China Morrison suggested setting up a string of bases just outside of China’s borders where missionaries could learn the language, translate and write Christian materials, and set up Bible training schools for Chinese Christian leaders. One of the most important bases he set up was in Malacca.

One of the guys who helped Morrison with translation was William Milne. When he was in language school he wrote, “To acquire the Chinese [language] is a work for men with bodies of brass, lungs of steel, heads of oak ... eyes of eagles, hearts of apostles, memories of angels and lives of Methuselah.”

Morrison opened a Christian school in Malacca where English and Chinese students could study together both Asian and Western culture, worship together and be trained for missions and evangelism. Morrison died in



1834. 📌 He was buried at this cemetery in Macao.

## The Treaty of Nanjing (1842)

📌 England was addicted to Chinese tea but was having difficulty paying for it. The Chinese were not interested in products from England. They only wanted gold and silver. So England started smuggling opium into China and get enough money from that to pay for the tea. But many Chinese got addicted to the opium and the Chinese government didn't like that. They banned opium. So England declared war on China. And because of their better military they won.

📌 The infamous Opium Wars brought about the Treaty of Nanjing where **China opened**



**five major ports to the world. The five ports were Guangzhou (Canton), Xiamen (Amoy), Fuzhou (Foochow), Ningbo (Ningpo) and Shanghai.** They also

allowed Britain to control Hong Kong at this time. Foreigners were allowed to study Chinese, build houses, schools and churches in these ports. By 1860 foreigners were allowed to travel outside these ports into China. Freedom of worship and protection of Christians, both foreign and Chinese were guaranteed anywhere in China. But by 1860 there were still only 351 Protestant church

members recorded.

## Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission (1866)

📌 In 1866 Hudson Taylor came to China by boat with 17 others as members of CIM, the China Inland Mission (Now that is called OMF – Overseas Missionary Fellowship? Do you remember being any where with OMF?).



📌 There were 9 unreached provinces in China and Hudson Taylor's plan was to send two missionaries to each province. 📌 This was the largest known team of missionaries to go into China at one time. There were only two married couples on this team. All the rest were single. Within the first year his daughter Grace (sitting in front) died. That same year another single guy on their team, John Sell (standing back right), died. Mary Bell (sitting to the right of Mrs Taylor) married William Rudland (first guy sitting on left). Four years after they arrived in wife, Maria Jane, and son Samuel (sitting on right) died. Three years later both Mary Bell and George Duncan (tallest guy standing) died. And one year later Emily Blatchley (sitting to the left of George Duncan) died. It took them four months by boat to travel from London to Shanghai.

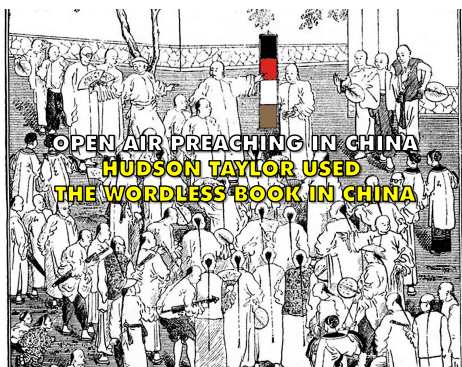
📌 One of the ways the missionaries with CIM shared the gospel was **using the wordless book** in just four colors (black, red, white and gold). This was created by Charles Haddon Spurgeon and was also used by D.L. Moody.

In 1881 Taylor prayed for 70 new workers to come during the next three years and his prayer was answered.

📌 In 1885 a group of seven students from Cambridge University came. They influenced the Student Volunteer Movement in America.

📌 Taylor recruited a lot of these missionaries with

a book that he wrote called, "*China's Spiritual Need and Claims*. It is 100 pages long and I will send it to you as a pdf document (<http://archive.org/download/cu3192402>)





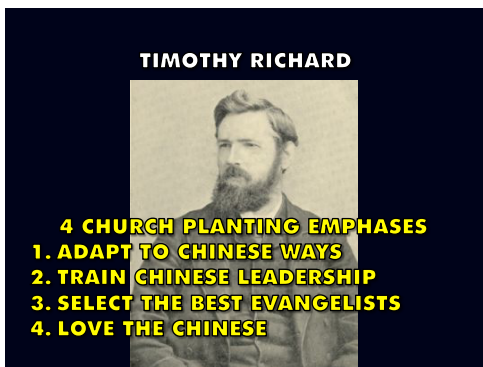


[3067972/cu31924023067972.pdf](https://www.cim.org.uk/3067972/cu31924023067972.pdf)). It is a great book to read because it shows you the way God used Hudson Taylor to convince people to join his team.

✚ In 1886 he prayed for 100 new missionaries and they came the next year. In 1889 he prayed for 1000 new missionaries. And by 1912 CIM had over 1000 missionaries. ✚ Here is a map of where they were located in 1902.

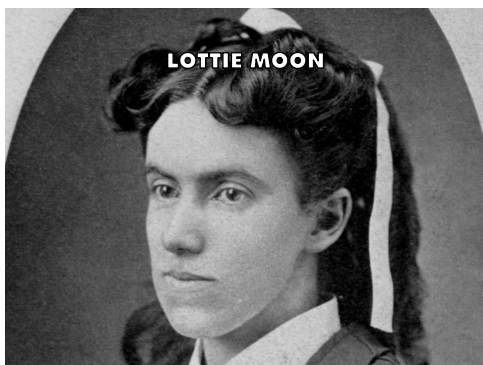
### Timothy Richard

✚ One of the most famous missionaries of his day in China was Timothy Richard. He was a dynamic speaker and wrote articles in a monthly magazine called *Review of the Times*. One article he wrote was called *The Prime Benefits of Christianity*. He developed very effective church planting methods with four emphases: (1) Adapt to Chinese ways; (2) Train Chinese leadership; (3) Seek the most worthy who make the best evangelists; (4) Love the Chinese.

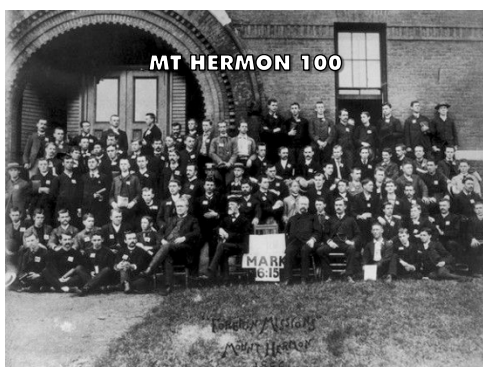


### Lottie Moon

✚ In 1873 Lottie Moon went to China. She started a school to train women church workers. She once wrote a letter home suggesting that Southern Baptist women take up a Christmas offering to send more women to China. By the time she left China, her disciples in Pingtu were baptizing 500 converts a year. And one of her students, a leading Chinese evangelist is said to have baptized 10,000 people. And the Southern Baptists still take up a “Lottie Moon Christmas Offering” every year. In 1992 they collected over \$80 million to go to missions. There is a monument for Lottie Moon in Pingtu that simply has her Chinese name as a missionary and “How She Loved Us.”

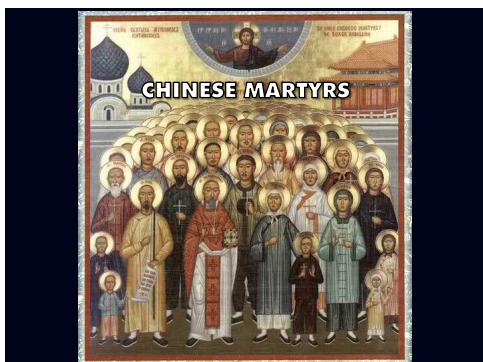


✚ It was about this time in 1886 that the Student Volunteer Movement began to send missionaries from American colleges. Remember the Mt Hermon 100 that we talked about in our mission conference. By 1945 over 20,000 American students had gone to a foreign land as a missionary. Some of them joined Hudson Taylor and the CIM.



### The Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901)

✚ In 1895 eleven missionaries were killed near Fuzhou by a group of rebels called “Boxers.” Their slogan was “Exalt the Dynasty. Destroy the Foreigners.” In 1899 over 200 missionary family members were killed including 58 adults and 21 children with the China Inland Mission. ✚ Over 3000 Chinese Christians were killed as well. It has been said that the Boxer massacres produced more Protestant martyrs than all of the previous Protestant martyrs in China combined.



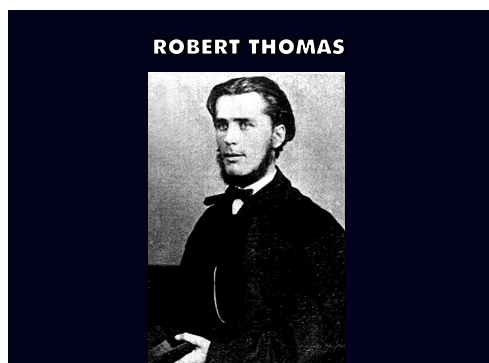
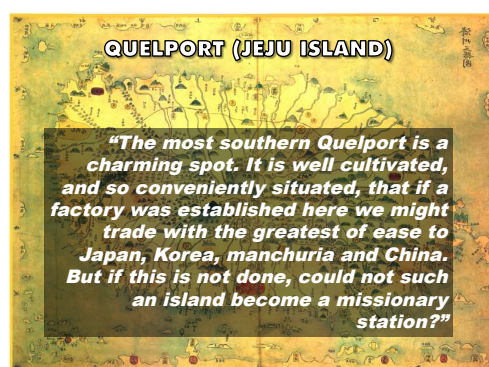
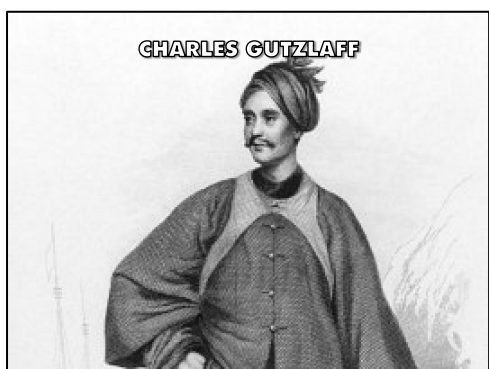
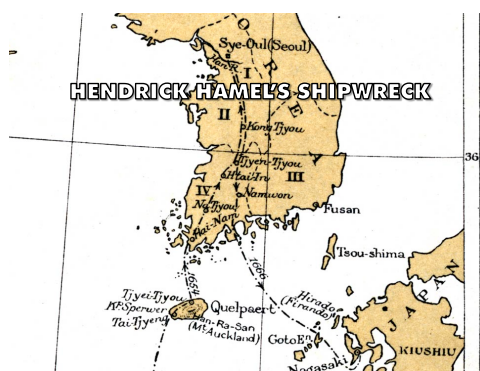
✎ But it also produced more Christians. The *World Christian Encyclopedia* gives the following statistics.

	1900	2000
Christian folk religions	376,300,000 (79.7%)	360,000,000 (28.5%)
Buddhist	60,000,000 (12.7%)	106,000,000 (8.4%)
Muslims	24,000,000 (5.1%)	19,000,000 (1.5%)
Christians (professing)	1,670,000 (0.4%)	89,000,000 (7.1%)
Roman Catholic	1,200,000 (0.2%)	7,000,000 (0.6%)
Protestant	436,000 (0.1%)	71,000,000 (6.0%)
Orthodox	34,000	



## Asian Church History: Lecture 9 Transcript: WOLBI Jeju: Spring 2012

Steve Nicholes, Professor:



### Hendrick Hamel

Hendrick Hamel was from Holland. In 1653 he was on the ship, DeSperwer (the Sparrow Hawk), with 63 other men from his country headed from Taiwan for Japan when they were shipwrecked here on Jeju Island. 28 of the men died. The 36 survivors were treated well by the residents on Jeju for several weeks and then were taken to Seoul. The Korean people had not known foreigners before and so were interested to learn about

them from these guys. And they did not want these guys to leave and then bring others back to attack this place, so they just kept them as prisoners. Finally they were sent to Chollanamdo. Over time 20 of them died from sickness and disease. 13 years later Hamel and 7 others were able to escape Korea in a small boat they made and went to Japan and then back to Holland in 1666 where he wrote the book, *The Journal of the Unfortunate Voyage of the Sperwer*. You can visit the Hendrick Hamel Memorial Hall at Sanbangsan here on Jeju Island. **Hendrick Hamel was the first westerner to write about Korea with firsthand knowledge.**

### First Protestant Missionaries to Korea

Bringing the gospel into Korea in the beginning was not easy as Korea was not open to outsiders. That is why they were called the 'hermit kingdom.'

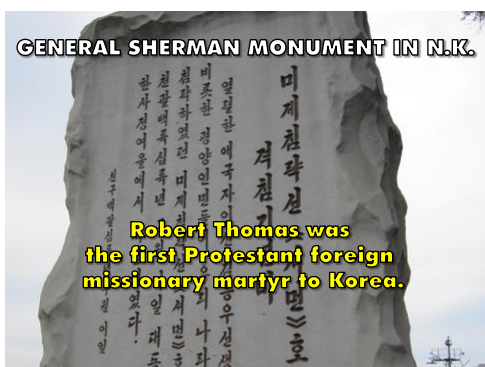
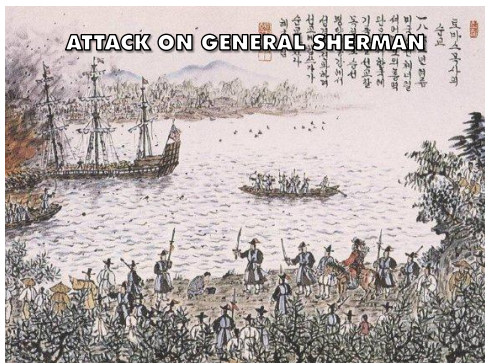
➤ First **Charles Gutzlaff**, a German missionary tried to enter Korea in 1832 to distribute Chinese Bibles and tracts by Robert Morrison. Even though he passed out some Scriptures, and traveled along the west coast in a boat for 2 ½ months he was not allowed to stay and had to leave right away.

He writes about his trip in a book entitled, *Journal of Three Voyages*, which is available free online (<http://www.lib.nus.edu.sg/digital/3voyage.html>). You can read the part about his trips to Korea in chapter 6 of his second voyage, which is on pages 263-288. It is interesting that on the last page of this section, on August 17 he visits Jeju Island and says, ➤ "The most southern Quelport (Jeju) is a charming spot. It is well cultivated, and so conveniently situated, that if a factory was established there, we might trade with the greatest of ease to Japan, Korea, Manchuria and China. But if this is not done, could not such an island become a missionary station?" That is what the first protestant missionary to visit Korea said.

➤ The next Protestant guy we know to try to bring the gospel to Korea was **Robert Thomas**. He was a Welsh

missionary. At first he dressed in Korean clothing and in 1865 went along the coast of Korea where for four months he passed out several hundred Bibles.

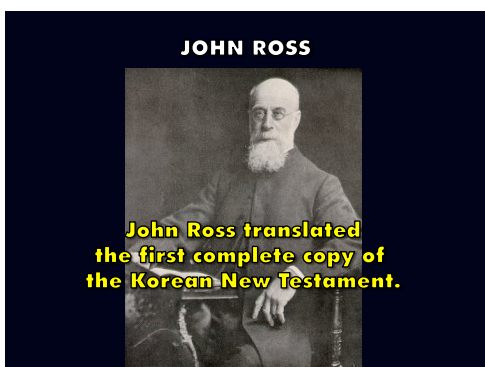
Then he went back to China and the next year he persuaded a US trading ship, the *General Sherman*, to go to Pyongyang and try to open up trade there even though those two countries did not have a relationship and told their people not to do that. But they agreed with Robert Thomas and in August of 1866 they brought their boatload of cotton goods, tin and glass. As they came close to the shore Thomas threw out gospel tracts on the land. The Korean officials on the shore told them to leave immediately. They kidnapped the official and a couple of his guys. This caused fights to break out and the crew of the boat started shooting their guns and 7 Koreans were killed and 5 wounded. The Koreans set a wooden boat on fire and put it right next to the *General Sherman* and in this way set their ship on fire. 14 of the crew were shot and killed, 4 were burnt to death and 2, including Robert Thomas were beaten to death by people on the shore.



A Thomas Memorial Church was built near this spot in 1932. But it was destroyed during the communist takeover.

Today there is a monument in Pyongyang, North Korea to mark this spot. Some people said that Thomas was passing out Bibles as the people beat him to death. Later the man who killed Thomas said that he used the pages from the Bible to wallpaper his house. In 1893 this house was later turned into an inn and bought by three western missionaries who turned it into a church, which

became the Thomas Memorial Church. He is remembered today as **the first Protestant foreign missionary martyr to Korea**. If you would like a copy of his story I have a pdf copy of the book *Chosen for Choson – the story of Robert Thomas*.



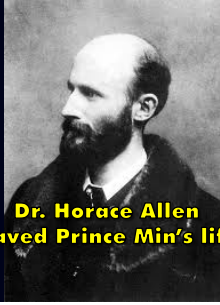
### John Ross (Korea)

John Ross was a Scottish missionary who went to NE China (Manchuria) in 1872. He met a missionary there, Alexander Williamson, who had been to the little village of Wiju on the northern border of Korea, what he called the “Corean Gate,” where he sold Christian books to the border merchants. He helped to translate and publish the gospel of Luke into Korean in 1882 with the help of five Korean assistants and had 1000 copies print and sold in North Korea. In 1884 he and his wife actually crossed

over and entered Korea and helped distribute copies of the gospels of Luke and John. So Mrs. Ross was the first foreign woman recorded to have entered Korea. Also that year Ross baptized a couple of the guys who were delivering Bibles and had become believers in Jesus. By 1887 they had translated the first complete copy of the Korean New Testament as well. These copies were later revised by others. A lot of Chinese people lived in Manchuria and they received these Bibles too. Hundreds of Koreans up in this area are reported to have believed in Jesus and were being baptized. By 1883 a Korean evangelist had already come to Seoul and started a church there. He invited John Ross to come and baptize 79 new believers. The Korea Bible Society in Seoul has a John Ross Memorial Hall.



DR. HORACE ALLEN



Dr. Horace Allen saved Prince Min's life

### Horace Allen (Korea)

➤ Horace Allen was a Presbyterian missionary doctor who arrived with his wife and young child in Korea in 1884. Soon after he arrived there was attempt to overthrow the king (Gojong) and **Prince Min** was stabbed and seriously injured. There were no other modern doctors in Korea at that time and Dr. Allen was called and **saved the prince's life.**

➤ After this the royal family asked Dr. Allen to be their doctor and to establish a medical center in Seoul. This was a God thing. As a result of what Dr. Allen did the leaders of Korea trusted western Protestant missionaries and allowed them to come into Korea and they were allowed to evangelize Koreans and build schools, hospitals and churches in what used to be called the 'hermit kingdom.' Later after Louis Severance gave a lot of money this became the Severance Hospital in Seoul.

KOREA'S FIRST MEDICAL CENTER



### Henry Appenzeller & Horace Underwood

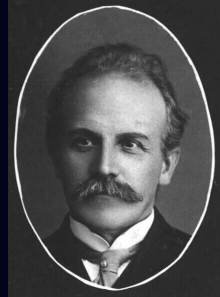
➤ On Resurrection Sunday morning, April 5, 1885 Henry Appenzeller (a Methodist) and Horace Underwood (a Presbyterian) became the first ordained Protestant missionaries to arrive in Korea. The story is that they held each other's hand and jumped off the boat together at Incheon so that no one could say which denomination arrived first. In those early days they divided up the whole country into sections. That is why there are Methodists in some parts of Korea and Presbyterians in other parts.

➤ Henry Appenzeller opened a school for boys (Baekjae) within one year after he arrived. The purpose of the school was to train the boys in evangelism. He served in Korea for 17 years and saw 47 churches established. He also helped with translating the Bible into Korean. He traveled to a meeting in 1902 but the boat crashed with a Japanese steamship and Henry died saving another man's life. He was 44 years old.

HENRY APPENZELLER



HORACE UNDERWOOD



➤ Horace Underwood established Korea's first Protestant church, published the first Korean hymnal, helped found the Korean YMCA and in 1915 established the Chosen Christian College, which became Yonsei University. Horace's wife, Lillian wrote a very interesting book about their first years living in Korea that you can get for free online pdf called *Fifteen Years Among the Top-knots: Life in Korea.*

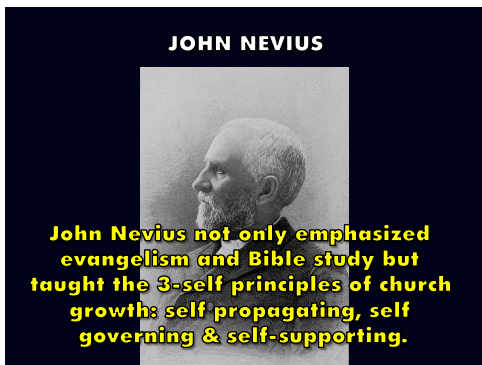
(<http://archive.org/details/fifteenyearsamon00undeiala>.)

The Korean Bible was translated in 1887 and by 1910 American missionaries had established over 800 mission schools all over Korea, including Ewha University for girls in 1886. This made a big impact is seeing Christianity spread quickly. ➤ Another reason the church

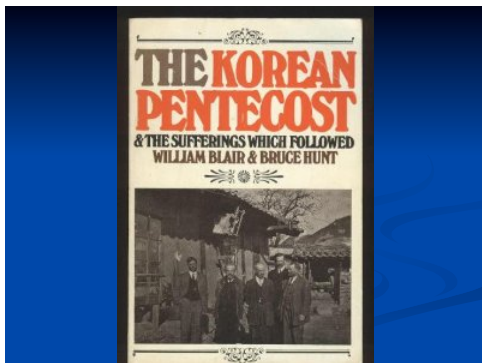
15 YEARS AMONG THE TOP-KNOTS



continued to grow well was the principles of **John Nevius who not only emphasized**



**evangelism and Bible study but also self-propagation** (every believer was to teach others), **self-government** (each group would chose their own qualified leaders) **and self-supporting** (each church would take care of their own pastor and expenses). John came and taught this to the Korean church leaders for two weeks in 1860. You can read his teaching in his 92 page book free online called, *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches* (<http://ia700306.us.archive.org/6/items/plantingdevelopm00nevi/plantingdevelopm00nevi.pdf>)



### The 1907 Pyongyang Revival

➤ In chapter 9 of the book *Korean Pentecost* it tells how the missionaries met in Pyongyang in August of 1906 for Bible study and prayer. They were studying 1 John. They were also using this time to prepare their hearts for a yearly Bible Conference for all church leaders they had planned for the first two weeks in January.

1500 men came. Most walked 10-100 miles to attend. In the morning they had devotions, 30 minutes of singing and 3 hours of Bible teaching. At night there

would be a men's meeting. It started on Saturday night. On Monday night a Mr Lee was in charge of the meeting. After a short message he asked the people to pray. Later Mr Lee wrote, "Man after man, would rise, confess his sins, break down and weep, and then throw himself to the floor and beat the floor with his fists in perfect agony of conviction. My own cook tried to make a confession, broke down in the midst of it, and cried to me across the room: 'Pastor, tell me, is there any hope for me, can I be forgiven?' and then he threw himself to the floor and wept and wept, and almost screamed in agony. Sometimes after a confession, the whole audience would break out in audible prayer, and the effect of that audience of hundreds of men praying together in audible prayer was something indescribable. Again, after another confession, they would break out in uncontrollable weeping, and we would all weep, we could not help it. And so the meeting went on until 2:00a.m. with confession and weeping and praying."

Only a few of the foreign missionaries were there on that Monday night. But they heard about it. On Tuesday night William Blair says, "We were aware that bad feeling existed between ... a Mr. Kang (from the North Pyongyang Church) and Mr. Kim (an elder from the Central Church). Mr. Kang confessed his hatred for Mr. Kim on Monday night, but Mr. Kim was silent. Now on Tuesday night as the meeting went on, I could see Mr. Kim sitting with the elders behind the pulpit with his head down. Bowing where I sat, I asked God to help him, and looking up saw him coming forward. Holding to the pulpit, he made his confession. "I have been guilty of fighting against God. I have been guilty of hating not only Kang You-moon, but Pang Mok-sa." Pang Mok-sa was Mr Blair's Korean name. He says, "I never had a greater surprise in my life. To think that this man, my associate ... had been hating me without my knowing it! It seems that I had said something to him one day in a hurry, which gave offence, and he had not been able to forgive me. Turning to me, he said, "Can you forgive me, can you pray for me?" I stood up and began to pray, "Apa-ge, Apa-ge" (Father, Father,) and I got no further. ... I fell at Kim's side and wept and prayed as I had never prayed before. My last glimpse of the audience is forever photographed on my brain. Some threw themselves full length upon the floor, hundreds stood with arms outstretched toward heaven. Every man forgot every other. Each was face to face with God. I can hear yet that fearful sound of hundreds of men pleading with God for life, for mercy.



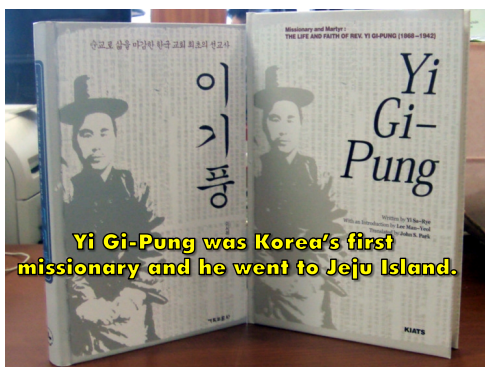
As soon as we were able, we missionaries gathered at the platform and asked, "What shall we do? If we let them go on like this some will go crazy." Yet we dared not interfere. We had prayed to God for an outpouring of his Spirit upon the people and it had come. We went down and tried to comfort the most distressed, pulling the agonized man to the floor and saying, "Never mind, brother, if you have sinned God will forgive you."

Finally, Mr. Lee started a hymn and quiet was restored during the singing. Then began a meeting the like of which I had never seen before, nor wish to see again unless in God's sight it is absolutely necessary. Every sin a human being can commit was publicly confessed that night. Even the man who had killed Robert Thomas confessed this at the meeting. Pale and trembling with emotion, in agony of mind and body, guilty souls, standing in the white light of that judgment, saw themselves as God saw them. Their sins rose up in all their vileness, till shame and grief took complete possession; pride was driven out, the face of men forgotten. Looking up to heaven, to Jesus whom they had betrayed, they smote themselves and cried out with bitter wailing: "Lord, Lord, cast us not away forever!" Everything else was forgotten, nothing else mattered.



Then he chapter 11 he tells the results of what happened after the Pyongyang Revival – the Christians returned to their homes and churches in the country taking this revival fire with them. In schools they stopped holding classes while children confessed their sins and got things made right. People returned articles and money they had stolen. Some people even returned large sums of money they had cheated someone out of. That's what happened in the Pyongyang Revival – **sincere prayer, a desire to be close to God, confession of sin with a humble mind, not being self-centered but by being**

**others centered.** And God used that revival to be the spark that saw thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of Koreans turn to Christ. God blessed that. From 1895 to 1910 the Korean church had grown from 500 to over 200,000.



### Foreign Missions from Korea

The Korean revival happened in January of 1907. On September 17 of that same year Korea sent Mr & Mrs **Ki-Poong Lee** with three helpers as **Korea's first missionary to take the gospel to Jeju Island.** In 1909 they sent Choi Kwan Heul as a foreign Korean missionary to work among the Koreans in Vladivostok, Siberia in Russia. The next year her reported there were 648 Christians there. In 1912 they sent three pastors and their families to Shantung, China. In 1921 they sent Pastor Ee-Kon Kim to Japan and began work in Kobe, Kyoto, Osaka and other cities. So after the gospel came to Korea, less than 30 years later Korea was sending out their own missionaries to neighboring countries. In 1973 Korea had sent out 93 missionaries. In 1991 this had grown more than 10 times to 1200. In 2006 it grew more than 10 times again to over 13,000. Since 2008 that number is now around 20,000. The Korea World Mission Association plans to see 100,000 (1 out of ever 300 Korean Christians) be sent out as foreign missionaries.



### 2007 Korean Hostage Crisis (Afghanistan)

In July of 2007 these 23 Koreans went on a

short-term medical team to Afghanistan when they were traveling by public bus from Kandahar to Kabul when they were taken hostage by the Taliban. Two of the Korean leaders on the trip were killed. The first on July 25 was Bae Hyeong-Gyu (top right) who was shot 10 times and killed on his 42<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Five days later the second was 29-year-old Shim Seong-Min (bottom left). Now, the first guy, Bae Hyeong-Gyu was from Jeju. He was from the Young-Nak Church. Do you know the lady who plays the piano, ?? She is the sister of Bae Hyeong-Gyu. If you look at the picture you can see she looks like her brother. He once wrote an article for a church newsletter where he said a disciple should be ready for three things at any moment of his life – 1. Be ready to leave (everything behind). 2. Be ready to move (to a different place). 3. Be ready to die. Two weeks before going to Afghanistan he spoke at his church and said this, ✎ “Dying for Christ is a glorious thing. Don’t cry for me if I die in service to my Lord. Put on my tombstone, “He died training young people to make a difference in the world.”



✎ **Five Possible Generalizations about Asian Church History in the 1800s**

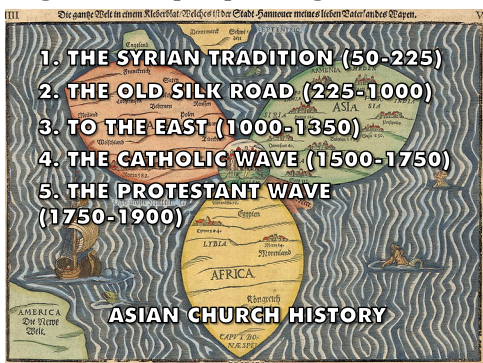
**1. It was a Time of Church Growth.** During the 1800s the world population grew from 900 million to 1.6 billion. But the number of Christians grew from 208 million to 558 million. So in 1800 23% of the world said they were Christian. And in 1900 34% of the world said they were Christian. And in 1900 there were twice as many Catholics as there were Protestants.

**2. It was a Time of Protestant Missions.** There were twice as many Catholics but by 1900 the Protestants were growing three times faster than Catholics. They were the ones building schools, hospitals and churches and putting translated copies of the Bible into the hands of as many people groups as possible.

**3. It was a Time of Evangelism.** In America most of the schools were started with the purpose of training evangelists, pastors and missionaries. Yale University President Timothy Dwight told his students in 1813 that if they had the will and the faith, it would be reasonable to believe that with God’s help the whole world could be brought to the Savior, perhaps “not far from the year 2000.” Charles Hodge at Princeton in 1856 said, “There are now 800 or 900 million human beings living on the earth ... if they do not believe they cannot be saved.” In 1900 the president of Columbia University, Seth Low: “What can Christians do better, in such a time as this, then to bear their unshaken testimony to their belief that there is no other Name under heaven, whereby men must be saved, but the Name of Jesus Christ?”

**4. It was a Time of Women in Mission.** Before 1860 it was unusual, rare for single women to go out as missionaries. But in 1860 the China Inland Mission and others began accepting single women just like they would accept men. And by 1900 there were more Protestant women missionaries (6772) worldwide than there were men (6259).

**5. It was a Time of Volunteers.** In 1886 the Student Volunteer Movement began in America. It was during this time that independent and nondenominational mission societies began. And people began to voluntarily give their time and money to get involved in world missions.



✎ **Summary of Asian Church History (1-1900AD)**

**1. The First Advance (50-225AD): The Syrian Tradition**

Thomas to India (50AD); Addai to Edessa (100AD)

**2. The Second Advance (225-1000AD): The Old Silk Road**

Nestorians move across Asia from Persia (225AD)

**3. The Third Advance (1000-1350AD): To the East**



Nestorians in Central Asia (1000AD); Renter China (1200AD)

Catholics from the West arrive (1245-1346AD)

**4. The Fourth Advance (1500-1750): The Catholic Wave**

Portugal and Spain (1500s)

**5. The Fifth Advance (1750-1900): The Protestant Wave**

The Protestant Wave

## **Church Planting Movements**



✚ **CHINA:** A few years back I was in Taiwan and met a missionary with the IMB who was working with church planting movements in China. When I sat and listened to him for 2 hours share all that was happening in China I was amazed. What they did was to go into a very large city to a very busy intersection (where lots of people passed by) and rent a large store space there. In that store they would divide it into several sections. One section was for free 15-minute English lessons. One section was a coffee shop with Christian music. One section was teaching people how to play games. One

section was doing drama. Most of it was free. There was lots of staff doing all these activities. And people were standing on the street inviting people to come in. And lots of Chinese people, especially young people came in from the street.

Now why did they do all of this? The purpose of all these little sections was after 15-30 minutes they would stop and would invite them to a special class. And they had prepared classes all over the city at different times during the week on 1. How to find your life's purpose or 2. How to make wise decisions or 3. How to prepare for marriage. And you could choose one of those topics and it would be a 3 lesson class. And they had prepared these classes to be done at different times and different locations. Those classes had Biblical principles but were not heavy Bible teaching ... a lot of practical wisdom ... a lot of Proverbs.

And the purpose of these classes was so that after the last class they would invite him to a 5 session study. And in that study they would show that the Bible is a manual for human life. And they would tell the story of God and the creation of man and why man was created. And they would finish by sharing the gospel and giving them a chance to respond. And at the end of session 5 they would invite them to begin a church plant. And that church would start other house churches that would start other house churches.

And then he looked me in the eye and said, "You may not believe this when I tell you but in one province in southern China we are starting 10,000 house churches every month." And he said, "I am preparing lessons to give the house church head pastors and they teach it to their group of pastors who pass it on to their pastors and like a chain it keeps going." He said, "Recently, I went to a house church meeting that was 10 generations away from the one I started. And what they are teaching is exactly the same as what I taught my first group."

Now what would you call what I have just described to you? It is a church planting movement. I believe I already shared with you about the Back-to Jerusalem Movement that began in the 1920s. They believe that the gospel went west from Israel to Europe, then to the Americas and now to Asia. And they believe that now it is their job to take the gospel back to Jerusalem – back along the Old Silk Road (which technically there is not one silk road but many

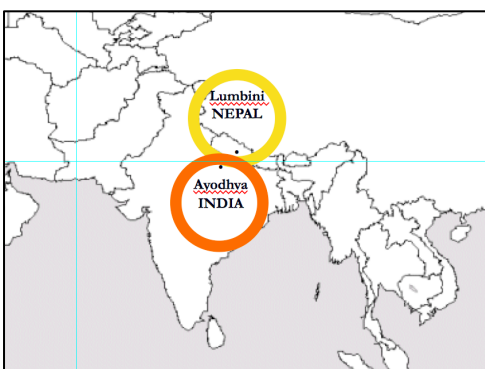
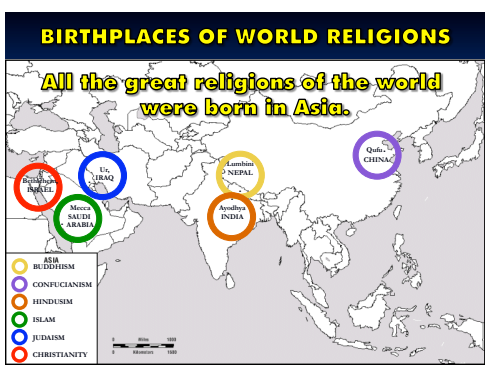


roads called the silk road leading mainly East-West, going through West Asia, going thru the heartland of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam along the way. Most Christians in China believe call has called them to take the gospel back to Jerusalem and they plan to send 100,000 missionaries to do this work.

✚ **INDIA:** Another church planting movement began in North India in 1994. Before this there were only about 27 churches among the Bhojpuri tribes in North India. The IMB sent Indian evangelists from south India to



come and preach the gospel in the north. Within 18 months 6 of them were killed. Through this experience God gave them a new idea. It came from Luke 10 where Jesus sent out the 70 disciples two by two. ↘ There it says in verse 5, *“But whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’* <sup>6</sup> *And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you.* <sup>7</sup> *And remain in the same house ... Do not go from house to house.* <sup>8</sup> *Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.* <sup>9</sup> *And heal the sick there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’* Over the next couple of years the evangelists returned but this time they were looking for “a person of peace” and they bonded with him and disciple him and trained him to be the leader of the church. In 1993 the Bhojpuri churches grew from 28 to 36. In 1994 it grew from 36 to 74 ... and in 1995 to 220 churches ... in 1997 700 new churches started and 800 new churches the next year. In the year 2000 a team went in to investigate if this was really true. They found over 4300 churches with over 300,000 believers ... 66,000 were new believers during the last year. Now in 2012 there are over 6 million Christian believers and they have a vision of seeing 30 million people come to Christ by 2018.



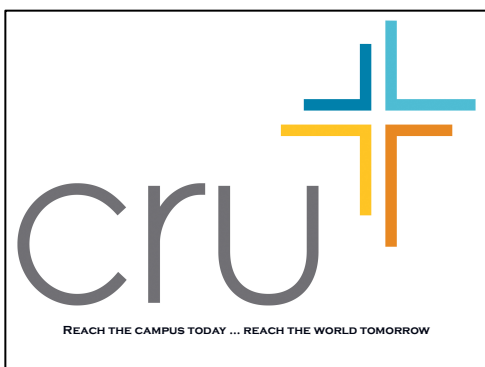
↘ Now I want you to see something. Do you remember when I showed you where the religions of the world had come from? ... how they were all born in Asia ... I want you to look at those two in the middle ... in Nepal and in India ... what religions were born there? Buddhism and Hinduism. Do you see where they are in India? ↘ Look again - They are in North India. Guess where the Bhojpuri tribe is from? Guess where this massive church planting movement has been happening. Guess where the 6 million new believers in the last 18 years has taken place. In the very birthplace of Buddhism and Hinduism. Isn't that amazing.

### Reaching Leaders for Christ

Another strategy that has been used to see many people come to Christ and into the church in Asia in the last 100 years has been a focus on reaching leaders. We saw in Korea and China that when the leaders accepted Christianity that they gave freedom for the missionaries to share this throughout the country.

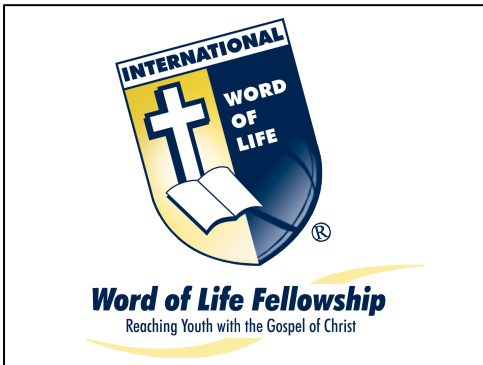
↘ A big way this has happened has been through university campus ministry. In the 1950s groups such as Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC - now called Cru), InterVarsity (IVF) and the Navigators as well as others have

focused on reaching the future leaders who are studying at the leading universities. Today CCC is on 2000 campuses around the world with the motto, *Reach the Campus Today - Reach the World Tomorrow.*





At WOL's last World Leadership Conference one of the staff in Central America was explaining the difficulty they were having in getting churches to accept Bible Clubs in their churches. The director of the ministry in Nigeria gave a great answer. He said that in Nigeria they went to the denominational church leaders and met with them, built relationships with them, explaining with them how WOL wanted to help their denominations. And there came a time that those leaders asked for WOL to help them. After that WOL began working in thousands of churches with Bible clubs all over the country. Once the leaders were behind it then ministry was huge. That is the way to see many come to Christ.

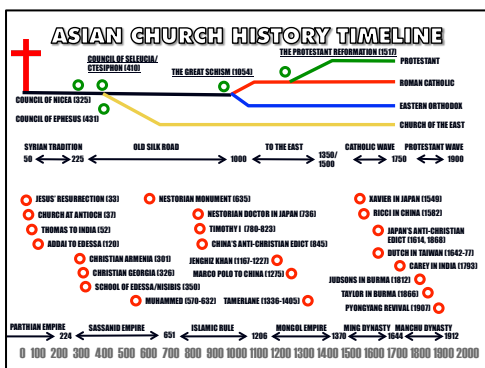


WOL not only focuses on training leaders we also focus on youth. Most people who trust in Jesus make that decision when they are young people. Our theme is "Reaching Youth with the Gospel of Christ." When our last executive director, Joe Jordan, went to Argentina he began discipling young people. At the first campfire service the young people who threw their sticks in the fire and dedicated their lives to Jesus Christ became the future directors for WOL in Central and South America and even in Europe and have seen hundreds of thousands

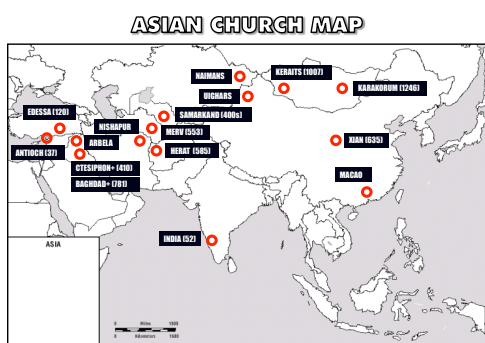
of people come to faith in Jesus Christ. If you reach the youth today you reach the world tomorrow.

### New Methods to Reach Target Groups: Japan Tokyo Youth – Black Gospel

Probably the best way to end our class is the same way Dr. Samuel ended the second volume of his book *Christianity in Asia*. He did not end with a statistic or a quote but with a story from an Asian Christian. There was a Baptist deacon living in Burma (Myanmar). He belonged to the Karen tribe in NE Burma 50 years after Adonirum and Ann Judson had been there. Missionaries came and found that rats had destroyed their rice crop and they had nothing to eat but the rats. After visiting the missionaries did not know what to do except pray for them. They were about to leave when the deacon brought them a gift of 10 rupees (about 5 USD). He said, "This is from our church for our Ka-Khyen mission – that was an unevangelized tribe that lived father north from them. The foreign missionaries said, "O no, you must use this for yourself. You are starving." The deacon shook his head, "Yes, but we can live on rats. The Ka-Khyen cannot live without the gospel."



Jesus Christ was born in Asia. The gospel has spread across Asia in its history and it's spreading across Asia again in this generation. I encourage you to find out what God is doing and join Him – be a part of it.





History of Eastern Christianity by Aziz Atiya

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1607243431/ref=dp\\_bookdescription?ie=UTF8&n=283155](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1607243431/ref=dp_bookdescription?ie=UTF8&n=283155)

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