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## When did Christianity Start?

Christianity, at its foundation, is a faith-centered on Christ, the offspring of the woman from the Garden of Eden, as promised in Genesis 3:15. This declaration of divine intent, often referred to as the Protoevangelium or "first gospel," serves as the cornerstone of God's creative plan. This plan, distinct from a purely redemptive framework, reflects an eternal purpose set forth at the dawn of creation. The promise of the offspring who would crush the serpent's head was not merely a response to the events in Eden but the unveiling of a purpose that had always existed within God's design for creation. Thus, Christianity's roots extend far beyond the historical manifestation in the 1st century, in the eternal reality of God's intention.

The events of the 1st century marked the historical culmination of this eternal purpose, mainly through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Recognized by His followers as the promised Messiah, Jesus embodied the fulfillment of God's creative plan. However, to situate Christianity as beginning solely within this historical framework means overlooking its deeper origin. Christianity is not merely a movement born of historical events but the realization of a promise spoken at the beginning of time now revealed in Christ.

In the 1st century, Jesus' ministry was deeply rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures, reflecting the covenant established with Abraham and carried through the lineage of Shem. His followers understood His mission as fulfilling the Law and the Prophets, confirming the promises made to Israel. The earliest followers of Jesus, predominantly Jewish, perceived their faith not as a departure from Judaism but as its fulfillment. They worshiped in synagogues, followed Jewish customs, and regarded Jesus as the one through whom God's promises to their forefathers were realized.

The proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah brought His followers into conflict with their time's religious authorities and the Roman Empire's cultural milieu. This tension catalyzed the expansion of the faith beyond its Jewish roots, mainly through the work of the Apostle Paul. Paul's missionary journeys and theological insights facilitated the spread of Christianity to Gentile populations, bringing the message of Christ into the broader Greco-Roman world. As Gentiles embraced the faith, the nature of Christianity began to evolve, reflecting the diverse cultures and philosophies of the people who joined the movement.

This intersection with the Greco-Roman world marks a significant chapter in the historical narrative of Christianity. The descendants of Japheth, as described in Genesis 10, include the Greeks, Romans, and other Indo-European peoples. These groups played a pivotal role in shaping the cultural and philosophical environment in which Christianity grew. The prophecy in Genesis 9:27, where Noah declares, "May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem," provides a theological framework for understanding this development. Shem's lineage, through which the covenant was established, ultimately leads to Christ. Japheth's descendants, representing the Greco-Roman world, are welcomed into the blessings of this covenant, fulfilling the prophecy that they would dwell in the tents of Shem.