

# Jerusalem - City of Peace

Rev. Dr. Sundara Rao Tsappidi M.A., D.Litt.



# **JERUSALEM - CITY OF PEACE**

*By*

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(C) The author

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# WORD OF APPRECIATION

The title of this book “Jerusalem- City of Peace” is quite apt and appreciable. The author **Dr. Sundara Rao Tsappidi** narrated with suitable presentation of the vivid subjects, the whole topics are spiritual especially Biblical.

Majority of the topics and their themes are well suited to understand the above average people. The author’s noble ideas and intellectual thoughts can be seen in the following topics such as Faith Conquers History of the Tabernacle, what made the Jews hate Jesus?, History of Jerusalem etc,....

In the chapter of what is faith? He touched some interesting topics such as faith is the synonym for the entire gospel, faith is taking God at His word, faith is a gift for daily triumphant living. Very few intellectuals know about the History of Tabernacle Lord specified Moses to build the Tabernacle and gave the plan to build it. Tabernacle is the dwelling moving temple of God.

- 1) The Ark of covenant
- 2) The Menorah
- 3) The Incense altar
- 4) The Table of shew bread

The writer gave *very* much importance to the character of King David, God and satan, particularly how satan tried to show his supremacy over God and man in two chapters.

The writer has very well sketched the character of Jesus Christ. He came to this world

- ❖ to heal the sick.
- ❖ To spread the word of God.
- ❖ To die on the Cross for the sake of Sinners



He called Jesus as the world greatest healer and religious leader, With His sermons especially on the mount, the world's great man of prayer. The Lord's prayer is the most beautiful and supreme.

He gave clear pictures of Biblical sacrifices in which the Lord wanted that each worshipper should identify himself with his sacrifice.

His narration of the Biblical topics are very well understandable by a common man particularly in the chapter of "Faith conquers" the character of Bartimaeus who was a blind man and has the confidence, that Lord Jesus would heal him by giving good sight. He shouted Jesus "the son of David", is a clear cut messianic term. He correctly demonstrated his thoughts of faith.

God wants us to be persistent in our prayers. Among many chapters in this book, "History of Jerusalem" enlightened me much.

The title itself means the 'House of peace' Today mankind requires peace in this world. Many people in the world think that we can get peace only in Jerusalem, because it is only one country rather city in the world and the worship place to Jews, Arabs and Christians.

I must congratulate the writer Dr. Sundara Rao Tsappidi for bringing out many Biblical books especially this "Jerusalem- City of Peace. I pray the Almighty God to give him strength and spiritual knowledge to bring out as many books as possible to the thirsty people in the globe.

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# *1. Biblical Miracles*

It is not justified if we speak of the miracles without thinking about the miracles in the Bible. By doing so, we can understand what is the exact meaning of it which is either from the Bible or elsewhere. We can divide the miracle stories into plausible or implausible and possible or impossible. If we believe the God of the bible who created the universe (cosmos) out of nothingness, according to the Old Testament we can accept that He is capable of rising the dead to life and multiplying the loaves and fish. This kind of miracle made us to believe that such things are possible for a person who created the cosmos of the universe. Some miracles due to some reason do not make us believe but it depends upon hope. We take that particular story miracle into consideration and finally give our judgment.

But we have a man who won the flood of popularity as a true and craved pleasing and captivating hero the son of God Jesus Christ. We know this from the pages of the New Testament. Every one of the true miracles attracted to Jesus is a sign pointing to beyond miracle itself. When Jesus brought sight to a blind man He was signifying the idea that we are all blind spiritually and needed God's help to see. Jesus also fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah. When he multiplied loaves and fish that means he was doing something with many loaves and fish only to feed that were hungry.

The impression of the believers is that God can do anything and nothing is impossible for him. The Bible also says the same with God all things are possible. God gave us common sense when we think of the miracle. We believe that God can do anything but there are certain things that He would not do.

It is believed some miracles violate his character. It is really interesting to know about the character of God. We think about God's character with all our understanding the subject that we can see from the



stories of both Old and New Testament. So to say they are the original sources for any kind of authentic information. We have to keep this in our minds regarding the character of God. When we hear about any miracle story. We have to evaluate any miracle first of all whether it is fit to the character of God of the Bible or not.

We know the God in some stories from pagan folklore but the God of the Bible is not someone who plays games like pagan god's. For instance if some people imagine that the cosmos was created a few thousand years ago and if they are confronted with geological evidence to the contrary, then they simply respond that God can do anything in ending the creation of geological evidence. That is deliberately misleading if we question why God did such miracles. The answer is to trust our faith Jesus never did anything intentionally misleading nor the Old Testament contain any example of misleading people in any manner. In such conditions if one thinks about the character of God of the Bible and find anything lack in him then he can reject such ideas in Him.

In 17th chapter from the Gospel of Matthew there is a fish story that crossed even the boundaries for it is a wonderful miracle and also speaks about the true character of God. According to this miracle story Jesus asked peter to pay the tax they owe to the government by catching fish. Whose mouth contained the necessary coin? As far as we understand this miracle of the New Testament appeared to the quickest one Christ did. To understand this clearly we must look into it the details. The coin mentioned in the passage is certainly a silver coin shackle coin which is equal to two Alexandrina Drach mark. The tax would have been one half shekel to each person, and it was the correct coin and amount to be paid for both Jesus and Peter. Then speaking about the story the coin of somebody must have been slipped into the water must have swallowed by the fish. If it is a common experience that when we drop anything into water the fish that will be moving immediately grab it. But who can say what exactly happened. The details are that the fish has a silver coin in its mouth is not at all impossible.

We have to account for further idea that Jesus tells peter to go to catch fish knowing and the fact that he would catch that particular fish which has silver coin in its mouth. There is also an idea that Jesus must have known particular fish has silver coin in its mouth. Of all the miracles of the New Testament, this is the most important which would attract everybody and this is meant to point out to us to see something beyond the miracle itself. One of the most important aspects of this story is how it demonstrates the specific aspects of the character of Jesus is always honest in what he says to peter as another fact.

Actually, they need not pay the tax but they do so because nobody is offended. Jesus wishes his disciples and others to understand that we must always go with the proverbial “extra mile” we don’t do what we are required to do, but we must do more. If we believe God has given us much then we can offer something to others requirement God is more generous toward us with more blessings because we are His children. The idea of grace and generosity and unforced self giving is the heart of the New Testament idea of agapes love and the simple details of the story we can see it again.

The most important and central illustration of this idea is the death of Jesus on the cross. He sacrificed his life for the sake of others out of love but not because we deserve his sacrifice for we must be thankful to him and humble our selves before we really understand the situation. But Jesus Christ always called his disciples and followers with beyond the justice of an “eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth”. His realm of Agape’s Love of generous gracious, selfless giving born out of the super abundance of relationship with God. We can also see in the scripture what Christ in the beginning of the public ministry was when He went to the Jordan river to take the Baptism from his cousin John the Baptist.

To our understanding Jesus was the sinless son of God. In such a conditions He need not take Baptism at all to have His sin forgiven symbolically washed away. but He wanted to identify Himself publicly so that others in the public who are sinners will allow Him for cleaning their

sins Jesus came down to move among us by leaving all His glory in heaven. He entered the water of Jordan river for Baptism humbling himself publicly. He illustrated the same thing when he became the lowest person and tried to wash the feet of his disciples. He showed all these examples because if we wanted the perfect life like himself we too must be humble before others so that they too would wash our feet. He paid the temple tax with a silver coin that was taken from the mouth of a fish was another such example. So, the details of the stories were considered with the Character of Jesus Christ and all the other stories in the New Testament especially with His teaching that we love our enemies to walk the extra mile and turn the other cheek.

The above said stories also linked with the story of the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. First He asked that woman to give Him water as He was thirsty. After a brief conversation with the woman Jesus said that the water He would give never make any one thirsty and people must think of that perennial water so He said

*“Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life”.* (John 4:13-14)

### **Feeding of the Five Thousand people :**

This is known miracle of loaves and fishes will illustrate the same principle of God's super abundant grace. This miracle also indicates the wonderful idea that each one of these miracles or signs Jesus did was meant to signify much and to point out the presence of the people and us. So God himself before Jesus performed this miracle He just heard the beheading of his cousin John the Baptist by the cruel king Herod. He came to the picture with grief in his mind.

When Jesus heard (the news) He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it they followed

Him on foot from the cities and When Jesus went out He saw a great multitude.

Jesus was not in a mood to be moved by the presence of that big crowd He wished to be lonely with His disciples to be grieved over the cruel murder of His beloved cousin John the Baptist. He grieved because John was not only his cousin but also according to him he was the greatest prophet of God. King Herod beheaded John only to satisfy the wish of a woman with whom he was committing adultery with the daughter of the women. Though he was completely in unhappy mood he had compassion over the moving multitude and heard their sickness. Jesus came out of the boat and saw many thousands of people were waiting for him. They seemed to have desperated and Jesus was filled with compassion. In the Bible it is mentioned that in a few verses there were a few thousands men in the crowed. Which means there must be fifteen to twenty thousand in total. Many of them travelled from different places because they had confidence in Jesus that he would heal their sickness.

Some scholars were under the impression that Jesus must have done many miracles on the occasion probably even hundreds. But the Gospel Writers did not give much importance to the figure only to the main miracle about loaves and fishes. John mentioned in his gospel (John 21:25) that Jesus did many other things with this we can presume that only after performing hundreds of miracles Jesus came to the miracle of loaves and fishes.

When it was evening His disciples came to Him this is a deserted place and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away that they may go into villages and buy themselves food. But Jesus said unto them they need not go away you give them something to eat. “And they said unto Jesus. We have only five loaves and two fish. Then Jesus said Bring them here to me”. Then he commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves, two fish and looked up to heaven He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples and the disciples gave that to

the multitudes. So, they all ate and the remaining they took up into twelve baskets full of the fragments. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men besides women and children.

The most wonderful event of that day became memorable because plenty of food was left after they ate but some people became selfish and hid food from one another and somehow Jesus came to know this. If we try to understand the passage actually it won't serve our purpose. As a matter of fact this interpretation unravels with single verse from Matthew Gospel 13:32 when Jesus said "I have compassion on the crowd. They have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat and I am unwilling to send them away hunger. The opinion of others regarding selfish people Jesus did not want to give due importance to such things without any damage to the text.

This remarkable miracle would communicate us that Jesus heavenly father cared more the physical means also but not just their spiritual needs. As he had compassion on the sick and healed them he had compassion on the hungry also and fed them. So just as in this miracle Jesus made it clear. That feeding the hungry people also he took seriously. He is the God who only had what one wanted. He wants to make us happy with the blessings of heaven. The people who had witness that great miracle must have immediately recollected the wonderful story of prophet Elisha who multiplied olive oil as recounted in (1kings 4:17)

The Jews knew clearly that one day a Messiah would come, who was like Prophet Moses. They also remembered how Moses fed the multitude in the wilderness with Manna. So the people and particularly the Jews compared the miracle of loaves and fish with how Moses fed the Israelites in the wilderness with Manna. The next point Jesus made in this miracle was the one that would have been lost, but it would not be lost on anyone familiar with what he did later of the last Supper. The act of the praying by Jesus and then breaking the bread in the midst of a vast multitudes was a prefigurement and a fore shadowed of his breaking the bread in the upper

room and in turn a prefigurement of breaking the body of Christ on the cross. And this act has been shared by all believers through communion being shared by all through centuries.

And finally the number of baskets left over twelve is almost intended to remind us the twelve tribes of Israel, and also the twelve disciples of Jesus who were the first followers of Jesus Christ and represented the church and who were meant to be new Israel.

### **How Lazarus was raised from the dead:**

It is said Jesus raising of Lazarus from the dead in many ways was a miracle of miracles. Through this wonderful story we can understand the true picture of God entering and acting in this world in a most dramatic way in the pages of Bible. Many Bible scholars were of the opinion that the raising of Lazarus by Jesus was the most everlasting miracle of all other miracles of Jesus in the new Testament. Everything that went before this event built to this scene the entrance of Jesus unto Jerusalem and the shouts of acclamation and before his death on the cross a few days later were all his achievements.

So, as to understand the significance of this miracle we must recollect one thing that Jesus was a close friend of Lazarus and his two sisters Mary and Martha. When Lazarus fell sick the sisters immediately sent a message to Jesus but he was far away from that place. Finally he received the message regarding the condition of Lazarus and said “This sickness will not end in death now it is for God’s glory so that God’s son may be glorified through it. Jesus knew the serious condition of Lazarus, yet he waited in the same place for two more days. He also knew that his friend would die before He goes to the place but the death of Lazarus gave Jesus an opportunity to perform the greatest of all his miracles in order to glorify God more powerfully than He had done before.

By the time Christ came to Bethany the place of Lazarus, he already died and he was in the tomb for four days. Then Jesus consoled both the



sisters individually and said The one who believes in me will live and even though he dies and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this the reason of that those who believe in him will never die is because Jesus himself is the source of life He is the one who created the universe and also created man the source of life itself. Then first let us see Him who He was we would see Him the humble humanity and how He wept when He saw His friend and others. Jesus himself wept the verse is just two words “Jesus wept”.

Jesus came to the tomb of Lazarus with more emotion. The text says he was once more deeply; moved Finally He did what He had come to do. Take away the stone, He said but Martha protested and said by this time there is a bad odor for he had been there for four days. Jesus reminded her again that anybody believes in Him will never die. He did not want the meaning of what he was about to do to be missed. As with all miracles it was God communicating through the miracle that was most important. So there was not merely raising his beloved friend Lazarus to life, it was about revealing his true identity and as a result many believed in him that he would restore all of them.

Jesus cried “Lazarus come out” It was really a strange thing that he was commanding a corpse. But it was He who cursed the fig tree. It was he who rebuked the boisterous wind and waves saying to them peace for still. We can call back now how the fig tree weather and the wind and the waves obeyed command of the creator and now Lazarus also simply the command creator of the universe. Bethany was about two miles only from Jerusalem and so many mourners came from Jerusalem especially to see the image of Lazarus who came out of tomb. All who saw how Lazarus died and remained in the grave for four days end came out from his tomb with life must have wondered at the creator who did that miracle.

The miracle of Lazarus resurrection gave scope for a good number of things the first point is how the religious leaders were in angry mood

when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, because those men were thinking about their power which was greatly threatened.

They had allowed themselves to be blinded by their own power and never thought of God and His power as Creator. Their thinking always ends in murderous thoughts in evil acts. The second point is Jesus performed the miracle to communicate with us. He wanted to demonstrate God's power specially so that people would see who He was and then come to believe in Him. He wanted to magnify the effect of the miracle so that it would point people to Him as the Messiah so that His Father God would be glorified. The next point is how God was glorified through this miracle. Jesus could have saved Lazarus from dying or he could have saved him immediately by raising him from his death but he did not do. Through this miracle God wanted us to trust in Him.

We see clearly that it is God and all God's grace this in turn gives us the clear picture of our spiritual condition that we are spiritually dead. We have no life we are the spiritual corpse and we need the life of resurrection that God only give us. God is the reason for life. Which we see it in Jesus raising of Lazarus to life this reminds us saying of God "I am the resurrection and Life" and He demonstrated this by raising a four days old corpse to breathing walking conscious life.

By raising Lazarus from the dead Jesus wanted to say that He was God the very author of life. The miracle of Lazarus is God's way of life forcing us to see apart from Jesus there is no life. This man was very humbled but died horrible death in the hands of his own people in a short time.

## *2. The wrath of God*

The believers may have different opinion about the Anti Christ. He is probably a relatively unknown but he is called a charismatic personality. He will come on to the scene as if millions of people are packing him for his efforts. This Anti Christ will have peace covenant for seven years, through negotiations with Israelites and with the support of some world nations. A false prophets may also rise passing from Israel and try to support the Anti Christ for the implementation of this peaceful covenant brutally and encourage many people to worship the Anti Christ (Revelation 3:11-12)

He will try to establish his influence in the middle east and beyond region. There may be some nations or individuals who try to oppose his efforts, resulting of wars or rumours of war

There will be marking system also though it was promulgated. It will be instituted for the purpose of identification who are in allegiance with the Anti Christ's increasing government and it's collaborating religious system. There will be a discipline promise by a false prophet of good things await those who whole heartedly submit themselves to the Anti Christ.

They must make Idols in his honor and take his mark either on their right hands or on their foreheads (Revelation 13:13-17) Added to that those who do not worship the Anti Christ will be caught and killed. But those who are found with the mark will be doomed by the God of Israel the eternal torment.

During this time the Israelites with their peace covenant feel that they are out of danger. They believe and relax themselves that they will not have the punishment of death, that has been going on around them. After conforming the peace covenant they feel free and enjoy themselves for 3 1/2 years of peace and safety. But their peace and safety are short lived during this time; Israelites will have once again the access to rest their most holy

site on the Temple Mount. They may try to institute the ancient sacrificial worship system. Which abundant and later destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D.

Perhaps only the Jewish people who worshipped the Lord on the mount Moriah, may follow the wilderness Tabernacle, as developed in the Torah (The law) Nevuim (The Prophet) Kitham ( the writings). These are the important things we come across in the old testament.

Eventually a large temple is anticipated in the near future but the presence of God will not indwell the temple. In the mean time the system of Anti Christ will become a threat to the food resources. As a result, the Jews who are not in favour of Anti Christ, will be starved and those who have some money if they want to purchase the food stuff the cost of the food items will be beyond their approach. It is said only rich people and who are loyal and support. Anti Christ will enjoy the essential commodities (Revelation 6:6). It is only self indulgent leaders and merchants of the world, who have link with the Anti Christ will prosper till the end of seven years period.

In these critical conditions death in the streets will increase enormously due to the occurrence of war and famine. The outcome of those diseases like pestilence will spread in many parts of the world. During the first 3 1/2 years of the seven years of the covenant there will be a master plan to allow the Jews people for the worship on the temple mount, the Muslim Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa will remain as it is on the Temple mount and in course of time a wall may be built around the Jewish temple. It is crystal clear that the ancient 35 acres land will be divided between the Jews and Muslims. In this 3 1/2 year period the Anti Christ will establish his abomination like putting his statue in the temple of the most high 'ELEYON' and defile it by sacrificing pigs on the altar which is an indication of insult to Jews and their God. The Anti Christ will plan to discourage the Jews not to worship their God at this stage. He will violate

his own covenant of peace and starts his brutal persecution of the Jews. He will start his wrathful act first in Jerusalem Judah then spread this throughout the world.

Here the 3 1/2 year mark is a period of time known as the great Tribulation, which is planned by the Anti Christ fights against the Jews spiritual Christians who were considered children of Jews. The Anti Christ in his wrathful situation kills the Jews as far as possible and enforces his mark on the people. Who will be forced to become his supporters and loyal to him. And those who do not support him and his mark will be persecuted miserably. Buying and selling of food material will be only between those who possess his mark. But regarding those faithful to Yewah (God) and refuse His mark will be persecuted, martyred or beheaded. Those who became martyrs for their faith on God will go to a place of prestige beneath the altar of God in heaven. As mentioned in the Bible the true believers who refuse his mark will be murdered by the Anti Christ in his evil empire.

### **The wrath of God not yet:**

We must understand now at this stage, that none of the events spoken so far will cause any anger to God. The chronology of events up to this point we have entered the 70th week spoken off by the prophet Daniel have traversed at least 3 1/2 of first seven years covenant and then entered into the great tribulation. Yet there is no resurrection or rapture of the saints. The church inspite of many people today who agree contradictorily remain on earth without any punishment. scripture pointed out that believers will not suffer any more the God's coming wrath. At the same time it is said in the scripture that the believers are not exempted from the wrath of the Anti Christ.

We cannot come to an immediate conclusion whether God will use His wrath with the points we have seen so far. Let us look into scripture again for our answer. Let us not set to the emotion and natural desire of our heart before this time of difficulty for Jews and Christians. A verse from the

book of minor prophet Joel who gave the answer to our doubt He said “the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come” (Joel 2:31). By looking at this wonderful answer we can understand cosmic event is invoking the sun the moon and the stars.

The mankind has to remember that this cosmic event indicates the terrible day of the Lord has come and about to begin. To be more clear when you see this cosmic event and looking at all other related verses to get the whole picture it is not simply and eclipse you know God’s wrath is about to begin because the cosmic event is said to accure before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes So, until you see the cosmic event in the scripture you know God’s wrath has not yet begun, It is presumed that the rapture will accure at (revelation 4:1) where the Apostle John represents the church and is supposedly caught up in the rapture in heaven.

At that stage we may see the cosmic event immediately preceding that verse in the Scripture. That kind of reference we do not find anywhere in the preceding three chapters of the book of Revelation because this book contains God’s unveiling time events. If we look into the world events today people are under the impression that God has taken back His protection and bringing his wrath now itself against the unbelieving world. If that is the opinion of the people then the wrath of God has begun in some time later. We have studied about this ‘epic’ cosmic sign in the sun, the moon and the stars as prophesized by many prophets in the old testament.

The prophets have repeated the same in the New Testament also, in the book of Matthew 24, Acts 2 and Revelation 6. The answer is of course “No” Let us see if there is any evidence that the wrath of God does not begin at the start of the seven years period according to pre tribulation assert. For this we have to look into the opening of the seals in revelation. Just before cosmic sign in the sixth seal. During the events of the fifth seal we



find the books of the mortise of God under His altar in Heaven cried out unto the Lord asking Him.

*“And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”* (Revelation 6:10)

Here, the saints are asking God when he will take revenge against those people who killed them on the earth. To be more clear, when he is going to give his judgment against those who killed them for no reason. And if His wrath is already being poured out then those beloved saints do not understand the events that have been occurring prior to the day. They asked the question the fact is they “Do” understand what is going on they recognize God has not yet begun to exercise His work of using His wrath against those who are in league with Anti Christ. That is the reason why they are asking Him when He is going to start His work of eliminating the criminals who are against the Christian faith.

Coming to the fifth seal again we have not come across any significant event. whether God has started pouring His wrath against any victim. But the slain sanits are under the impression that God has not yet started pouring His wrath on anybody. So, they are requesting God to go with His judgment and Punish. Killers at the earliest and give them relief according to the Bible the saints of the fifth seal will begin at the start of the great Tribulation as understood by some readers at the 3 1/2 year mark. (The midpoint of the seven years). Those events will continue until God brings to an end of a later time.

**So it is said :**

*And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were.* (Revelation 6:11)

In the fifth seal, the events begin at 3 1/2 year mark (the midpoint of the seven years period). and saints under the altar are told to wait for some more time since God's wrath has not yet started what God wants to say here is the wrath will come into force some time later at the midpoint.

### **The fearful and the Hopefull:**

The following spiritual evidence may appear surprising and also it may be competing. After sixth seal there are a good number of passages indicating the events of the world. This news of the world is not only to the believers but also to the non believers that the wrath of God is about to begin. And we can have this in two passages which are followed by cosmic events in scripture in the book of Matthew we can see the cosmic events indicating god's wrath is about to begin. (Matthew 24:29)

Matthew says in this way, those who are alive at that time may be all the tribes of the earth mourn and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with music of trumpets with power and glory. This point is tackled by another penmen like Luke in a different way regarding believers and non believers. He says

*“Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory”. (Luke 21:26-27)*

*“Then what Luke wants to say to the believers is “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh”. (Luke 21:28)*

The wrath of God is about to begin and the followers of the Anti Christ are in absolute fear, what is going to happen to them. At this stage most of the believers are undergoing in the hands of the Anti Christ. The suffering of the believers in the hands of the Anti Christ and the time of great Tribulation will be coming to an end.

The book of Revelation gives additional evidence and details regarding the thoughts of those who are alive on earth at the time of the cosmic event.

*And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? (Revelation 6:15-17)*

It is clearly said here, that the unrepentant humanity cannot face the wrathful face of God. So, they try to either hide or die as they are terribly afraid of revengeful God. Who sitteth on the throne, and embodied with the wrath of the Lamb.  
whose wrath?

Let us take a look at the events that must have taken place in the first seven seals in the book of Revelation we have to examine how far these events caused the wrath of God. We must understand first. God is the sovereign authority and controlling everything. That does not mean he is responsible for whatever is happening. God has His sovereign will and also His permissive will.

Though God is sovereign power, He is not directly invoked in persecution and martyrdom that has been going on around the globe on Christians who are faithful to Jesus Christ. Just for argument we may take it for granted that God is willingly killing his own children by some gruesome means whatever may be our opinion about the actions of God. He is going to defeat Satan at the end times. His permission may allow Satan to persecute his children according to the first five seals found in Revelation sixth chapter.

In the first seal God allows the white horse and the rider on to the stage of history to accomplish the activities of Satan to defeat God. Then

the Anti Christ and his millions will try to establish their evil kingdom God does not command them try to defeat him because of his permission will allow the Anti Christ. Then coming to the second seal God allows the red horse and the rider to depart The Anti Christ. begins to exact forces and gain power by taking peace from the earth. Then He tries to threaten people by saying that he will declare war and demand that they would submit themselves to Satan Anti Christ command some will surrender some will not. So, the outcome of this seal is more concern to war.

If God really wants to exercise His wrath then there will be no rumor of war because he will defeat and eliminate all the enemies. For example, if we look at the battle of Armageddon he will force all the enemies with their armies join together against Him for the final war, in which all the enemy forces will be utterly defeated and they lose their powers also. (Revelation 16:16-21)

Here, we have to think about one technical point. That is in the second seal God is permissive in the battle of Armageddon He is sovereign In the third seal black horse and the rider are permitted to move forward next the Anti Christ is permitted to have full control over food supplies. As a result they can have full grip over the mankind with this he can increase the rates of the food stuff abundantly those who are against the Anti Christ will be unable to purchase the food items at abnormal rate. So they stoop down to drink the milk of beasts God allows both Satan and the Anti Christ to do all this mischief against His people.

In the fourth seal the pale horse and the rider are allowed to sip out the Anti Christ through wars and controlling the food supplies becomes responsible for the death of so many people. To say Satan and Anti Christ are responsible for all the deaths but not the wrath of God. Regarding the fifth seal we have discussed so far. Satan and the Anti Christ exhibited their wrath and killed many people of God. So to say this is nothing but letting down and deliberate face to face murder of those who are specifically Jewish people or those who

are faithful toward messiah or the Jewish people of Jesus Christ the anointed one.

If those souls under the altar of God are the result of God's wrath then He will have lied with His Children and as a result defile His holy name. The fact is we have to wait till the coming of Christ from heaven. God further says it is impossible for a believer to be martyrs under the altar of God if it is the result of His own wrath. When the fifth seal begins the altar of God is already full. They are told to wait till some more to come and join them. We have to find out who they are and how they come to the place. In the great tribulation (the wrath of Anti Christ) begins martyrs will be added to those who are already under the altar in the future after the midpoint (3 1/2 year). Then who are the martyrs already there at the beginning of the Great Tribulation?

It is said in the Bible about the first martyr as we see is "Abel" who was killed by his own brother Cain. Both were the sons of Adam and Eve. The reason is Abel was very obedient and faithful toward God.

Then there were many prophets killed by some of the Davidic Dynastic rulers. They did not believe the messages which were actually prophetic sayings of the prophets of the Old Testament were miserably and brutally killed in the streets and it is said their blood flowed like water on the roads. Coming to the New Testament "Stephen" was the first martyr who was killed with the help of stones outside the gate of Jerusalem and Apostle Paul was one of them in Killing Stephen. Apart from that there are countless number of saints who lost their lives for their faith and testimonies of Christ in the history. Till the time of Great Tribulation begins, they are already there under the altar anxiously awaiting to take vengeance against those who killed them. Those who became martyrs at the Great Tribulation will be added to the old list.

God explains his wrath :

There are some prophetic verses describing the wrath of God.

*Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cried both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. (Isaiah 13:9-13)*

If at all the wrath of God begins at the first seal nothing is happening even remotely nor sounds like the above passage, when the white horse and the rider appear on the scene of history. We do not see the heavens shaking or the earth quaking until the time of the sixth seal of God the Sun, the Moon and stars. we may also except the wrath of God at the time of trumpet Judgment. We can see the beginning of the events occur on the earth like the above passage.

*That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land. (Zeph 1:15-18)*

When the fury of God is going to begin there is no clear idea during the opening of the scrolls in the hands of the lamb. The confluence of



prophetic sayings and the careful study of the readers gave the concluding statement that the outcome of the first five seals is the wrath of Satan and the Anti Christ against the people of God.

### **Sound the Alarm :**

In the sixth seal of Revelation from the 6th Chapter we see the sign of God in the Sun, Moon and stars which indicate His wrath we will certainly see God either protecting or removing His children at the latest, God is always right and He is on time. As we see He is Protecting His 1, 44, 000 Jews. They were the 12 tribes of Israel (Jacob) each tribe with 12000 people.

We also see a great multitude of resurrected raptureed saints in Heaven under the altar.

The people that will be saved by God are His Jewish remnant that are sealed and protected His redeemed children raptured to His presence those who remain on earth the unbelievers the recipients of His impending wrath which is going to begin immediately with the opening of the seventh seal and the unveiling of the trumpet judgment that we find in Revelation chapter 8. Having studied and understood the contents let us be faithful and warn our family members and friends about the anticipated wrath. God is always merciful. He wants to see that nobody should perish He wants all of us to repent, because He is always righteous and just. He wants to punish the wickedness.

### *3. Danger of Atheism*

The greatest threat today is not from the communism nor from ungodly countries but it is whether man can live without God in his life. On Christmas eve in the year 1968, three American Astronauts were the first in the world as human beings to go around the dark side of the moon on apolo 8 which was away from the earth. Then on their return they saw our earth planet in such a way that human eye had never witnessed before In their astonishment and awe inspiring experience they opened the pages of the Book of Genesis from the Holy Bible and read for the whole world to hear, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Apart from that there were two more expeditions took place into the space. So this extraordinary experience took place and became a fundamentally debated question on earth. So the controversial question has been whether God who has created man existed ? or Has man created God? Is God Indispensible to any cosmological explanations or he is only a psychological necessity of man? The problem of Atheism since many years has been going on. Encyclopedia Britannia was published in fifty five volumes and it was considered “The great Books of the western world”. Mortimer Adler a well known philosopher and legal scholar was a co editor of those books. The eminent scholars looked into those books concerning the important ideas for centuries. The essays in those followers were compared and contrasted and the largest essay was found on God. Mr. Adler said in this connection regarding the consequence for life and the action would follow from the affirmation of demical of God than from any other basic questions.

Lucasian Professor of Mathematics in the Cambridge University expressed his few points of the universe and ended with a humble assertion of an answer to the question of God. In modern days there are many people who strongly support Atheism. Fraud assessment of religion has further wounded the creditability of church by dragging human severity out of the

sacred quarters of marriage bed room and reducing marriage to our alternative for social independence (Just as work is an alternate for economic independence). In view of fraud religion was a public version of a private observance. He branded the hopes and beliefs of the church as the future of an illusion which was one of his letters of his book.

Nietzsche was one of the staunch supporters of Atheism. He totally despised religion in general and Christianity in particular with unimaginable fury. Some of his demonstrations were in his book “Anti Christ” he said I call the Christianity the one great curse” The emotions and inner most provisions the one great instinct of revenge which no means are too venomous too underhand too underground and to pity. Nietzsche was called more imaginative spokesmen of atheism. The popular historian Paul Johnson referred to Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini and called them as three devils who were influenced by the dogmas of Nietzsche regarding religion and Christianity Added to that the liberal theologians and their movements with the slogan “God is dead” shook very foundations of ecclesiastical in the middle of the twentieth century.

Nietzsche did not see any men with more intelligence behind the framing of this world transcending force growing counsel to this material world. He saw no light at the end of the turn and he felt loneliness of existence in its most desolate form. Modern philosophers and Christian thinkers tired their best to warm humanity though they have no faith in God. In the platonic doctrine and in prophetic voices of Judeo Christian tradition there is a wall punctuated recurrence of device between harmony within that a life lives by the truth and a discord within a life that shines the eternal virtues. Another noted Philosopher G. K. Chesterton said that to believe in the non existence of God would be analogues to walking up some morning looking up in the mirror and seeing nothing.

Israelites their ideas and their consequences are too serious to reflect with and linguistic surgery will not do. The death of God will not produce

any sanitized superman to pull us up by cosmic boot straps. If God is dead somebody may try to occupy that place. Then it is like mugolemunia etomenia the dive for power or the dive for player. Let us see the story of a cynic, who was sitting under a nut tree. By sitting lonely he was continuously joking with gibbling monologues with God. Thought it is a failure on the part of God and said Lord how is that you made smaller fruits to big trees almost weightless and you made bigger fruits like water melon to small trees while he was seriously thinking about the disproportion in God's mindless universe a nut from that big tree fell on his head. Having understood the greatness of the creator repented and felt sorry for the words he spoke against the supreme God. Then in his foolish voice he said thank God that it was not a water melon.

In our high paced information inundated society it is certainly going to take more reasons than a falling nut on a questioning head as many would come to that conclusion in the society. The danger of a simple faith is simplistic answer, than an informed mind can bring a proportionate response Atheism is found with enormous data and through much material to justify its conclusion. In this pursuit it must have crossed many hurdles in the way to logical existence. When it is unable to cross those hurdles then it must be looking at the validity of theism.

As a matter of fact atheism is a doctrinal belief that there is no God. It is an affirmation of God's non existence. The history of interaction between theism and evolutionary theory is filled with veradic language and verifying exchange between competing world views. An atheist by definition subscribes to a naturalistic views of our origin and existence the effect is forced to what is called wishing theory of history. Some philosophers psychologists and sociologists were of the opinion that the moral obsoletes are the things of the past and they recognised and endorsed moral theory is anachronistic that vocauous and Nietzsche said in the following way.

When one gives up the Christian faith one puts the right to Christian morality out from under one feet. This morality by no means is self existence.

Christianity is a system a whole bag of things thought out together. By breaking one concept out of it the faith in God one breaks the whole. It stands or falls with faith in God.

Nietzsche was right in his saying that one cannot rescue the beneficial aspect of Christian morality while doing away with Christ. One cannot salvage the Ten Commandments while destroying the authority of the books of Moses. Nietzsche considered the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount for a demning approach to life, because they emphasised more on the responsibility of man for the poor and weak in the society But Nietzsche said a society driven by ideas such society will be controlled by losers.

People like Bertrand Russell and Tean Paul Serra and even woody Allen have had profound impact on society. They happened to argue against the existence of God with their intellectual caliber. If Atheism gives the life sustaining support from authentic evolution then it cannot shut the flood gates to the tidal waves of its philosophical implications. It is certainly important to keep this in prospective. Adolf Hitler unintentionally exposed atheism and dragged it where it was unwillingly forced into its consequences. The demanding of people in every sense of the word. That occurred in the concentration camps that brought about our working of the demise of God and finally the extermination of moral law.

Because of the hatred toward God and Christianity both Hitler of Germany and Stalin of Russia massacred about fifteen million innocent people. A historian pointed out that while Hitler seduced Germany Stalin raped Russia and it was their atheistic world views. If anybody perchance say he is far away from the field of atheism in the argument Nietzsche said because God had died during the nineteenth century the twentieth century would become bloodiest century in history. It is very important for clear understanding that all atheists are not immoral. Morality means goodness which cannot be justified by atheistic presuppositions. So it can be said that not all atheists are immoral but morality as goodness cannot be justified with atheistic presuppositions. It is further argued that atheism is not the only philosophy

which has resulted in war and the crusaders engendered created volumes in the name of Christ and the answer is quite strait. There might be some believers in the name of Jesus Christ who kill people in support of their belief and propagate it. Such people are really in serious contradiction for their gospels and the messages. In contrast the demagogues like Nietzsche and Serre began their operation in total with great injunction of the ideology behind their actions.

We would be deceived more if we falsely conclude that the philosophy of atheism has not affected with violence. Some intellectuals who have indicated God from their philosophies have not remained content. The laws of the land today are shaped by many who have a worldview that deny the moral law of God Matthew Arnold wrote his poem “Dover Beach” in the year 1851. In that poem he described the calmness of the sea and the rhythmic flow of water moving to and fro. The melancholy that stamped in his mind lifted thoughts to the tragic turn of side in spiritual nations in his English homeland. The spiritual aspect of the people began to wane gradually that is people lost faith in God and it was over shadowed by a gathering storm of skepticism. If we look into the poem “Dover Beach” and the third stanza we can find the agony in the mind of the poet. regarding the changing society That stanza is

*The sea of faith  
was once too at fever rounded the earth shore  
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle feared  
But now I only hear  
Its melancholies long with drawing roar  
Retreating to the breath  
of the night wind down the vast edges drear  
And naked shingles of the world.*

As far as we can understand Arnold wished to establish a life with meaning in a world without God. Arnold’s mind is crystal clear through his other poems also that with the loss of God came the loss of Joy, Love, Light,



Peace and Help for pain. We are left in this world on a darkening plain. The loss of a creator and the abandonment of a moral law led to the third hurdle to atheism the search for meaning. It is a most striking feature of the Biblical narration that the man who most thoroughly poured out his heart and mind on the pointlessness of existence he was renounced more than anyone else in his time. Let us look into the book Ecclesiastes of King Solomon from the Bible. He said “Vanity of Vanities all is Vanity” or “Meaningless all is meaningless” are very familiar but some have not followed his thinking to the end of the book. Solomon sincerely stated his observation about life through study and personal experience and his sense of emptiness is a recurring theme. He explained every pursuit he had taken his rage of accomplishment in wisdom pleasure work material gain and other things.

Solomon tried everything that he could grasp and his wrath could afford. He concluded that there was a monotony a circulatory and fatality to all human endeavor. The struggle observed by Solomon would take us one step further than Sisyphus's who as one of the most popular Greek story writers and mythologists. Diversity of activity and the unlimited recourses of his disposal still brought the inevitable monotony to weary even the best of minds. Here the larger point is solely by missed by those philosophers who plan and try to build and escape which for the skeptic by saying that it is meaningless to ask the question of life's meaning for centuries of great scholars and thinkers have continuously warned the departure from God demands from human beings and results in the death of many cannot be separated from each other. The farther we move from God the more we devalue man. The Nobel Prize winner T.S. Eliot described this event briefly but with powerful words.

*Where is the Life we have lost in living?  
Where is the wisdom, we have lost in Knowledge?  
Where is the Knowledge, we have lost in Information?  
The eyeless of Heaven in twenty centuries  
Bring us farther from God and nearer to the Dust.*

So, the farther we move from God the more devalue man. It is said there is a second clue and it is at the heart of naturalism during both its predicament and poverty. King Solomon gave us the key to unlock it. In his deals and pursuits he repeatedly used the phrase under the sun which denoted life outside God or life without God. The contention of Christians is that God has spoken and He has His correct place in our lives. In this context the Noble words of Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430) are most appropriate what he said is you have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee. Another noted French Mathematician and philosophers.

Blaise Pascal spoke wonderfully about this matter. He said “There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man and only God can fill it. So, the outcome of many eminent spokesmen is that atheism must walk out by bending down its head because it cannot understand eternal power and value. Atheism has to accept its predicament that without God there is no meaning to life. The following lines are from Hamlet one of the tragic dramas of William Shakespeare

*To be, or not to be: that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;  
No more; and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep;  
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come.*

The subject of death is discussed by great thinkers because this is the last enemy in the life of man, at the same time it is the common experience

we are all forced to face. Many examples are quoted to reveal death the struggle and realization of the philosophical implications from the choice between atheism and God. Winston Churchill also spoke for the whole tormented world. He cried for justice when he was pursuing the tormented world He said I have only one purpose the destruction of Hitler and my life is made simplified thereby if Hitler invaded hell I would make at least a favorable reference to the devil in the house of commons God made everything beautiful at the time of his creation. He also set eternity in the hearts of men. Yet men cannot fathom what God has done from the beginning to the end. Here the debatable questions are about death which demand correct answers. But atheism has no such show because there is no heaven to be gained and no hell to be skimmed. The atheists have killed God and left with no reason no feeling no morality no meaning to life and no hope beyond the grave.

Truth of course must be stronger than fiction. As we have modification to suit our selves (G. K. Christina) for instance Christianity suffered a lot in the hands of dictators who have framed it has a mindless mass of material that states credulity. So a greater tragedy is the way to Christian faith has suffered much in the hands of its supposed defenders. From the Bishops who were dressed in ecclesiastical regalia used to denounce the virgin birth to the communalised version of Christianity put the image of God into the world to make faith in Him most reasonable. He has life enough out to make it impossible to live by sheer observation alone. Science may be able to explain the two ounces in glass be. It cannot explain the four ounces in it.

The worldview of the Christian basically presents a powerful and unique explanation of these other two ounces with remarkable presentation. God will speak to us in many ways. He has not list himself without a witness In fact the Bible states the evidence and manner of Gods communications leaves us without excuse. The psalms 19 of David remains us splendor of the universe and it is the handwork expression of God. So, He said

The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Day after day they pour forth speech;  
night after night they reveal knowledge.

Apostle Paul also expressed the same theme for the confirmation. He said in the creation as well as the human mind God's eternal power is manifested (Romans 1:20). God has spoken from within and from without but human beings determined on self intelligent paths expresses the truth and miss the importance of God Here, the fact is the tragedy of the atheist is undoubtedly two fold The first one is his effort will not yield only consummate knowledge the choases. The second one is in his miserable aptitude to know. He works into the areas which ultimately deny him. But the Christian acquires knowledge from a drastically different point of view. Christ looks at the human beings as created by God like himself in a unique situation. For this there is no answer except God himself. Man is not God nor omnipotent but only part of what he created in the beginning. At the same time there were some creatures created in the image and likeness of God to rule the earth as a gardener over this garden but always under the control of God.

It is pointed out the morality as the most important factor in the life of every man and Bible also equates with moral unrighteousness and death with the obscene of moral souvernity Therefore the first recorded communication between God and man after the creation was on the nature of good and evil. The atheist believes that one's moral beliefs are a private matter and need not depend upon one's public pronouncements. It is a strange thing as morality is a dirty word in public and immorality has no conceived effect if it is kept private the atheist is convinced himself regarding private practices and public behavior. So morality is not related to the individual can easily draw laws and cross borders without any dirt sinking to one's feet.

Where the nationalistic world view is assumed it admits to an unknown staturing point for life and for morality also. This man is not past Scientific or incarnated for the first time that we see in John Milton's famous poem "Paradise Lost" But we met that man in the Garden of Eden where he arrogated himself the God like characteristic of defining the good and evil. The fact is

in the heart of Christian argument for morality. But the problem here is with all the humankind. Generally nobody likes the authority. All these began during the first days of creation when the first parents Adam and Eve refused to allow God to be good. As a result sin entered the world through the rejection of God and the choice for autonomy and self will.

Man and woman became authors of their own moral laws. and the first murder took place in the first parents (Cain murdered Abel) with the question “And I my brother’s keeper? and it is a fact Human kind did not accept God. As a result rebellion began and society is not jeopardized as much as individuals themselves.

People must understand from the fact of the Bible that the morality digraded and their hearts were with sin. The next point is people with their rebellion against God constantly failed to understand what sin is when they hear about it they mock at it and attack the very idea of sin as a hangover from pre scientific beliefs. The moral law is an expression of one’s love is in response to the unbounded love of God. It is a fact behind the Christian worshipping of his or her maker (the God) The moral law can be seen in the true Christian as he committed because of his gratitude toward God whose love one experiences the correct recognition of God who he is forms in man the foundation of understanding right and wrong.

With this information any one can understand the purpose and importance of morality in Christian way of life. So the moral behavior of man in the society is nothing but the overworking of spiritual recognition of who God is. But the atheist begins from sexual ethics and never tries to anchor morality or its purpose. If relationships bring meaning to life, then the ultimate mockery of life is the reality that all relationships are either reception by sin or survived by death.

It is quite but natural that every one of us wishes to maintain true relationship with God and that must not be victimized by sin or destroyed by death. The relationship is only with God and once it is established it will

serve as a blue print for all other relationships. The examined life truly becomes worth living one's conscious responds to the holiness of God one's mind is nurtured and nourished by the truth of God. one's mind is enlarged and purified by the beauty of God one's heart or impulses responds to the love of God one's will "Surrenders to the purpose of God. Because of all these things Jesus one's said if anybody would come after me he must deny himself and take up His cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23)

The central idea of this challenge is to die for one's own self centered pursuits and to build one's entire life with God's honor as primarily motivation. Christ offered to those people who were thirsty spiritually whoever they might be. The Bible says that God so loved the world that he gave his own son the only son that whoever believes Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:17)

The love of God for the world is portrayed but the application to own the love of God is purely individual. God does not spread his love in the generalities of a mass appeal but rather in the particularities of each individual. The process of God for bringing about change in society has always been through the hearts of men and women bringing cure from within rather than making short term gains by legislation from without. A Christian in the society is like salt to water society can never absorb one without change in oneself.

In Christian point of view we see the finger of God in the whole history and Christ is the center figure The Christian explains history through eternal eyes of Christ with his disciples when he broke the bread for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup (emphasis on the present) you proclaim the Lord's death (a look of the past) until he comes again (the anticipation of the future) (1 Corinthis 11:26)

Jesus is the exact figure of history God indeed had spoken and the authority of His message was demonstrated with his power over His death. Jesus Christ continually contradicts in the way we experience ourselves as alive and compels us to redefine what we mean by life. He encountered us as



he encountered his disciples. The atheist after rejecting God, between pleasurable opinions and inner peace ever eluding Him. If after death he should be found out even as a God His loss might be described as beyond repair. As a result he would be depressed of peace and contentment in this life. But death has opened the door to an ultimate eternal loss. The atheist risks everything for the present and future over the basis of a belief. The Christian who recognizes his shame before God is spiritually transformed to see the glory for which each one of us was created. If a man or woman rejects God not because of intellectual demands nor because as long as he does not need him.

Many commonly hold beliefs are prone to some mistakes. For instance let us consider the argument that assumed to be a proof against the existence of God.

1. There is evil in the world
2. If there were a God He would have done something about it
3. Nothing has been done about it
4. Therefore there is no God the problem of evil has been a major issue for discussion at present between theism and atheism.

This controversial issue can be discussed in some other way

1. Yes, there is evil in the world
2. If there is evil there must be God also (a problem the atheist has to explain)
3. If there is good and evil, there must be a moral law on which to judge between good and evil
4. If there is a moral law there must be a moral law giver.
5. For the first these points are to God the giver of moral law.

So, to extract world view on this burning topic, God, reality, knowledge, morality and humankind are necessary. Therefore we can see this world makes for a strong foundation in understanding reality So, that people will be above to deal with “Truth and Error”

## ***4. Important Jewish Festivals***

The Israelites after experiencing 430 years of bondage in Egypt under the pharaoh the king cried unto God for liberation from his cruel hands. Though they never knew the God of their forefathers, He pitied them and entrusted that responsibility to Moses who later became the true servant of God. He had to take them to the Promised Land called Canaan. The king pharaoh did not allow them to go in the beginning, but God used 10 plagues in Egypt to show His power. Among the plagues the 10th one was the death of the first born son. The result was even the only son of the king died and finally the king permitted Israelites to go.

Moses started his journey from Egypt to the Promised Land with about 15 lakh people. They crossed the Red sea on their way and reached the foot of Mount Sinai which took about 8 months. Then Moses met God and received the Ten Commandments. God asked Moses to prepare the Tabernacle a mobile temple. God gave him the plan also and the workers took 4 months to complete the Tabernacle. The time for both their travel and constructing the tabernacle was one year. The Israelites then planned to celebrate the first anniversary and they invited God also for that function. God came and felt very happy for meeting His chosen people. Then he wanted to meet them frequently and with this intention, He introduced seven festivals and those festivals were

1. The Feast of PASSOVER
2. The feast of UNLEAVENED BREAD
3. The feast of FIRST FRUIT
4. The feast of PENTECOST or the feast of WEEKS
5. The feast of TRUMPETS
6. The feast of ATONEMENT
7. The feast of TABERNACLES

## **1. The Feast of PASSOVER or Peach means Passover**

4th of month Nisan in Jewish calendar Lunar. This is the March or April in our calendar. Exodus 12:1-14, - Leviticus 23: 4-5

Here peach means Passover This festival is to be celebrated to commemorate Israelites deliverance from the bondage in Egypt. They would celebrate this Passover on 14th of Nisan the first month of Jews. They would continue for eight days that is from 14 to 21 and during that feast they must eat only unleavened bread. This bread must be made in a hurry without yeast. They would recollect the day of their departure from Egypt in haste. In the scripture the leavened bread is described as a symbol of sin. Today cleaning of the house before the Passover is a symbolic search to deny wickedness. The Israelites escaped the danger of the death of their first sons by applying the blood of rams to their lintels. This blood of lambs was compared to the blood of Jesus (the Lamb of God) on the cross for the sake of the sinners of the world.

## **2) The feast of UNLEAVENED BREAD**

15th day of Nisan month (15-21) March or April in our calendar  
- Exodus 12:15-20 Leviticus 23:6

This second feast is mentioned as a separate feast in the same Nisan on the 15th day. But the Jews today observe the feast of Passover Unleavened bread and the feast of first fruit as one festival. The unleavened bread is a reference to the body of Christ which remained perfect in the grave that was put in it after crucifixion.

## **3) The feast of FIRST FRUIT**

16th day of Nisan month (15-21) March or April in our calendar  
- Leviticus 23:9-14

During this festival offerings would be made (given) from the spring barley. Harvest for first fruit of barley was an act of dedication to the Lord.

The Jews after cutting the barley in the field had to keep the sheaf standing in the field itself for the next day. Then on the day of unleavened bread that sheaf should be cut into pieces for the purpose of offering. On the third day the priest would take it and offer to God. Then they had to count the days up to Sabbath which would become 50 days. This fiftieth day is called the day of Pentecost and on that day Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to his disciples. Then the New Testament came into existence and the new churches came into existence and in the place of BC of our Lord A.D came which means (Ano Domini) in the year of our Lord. This feast of first fruit was also a reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ because He was victorious from the grave. He conquered death and in some churches in India this feast of first fruit used to be celebrated as Harvest festival and Jesus is the first fruit.

#### **4) The feast of PENTECOST or Feast of the WEEK**

6th Sivan may be 3rd month to Jews for our Calendar May or June  
- Leviticus 23:15-22

This feast would be celebrated 50 days after the feast of Passover. For Jews it was time for the offerings of grain summer wheat would be offered to the Lord. This event is an indication of Joy and Thankfulness to God and they would accept the blessings of the Lord for their harvest. It is also called “Matan Torah” in Hebrew which means the law. The importance of this day was that God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses on the Mount Sinai. The book of Ruth used to be read on that day in the synagogues This is called “Shabbat” in Hebrew which means “feast of weeks” This is treated as one of the three pilgrimage feasts. During this feast all male Jews were required to visit Jerusalem to appear before God and receive His blessings.

#### **5) Feast of Trumpets or Rash Hashanah**

1st in Tishri Month and for us September or October in our calendar  
- Leviticus 23:23-25

In this festival the first 10 days would be used for repentance. This festival is also called Rash Hashanah in Hebrew. On the first day YON Kippur which means time for repentance and the last day would make up the High Holy Day. According to Jewish traditions God would write the works and deeds and thoughts of persons in the book of life. At that time He would open the book and examine about the persons. If the good deeds of a person were outnumbered the sinful activities then his name would be entered into another book for the next year. On yon Kippur during rash Hashanah synagogues services would be conducted. At that time (Lambs horn) had to be blown for 100 times and that day was also a reference to the second coming of Jesus on clouds to the earth with the celestial music of trumpets by angels.

## **6) Feast of Atonement or yon Kippur**

On 10th in Tishri month September or October in our calendar Leviticus 23:26-32

On this day (yon Kippur) the high priest would make arrangements for Atonement of their sin. Yon Kippur is also called the Day of Atonement. So to say this is the most solemn day for the Jews. Yon mean “Day” Kippur means “Atonement” or reconciliation of God with human kind These 10 days festival include Rash Hashanah and yon Kippur, the days of repentance and the blessings. Yon Kippur is also the day of judgment of the wicked and finally send them to hell. At the end of this festival the so far would be blown after evening prayer.

During the time of Bible reading the high priest would sacrifice for his sin and for the sin of all people. After the completion of sacrificial process, for the Atonement of all a scape goat would be sent into the wilderness, carrying the sins of all people.

## **7) Feast of Sukkoth or feast of Booths or Tabernacle**

Tishri month of Jews, September or October in our calendar. Leviticus 23:33-43

This feast is being celebrated in commemoration of the wilderness life of Jews for forty years. It is also called Jewish festival of Tabernacles. It is a weeklong celebrations and time for preparing booths. According to the background of the event, the Jews used to go into the wilderness and prepare temporary shelters with the collection of different branches. Then they remain in them for a week with the protection of God. The story behind is that this is the reminder of how they spent their life for forty years in that desert, while they were coming from Egypt to the promised land Canaan. This festival they would celebrate in gratitude to God's faithfulness toward them in the wilderness. The Jews continued this celebration which is also called "Sukkoth" in Hebrew language. This function of Tabernacle has been continued since the time of the Queen Esther by building the temporary booths for eight days. At that time they eat only unleavened bread. They would use the branches from the trees of citron myrtle palm and willow

## **8) The Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah**

25 Kirrline 2 Tevet month of Jews calendar, November or December in our calendar John 10:22 the book of Meccabees

This festival is celebrated in connection with the dedication of the Temple of God on the Mount Moreah which was polluted by King Antiochus Epiphanes. And also it is the celebration of the wonderful victory of Meccabees over the Greeks. This rededication took place in the year 165 B.C. After selucid or salukis king of Greece his successor Antiochus Epiphanies became king so to say the cruelest one defiled the temple of God of Israel. He used to offer pigs on the altar of the Temple. Added to that he kept his own statue in the Temple and forced the Jews to worship him. So the victory of Meccabees over the Greeks was most important and recorded in the books of himself called "Apo Grypha" Hanukkaoh was also a festival of lights of legendary miraculous provision of oil in the Temple. The supply of light was the flame for symbol of the presence of God for one day. But God made a miracle that there was light for eight days in the Temple.



## 9) Feast of Lots or Purim

14th or 15th Adar month of Jewish calendar, February or March in our calendar. Book of Esther

This feast came into existence in connection with the protection of Jews from the inhuman hands of Haman, who tried for the total elimination of them. He was the prime minister in the Persian of country under king Ahasuerus or xerxes for no reason. He developed prejudices against Jewish race and planned for their total destruction. In the royal palace there was a gate man by name Mordecai who was a cousin to Esther. He tried for the marriage between Ahasuerus king and Esther as she was a very beautiful lady. Mordecai somehow came to know the crooked plan of Haman and told that to the queen Esther and in turn she informed that to her husband king. Actually in the beginning the king did not know that Esther was also a Jewish woman. King Ahasuerus after hearing the story in detail immediately reacted and took action by killing Haman and his sons. Since that time the king of Shushan Persia also liked the Jews very much. For that timely saving, the Jews were thankful to the king and the queen. From that time the Jews have been celebrating this event as Purim festival. In their prayers they used to read the book of Esther and also keep fasting This Purim has been celebrated in all cities except in those which were surrounded by walls since the time of Joshua. They celebrate this festival on 15 of 'Adar' month of Jews.

## *5. What is Faith*

There are some important points for the readers to remember in connection with faith.

1. “ If you want to please God, according to the BIBLE It is only possible through FAITH”(Hebrews 11:6)
2. “If you want to experience the saving grace of God, It is said in the BIBLE for by grace are ye saved through FAITH”(Ephesians 2:8)
3. “If you want to receive the salvation of God, the BIBLE says, receiving the end of your faith even in the salvation of your souls”(I peter 1:9)
4. “If you want to see your life real and relevance to your present life, the bible says, now faith is substance (life dead)of things hoped for the evidence (proof) of things not seen(Hebrews 11:1)
5. “If you want to overcome or triumph over the unregenerate satanically controlled human world system, according to the bible, and this is the history that overcometh the world in our faith”(I john 5:4)

There are many other graces, like birds in the nest, depends on what faith will bring to them. THOMAS Mothan a popular puriton wrote ‘Love is the crowning grace on earth. Faith is the primary channel by which important humanity is able to lay hold of the omnipotent God or to say more accurately by which the omnipotent God lay hold of impotent humanity. Faith is taking God at his word-but not simply responding to eternal signs and miracles. Faith does not simply belief that God can do anything but it knows he will do everything. Faith is deaf to doubt dumb to discouragement blind to impossibilities and knows nothing but success in God. Faith is being prepared to trust where we are not permitted to see. Faith is like a plant that grows in the shade a grace that can find the way to heaven in the dark night. Faith will allow Christ to do anything for us and with us what we could never do alone. For centuries great men and women struggled much to understand correctly about biblical subject of faith but only some could have left us the fruit of their effort (fruit)

English physician John Bulwer (1606-1656) wrote strike from mankind is the principle of faith and man would have no more history than a flock of sheep. Scottish minister and theology professor Thomas Chalmers stated “faith is like hands of the biggar that takes the gift while adding to it” the incomparable English evangelist Charles Haddon spurgeon mentioned that “faith is reason at rest with God “one American theologian strong explained, “faith is the grip, which connects us with the moving energy of God” Another theologian who was born in nineteenth century, William N Clarke said faith is the daring of the soul to go further than it can see.

A popular English evangelist George Muller said, faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. Faith begins where mans power ends. G. Campbell Morgan was a great English preacher. With his understanding he penned these words. The faith that does not come from reason is to be doubted and the reason that does not lead to faith is to be feared. Gresham machine American scholar and courageous Christian apologist suggested that, the more we know about God is the more unreservedly we trust him the greater our progress in theology the simple and more childlike will be our faith. Having seen and understood all the above quoted examples about faith, what does the bible say about faith? What is it? There are still many questions here.

### **Faith is the synonym for the entire gospel**

Faith is the most important one through which the grace of God is imparted and all spiritual blessings flow. This statement is quite appropriate and accurate; therefore one must not pay little attention. So, it is not strange to the New Testament writers to use the word “faith” as a synonym for the entire body of truth known as the gospel (means good news). Apostle Luke also while talking about the spreading of the gospel wrote and the word of God increased and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem and the great company of priests were obedient to the faith(acts 6:7)

To the Corinthians Apostle Paul wrote examine yourselves whether ye be in faith 2 Cor 13:5 and Paul while he was coming to end of his age he

himself said” I have fought a good fight I have finished my course I have kept the faith”(2 Tim 4:7)

In every one of these examples the main saying the faith is used as a synonym for the entire body of truth, which is related to the death, burial and resurrection of the lord Jesus Christ that could be the brief note for the early churches for their understanding of the crucial and critical part “faith”. It really played a wonderful role to regenerate a sinner through the Holy spirit.

### **Faith is taking God at his word**

Inspite of all the above said examples let us not throw much emphasis on the basic element of faith too strongly whatever faith maybe. It is this salient point – taking God at his word, as first and foremost always. Faith cannot stand alone. It is always in something or someone. it may be man or woman says he or she has faith, when the question should be immediately raised as faith is what ? Or whose is it due to his or her own ability? Faith in my ways or in a doctor? in a country ? in the goodness of humanity, faith has always an object and let us not make any mistake about it. Biblical faith has its object and it is the word of God.

For example, a pastor may say before his congregation, I have faith that God will give \$ 1 million for the construction of a new church building. Literally nobody is dare enough to question the ability of the omnipotent God ; regarding money or anything. Is this really faith? would God tell the pastor he shall raise the money in heaven? or he would give the required money from his personal account from bank of heaven? The fact is the congregation should keep that project in their regular prayers, and God would touch the minds of some, who can afford to give something to the church building.

Sometime the believers used to presume on God with their faith. But presumption is not faith. And also sometimes Christian believer would have it in critical situation. For instance, they say, if I have enough faith my

daughter will be healed inspite of the discouraging words of the doctor. Even then is it the lack of faith if the daughter dies? or is it that God will never promise sick healings ?all these opinions or understandings are thrash. But as true believers in Christ, and in our faith, we must take it for granted that God will heal his people and when it pleases him to do so. However if God does not do so, it is not miserably an indication of the lack of faith in those Christians.

Now and then we pray to God for our physical deliverance from a problem, even though it is divine plan to take us through that problem for his glory and for some greater good. When Abraham went out from ur of the chaldees he did not his know where to go, but he was sure of his company. God had said “go” and Abraham went so real faith is like that. It is found not in feelings, operations, or good intentions but upon the promises of Almighty God.

“Those will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. Because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah26:3). That is the promise of God, you can keep your faith in him.

### **Another example-**

They hath no temptation, taken you but such as is common to man but God tempted above that you are able but well with the temptation also make a way to escape that we may be able to bear it (1Cor 10:13)

This is the promise of God. You can keep your faith. There is another promise mentioned below, and you are advised to keep your faith in it. In my father’s house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also (John 14:2-3).

And this is the promise of God. So you can keep your faith in it.

“And I give unto them, eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand”(john 10:28).

This is another promise of God; and you can undoubtedly place your faith in it. Martin Luther was correct when he wrote “the property of faith is not to be proved of what the eye sees, but to rely on what the word reveals.” And we can mention any number of examples from the bible, with regard to faith.

### **Faith is a gift sovereignly restored**

Here is another promise in which you can keep your faith. Humanity is totally depressed and people are not spiritually sick. They are completely dead people. So, dead man and woman cannot be helpful to God, or to assist him. In this connection Apostle Paul said “and you hath to be quickened (make alive) who are dead in trespass and sins”(Ephesians 2:1). This is not a Calvinistic doctrine, but a biblical trust. If men and women exhibit their saving faith, the impetus for such action must originate in God. And this is true of Paul’s statement. “For by grace are ye saved, through faith and not that of yourselves? It is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man shall boast”(Ephesians 2: 8-9). The phrase “and not that of yourselves” cannot refer to grace, for by the very definition, grace is unmerited favour and the term “and that not of yourselves” refers to the nearest antecedent “faith”. The ability to exercise faith is not resulted within men and women. Faith is sovereignly bestowed. It is a gift of God. The grace of God is not a reward for faith. But faith is the result of grace. To put this in some other way, faith is a grace, people receive not as a goal they adhere.

Following are some of the statements expressed by some men of intellectual caliber on this much thought over subject. Mareus foone an American theologian said, we cannot force ourselves to have faith. we are as much in need of this as everything. Faith can only originate in the soul of man by the gift of God.

Author c. Constance was a popular Canadian Christian scientist said, “Saving faith is not the human contribution, of a sinner, seeking salvation but the divine contribution of the gracious God, seeking a sinner.



Robert horn whose identity is unknown said “saving faith is not creative, but explore. It does not make our salvation it accepts it gratefully.”

Charles Hodge an American theologian said, there is no merit in believing. It is not of receiving a proffered favour. Saving faith believes the word of God, about the provision of God, for deliverance from God’s righteous judgment on the sinners, and depending on that provision and nothing else for acceptance with God and eternal life. This was the statement of an unknown pastor.

### **Faith is the principle for daily triumphant living**

Saving faith is profitable for an individual entrance into the big family of God. Then how is the word of God clear....? “They just shall live by faith” (Hab 2:4). It is faith in the word of God that makes a rebel under a judgment; a child under grace. Then the ongoing faith in the word of God is the channel whereby the child is progressing and finally transformed into the image of Lord Jesus Christ. It is further explained, that every believer has the potential to live in one of the two realms. The physical and the spiritual. The two realms are equal real, but one is visible and the other is invisible. One is material and the other is immaterial. Apostle Paul had these two realms in his midst when he wrote “walk in the spirit (the spiritual realm) and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh (the physical realm) (Galatians 5: 10).

The physical realm is predicated on law made operated by works of the flesh and will always results in bondage. Men and women can never do enough work, finish the work or do the work in a way that will satisfy an infinitely holy God. In contrast the spiritual realm is predicated on grace, appropriated by faith which always brings peace.

Apostle Paul warned the Galatians, who had exhibited their saving faith but now illegally trying to grow in grace, through works. So, Paul called them, O foolish Galatians who hath bewildered you that ye shall not obey the truth. are ye so foolish? Have begun in the spirit (faith) are ye now perfect by the flesh (works) (Galatians 3:1, 2, 3).

The only path to spiritual maturity is faith. In order to grow faith must claim the promises of God. To claim the promises of God, the individuals must know what God says. Here, we have one example, There is a promise in which to exhibit faith cometh by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17 ) As a matter of fact, there is no shortcut, no quick fix, no substitute for triumphant living. Instead triumphant living is the result of a striving pulsating but sating and growing faith in the word of God.

Faith begins in a newly saved life like a fragile sapling which can grow into a mighty oak tree. This was clearly seen in the life of the first patriarch Abraham, who was also called the father of faithful and this can be true in the case of every Christian. The great American preacher, D. L. Moody wrote, I prayed for faith and thought it would strike me like lightening. But faith did not come. One day I read, now faith comes by hearing the word of God. I have closed my Bible and prayed for faith. I now began to study my Bible and faith has been growing.

One can understand correctly that faith in the word of God is the most powerful force in the world. It is clearly mentioned three times in the Holy Bible, two times by the Lord Jesus Christ ( Matthew 17:20, 21:21 ), Once by apostle Paul ( I Corinthians 13:2 ). It is recorded that a man of faith can cast a mountain into the sea. Since there are no persons or recorded evidence of anyone to have cast the mountains into the sea, in the past or even to the present day. Does it mean there are no individuals of great faith among Christians? But people may have different comments regarding this mountain story. And a secret behind this event. Actually a mountain is the largest possible obstacle and it is strange that the land of Israel is Full of mountains and it is still wonderful.

That Jesus Christ remembered the mountains when he gave the parable of the seed and mountain. But physical appearance of these obstacles can no way impure divine promises in the spirit realm. Faith simply says the physical obstacles be removed into the sea – get out of the way move over I am coming through.

The spiritual realm is naturally stronger than the physical realm, why because it is harmless, So, the child of God can undoubtedly appreciate and live in the light of Gods promises, inspite of the raising of unexpected problems. It is quite but natural that human obstacles will retreat when confronted with the Biblical faith: which can boldly say to the mountain,” be removed and cast into the sea “. It is true the just shall live by faith but remember that.

### **Faith is belief in action**

With all the information and examples, we have looked into so far, it is understood that a passive fact is Biblical impossibility. Simply it cannot be faith that acts basing on the very nature of the case. The great reformer of sixteenth century Martin Luther did not like a particular book of James. He wanted that book to be removed from the Bible, because it is not coinciding with his argument, and also James fought the battle with Rome over the doctrine of justification. In addition to that He also wrote “Faith, if it hath not works, is dead being alone”(James 2:17). To speak with reality, the book of James is not at all a contradiction of justification by faith, but the substantiation of it. For its conformation following are the examples.

Abel : Believed God whole heartedly; and so he gave a satisfactory sacrifice to God, but became a victim to the first murder in the Bible by his brother Cain  
Abraham : The father of many nations simply obeyed the command of God to leave Ur the land of Chaldeans. He had faith that God could be with him and lead him where to go. He was called father of faithful.

Joseph : Believed in God and his people Israelites are God chosen people. So he commanded that his bones be taken to Canaan, the promised land after his death in Egypt

Moses : was the servant of God and believer. He wished to suffer affliction along with his people Israelites (the people of God) rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season

In all the examples, faith is described as “belief in action”. Then what method we must follow to reconcile with the work of man and woman in a law system, which God does not take any pleasure and the work of faith in which the heart of God delights? For this big question the answer is simple actually, a few of us can comprehend this. So to say the work of an individual who was unsaved the physical realm is done through the self effort, will not please God. Then we can call it dead work. “If the work of faith”: In the spirit realm is done though the believer is a living sacrifice (Romans 2:1 ) – that is dead to self. So the spirit of God can work through the believer. This work will please God because he alone receives the glory.

Somebody may suggest, if God gives you St. Paul’s faith, you will soon have St. James work this is true. Here is crucial neglected often compromised truth. If any individual claims to have put his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and there is no evidence of progressing or changing life. It is highly questionable; whether the individual was really saved, words will always emanate from a saving faith. Martin Luther, who revolutionized Roman Catholicism, commented in this connection said “the true living faith, which the Holy Spirit instills into the hearts, simply cannot be idle. However the life of faith is not an easy life.

### **Faith is always under constant attack**

James wrote, “My brethren con’t it all joy when you fall into divers temptations. Knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But patience has her perfect work that you may be perfect and entire warning nothing”(James 1:2-4). James Calvin wrote- “our faith is really and truly tested only when we are brought into many severe conflicts and when even here itself seems opened to swallow us up :”Sometimes, we must trust the word of God and appreciate his promises even when the pieces of our lives don’t seem to fit. After our faith is assaulted, we shall come forth as pure gold. It is the divine process, for refining. in the midst of affliction it can never be forgotten that.

## **Faith is that which substantiates future**

Sometime ago a highly established preacher by name Wyrdden happened to give a message at the word of his life Bible conference. In the midst of his message, he proclaimed “I believed in the reality of human as much as if I have already lived there for thousand years. He believed this totally. Another writer said, now faith is the substance of things, hoped for the evidence of things not seen”. (Hebrews 11:1). Wyrdden’s faith in the word of God was so strong and for him. Heaven was great, - there was no question and no hesitation and finally no doubt. What physical eyes are unable to see, the eyes of faith can clearly see. Faith can make invisible things visible, absent things present, and things that are very far off can be very near to the soul.

Thomas Brookes a puritan preacher, and John Bunyan English Christian writer penned these classic words “Hope is never ill, When faith is well”.

Faith allows us to see, and touch today, what God most assuredly brings to pass tomorrow. “It is the substance of things hoped for evidence of things not seen “.

### **Faith in nut shell :**

Faith is sometimes used as a synonym for gospel

Faith is always place in the word of God

Faith is a gift which is sovereignly bestowed

Faith is the principle for triumphant living

Faith is a belief in action

Faith is always under assault

Faith substantiates the future

In the final analysis, faith is the quickening of the soul (making) alive the intellect emotions, and well concerning the particular truth. And this is accomplished through the power of Holy Spirit; and always manifests itself in some kind of action.

## ***6. Seven words of the Jesus on the Cross***

**The seven words are**

1. Father forgive them for they do not know what they do (Luke 23:34)
2. Truly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise(Luke23:43)
3. Woman, behold your son, behold your mother (John 19:26,27)
4. My God, My God, why have you forsaken me(Mat 27:16)
5. I thirst (John 19:28)
6. It is finished (John 19:29,30)
7. Father into your hands, I commit my spirit(Luke 23:46)

These seven sayings of Jesus on the cross, form part of Christian meditation, that is often used during the lent days called holy week and Good Friday. Jesus Christ died on the cross to redeem mankind from sin because of his love towards them. As mentioned in the four gospels in the canonical Holy Bible. Jesus was mocked at tortured and scorned during the process of crucifixion, Jesus carried the cross on his shoulders and walked via dolorosa (way of sorrow) from Jerusalem to Calvary. Then he was nailed to the cross and hanged between two common criminals. He suffered from unbearable pain on the cross and that day has been called black Friday, God's Friday and Good Friday of the holy week.

When the religious pilgrims to the holy land (Israel) were stopped due to military occupation of Jerusalem, in the middle ages a popular know as the way of the cross arose during the lent; retracing the passion crucifixion and death of Jesus. There are fourteen events called stations on the way to Calvary. They are:

1. Pilate condemns Jesus to death
2. Jesus takes up the cross and put it on his shoulders

3. He falls down for the first time
4. Jesus talks with His unhappy mother
5. Simon helps to carry the cross on his behalf
6. Veronica a young girl takes the image of His face
7. Jesus falls down for the second time
8. Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem
9. He falls down for the third time
10. Jesus is stripped off his clothes
11. He is nailed to the cross
12. He died on the cross
13. He is taken down from the cross
14. His body is finally laid down in the tomb

**The first word from the cross:**

*Father forgive them for they do not know what they do (Luke 23:34)*

Forgive them here whom He was referring to, actually there were many groups of people around the cross and closest to him were the party of execution and Roman soldiers, who were coursed by discipline and cruelty. They had the unmistakable task of nailing Jesus and they never felt guilty of anything even though they were responsible for His unscrupulous death. As a matter of fact all people knew that Jesus was innocent of all allegations. So, he prayed an unselfish prayer “Father forgive them” while he was praying to His father who were there around Him?

There were teachers who hated Him the priests who bought Him for thirty silver coins from the traitor Judah who sold Jesus. The crowd which was bribed only to shout and they shouted “crucify Him; crucify Him” and finally at a distance Pilate in His palace observing what was going on. The most pathetic situation was his disciples who became unfaithful. They thought about their safety and hid themselves at a distance even though



they spent about three years with Jesus. When their master was suffering from enduring pain, and torture of crucifixion they could not make even a token protest of atrocities done on Jesus. So to say all these groups either actively or passively helped to crucify Jesus.

Though the above said people appeared to be responsible for the death of Jesus according to the message of the Bible it was the sin of the world which crucified him but the gospel simply wrote they crucified him. Who were they? It is I am, you are and everybody rather every sinner. We all crucified him. So, every one of us equally guilty. Jesus said, they do not know what they do. What a wonderful and thought provoking expression? Mankind became so blind by evil and sin, which reached its highest point, against purity and holiness of God. The reason is that the poor mankind is guided by the power of Satan. So, the greatness of the word from the cross is forgiveness. For whom is forgiveness?

1. Forgiveness for the disciples who deserted Jesus and fled in the night.
2. Forgiveness for the evil ones who drove him to the cross.
3. Forgiveness to the soldiers who nailed him to the cross.
4. Forgiveness to the bitter hearts of his religious enemies, the priests and the teachers.
5. Forgiveness for every person who has ever sinned or made a mistake.
6. And forgiveness for you and me.

So all of us must be immensely thankful to God for forgiving us. Forgiveness is to be taken individually according to the plan of God. In this connection one of the apostles John explained the truth in this way. If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). Forgiveness is the hall mark and most important thing in Christian life. For this we have the first and great example “Stephen” its founder who became the first Christian martyr. He showed His wonderful spirit of forgiveness when he was brutally stoned to death.

“Lord” he prayed “does not hold this sin against them”. Non-Christians may have the unforgiving spirit in their hearts, but Christians know the value of it better. Therefore, as true Christians, we must forgive others as Christ did.

Even while praying he witnessed his relationship with God. He called him “Father”. He did not say on the cross “I forgive you”, asked God to forgive them. When the people shouted crucify him, his response was forgiving them. So, the final message of the gospel is where there is forgiveness there is life and salvation. Here, the words of Jesus echo across the centuries, “Father forgive them”. Jesus at the highest of his bodily suffering did not react angrily. Why because his love to humanity is quite conspicuous, and so asks his father to forgive them. Can we find such most wonderful event than this? But only by his sacrifice on the cross. Mankind is able to be forgiven till the last hour on the earth, Jesus preached forgiveness.

He taught that forgiveness even in the Lord’s Prayer. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us (Matthew 6:12). Then peter asked Jesus, how many times anybody can be forgiven. To that doubt, Jesus answered, it must be seventy times seven. At the last supper Jesus clearly expressed to his apostles about his crucifixion and asked them to drink his blood as his covenant, which was poured out for many for forgiveness of sin.

### **The second word on the cross**

“Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise only” (Luke 23: 43). Here it was not only the religious leaders or the soldiers that mocked at Jesus but also one of the criminals. But the criminal on his right side spoke in favour of Jesus. He said “this man has done nothing wrong “. Then the man turned towards Jesus and said, Jesus remember me when you come in your kingdom (Luke 23:42) with these words, we find in him wonderful faith and immediate repentance towards Jesus. And Jesus thought

in His unbearable suffering, that the criminal was far better in faith than his disciple doubting Thomas.

So to his request, Jesus replied with love and mercy in his second word “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise”. While Jesus was hanging on the cross there were some people around it. Among them there were sympathizers. There were all there by choice. The criminal who mocked at Jesus and who was hanging on the cross at the left side of Jesus died with cursing on his lips. There were some people who confessed themselves to Lord. But we must be careful about the judgment. The criminal who was hanging with Jesus spoke from his heart. He confessed his sin and unworthiness. So “Father” said in the garden He (Jesus) was comforted by an angel. Whereas, here the hanging Christ was comforted by a murderer who was also hanging with him. It is really strange and wonderful that allowed his son be comforted by a murderer. The result of this is there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repented. The response of Jesus to the murderer is a real comfort to all of us. This man did not plead his works or any righteousness of his own. He wasted all his precious life only in crimes, but now received the reward of his deeds “the wages of sin is death: (Romans 6:23). If at all there is any commentary on the fact that salvation is by grace, through faith without the deeds of the law, here is one. The gift of salvation is not earned. It is given. Today you will be with me in the paradise. If we analyse these words, today with Jesus in paradise, we can understand that the death of saints is really a blessed one. Likewise the breadth and depth of the grace of God is very great. And with this understanding, let us not wonder how that evil man could be shown such grace. But let us thank God that grace is so rich that it could include even a criminal. In our last days, how blessed we will be if we cling to the cross of Jesus from which those gracious words “verily I say unto thee today shalt thou be with me in paradise”

### **The third word from the cross:**

“Woman behold your son, Behold your mother”(John 19:26,27)

When Jesus saw his mother and the beloved disciple John standing nearby whom he loved saith unto her, woman behold thy son. Then said he to the disciple John, behold thy mother. And from that hour the disciple took her unto his home (John 19:26, 27)

As Jesus was hanging on the cross there were some others hanging around the cross. In addition to that, there were some mockers, some scoffers. The pathetic sight of Jesus on the cross and the sound of evil voices mocking at her son certainly to bring to the mind of Mary, the prophecy of Simeon Mary happened to take Jesus to the temple when He was just a boy and at that time Simeon said those words. And Simeon blessed them and said unto Mary, his mother “Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel and for a sign which shall be spoken against” (yea a sword shall pierce thorough thy own soul also) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed (Luke 2:34, 35). The name Mary means bitter. Here at the arena of the cross, she tasted the bitterness of the helplessness of a mother, who could neither take the place of the son, nor bear his suffering.

Here we find greater than the mother love of Mary was the love of her son, at the same time. She also knew her son as her savior: because she said my spirit rejoiced in God my savior (Luke 4:2) in the midst of his suffering she exhibited what the scriptures recorded. Having loved his own which were in the world. He loved them unto the end (John 13:1). Even in his last hour he did not forget his mother. He provided a shelter and protector for her and also the savior provided another son John to her.

Both Mary and Jesus came together at the beginning of his ministry at Cana and now at the end of public ministry, while He was on the cross. He referred to his mother as woman at the wedding Feast of Cana and also He recalled the woman in Genesis 3:15. The first messianic prophecy of the

redeemer and anticipating the woman clothed with the sun in revelation 12 the unbearable sorrows of Him must have filled the heart of Mary when she saw him mocked and tortured and finally crucified. This situation must have reminded Mary the prophetic words of Simeon in the temple. There were four at the foot of the cross. Mary his mother, beloved John, Mary of Cleopas his mother's sister and Mary Magdalene. As a true loving son Jesus entrusted his mother to John to take care of her. This information gives us proof that Jesus was the only son to Mary. If she had other children they would have taken care of her.

According to some authentic information Joseph or (St. Joseph) must have died sometime earlier of the crucifixion of Jesus. If not he would have taken care of Mary. The early Christian traditions and the second century apocryphal proto evangelism of James gave the information that Joseph was a widower and the children born to his first wife were the brothers and sisters of Jesus. Another striking point in this connection as mentioned (Mark 6:3). It is said Jesus was the only child to Mary. Is not this Carpenter the son of Mary, brother of James and Judas and Simon and are not his sisters here with us. Now it is clear that if James, Joseph, Judas and Simon were also natural sons of Mary, then Jesus would not have been called the son of Mary but one of the sons of Mary.

### **The fourth word from the cross**

ELE ELE LAMA SABACHTENE which means my God my God why hast thou forsaken me.

These words were the cry of Jesus on the cross (Matthew 27:46 and Luke 15:34). If we study the seven words of Jesus we can simply wonder at the richness of blessings that showered on us, the truth of the father love in promising the saviour. It is really great achievement to a penitent who would know what was last by the sin of Adam and Eve and who recognizes the ongoing nature of sin in one's own life. The manner of his conception of his

holy ghost and the birth of the Virgin Mary is no less over souling, because it is contrary to nature. But we believe this miracle and glory as it declares to ask that Jesus was without sin. So, he would bear the sin of the world and suffer for the sake of all of us. Some of the most incomprehensible words recorded in the scripture are those spoken by Jesus on the cross. The exact time was 3'o clock in the afternoon. It is accurately correct time of lambs as evening sacrifices. His sufferings and shame were beyond comprehension but his endurance were real.

According to the gospels of Matthew and Mark it was after three hours of darkness Jesus spoke out this fourth word. This cry was from the painful heart of human heart of Jesus who must have felt deserted by his father and the Holy Spirit and in the gospel of John; Jesus is mentioned as separated from his father. He was alone and wishes to face that by himself. Jesus felt the loneliness as he lived completely in human experience and by doing so he saved us from the clutches of sin.

### **The fifth word from the Cross**

“I thirst” (John 19:28).

This statement is traditionally called the word of desperation some words are compared and constructed this saying when Jesus met a Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. He became desparated due to the loss of blood and sweat.

Actually Jesus had nothing to eat or drink since last supper, the night before as mentioned in the gospel, someone offered Jesus a drink of sore wine or placed a sponge dipped in wine. The fifth word of Jesus was only his human expression of his physical suffering so to say at that time Jesus must have been with mental shock. The wounds inflicted upon his body, the scourging, crowning with thorns and nailing upon the cross made him maximum suffering, especially in His three hours walking to Golgotha with the cross on His shoulders. He himself bore our sin on his body upon the

cross. So we are free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed. (I Peter 2:24)

I am weary of my crying my throat is dried: mine eyes fall, when I wait for my God and nod not my face from thy servant for “I am in trouble, hear me speedily”. (Psalm 69:3, 9). My soul thirsts for God: for the living God. When shall come and appear before God? (Psalms 42:2). If we wish to know the enormity of our sin we need only to sit at the foot of the cross to understand the real purpose of his suffering. Even in his unbearable suffering and approaching death. Jesus refused to receive the drink still it is said He was in full control of His senses, only to bring the cup of suffering to the maximum in order to satisfy the demands of law which pronounced death upon the sinner.

If Jesus had experienced less than that suffering the fallen man would have been still under the condemnation of eternal death with all its indescribable of the horror and suffering. So, he said “I Thirst” thirst He felt was not uncommon for anyone in such circumstances. But His thirst was for those people He wanted to come to Him to drink the refreshing water of salvation. Each time we hear the word I thirst we must appreciate what He meant His satisfaction through our faith and hope. In that matter Jesus did not thirst in vain So, let us try to satisfy the thirst of our saviour by saying with David. I Stretch forth my hands unto thee my soul thirsts after the as a thirsty land. (Psalms 143:6)

### **The sixth word on the cross**

“It is finished” (John 19:29-30)

When Jesus had received the wine He said it is finished and He bowed down His head and handed over the spirit. Here John recalled the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb Exodus 12. In this passage Hyssop is a small plant used on the door Posts of the Hebrews Exodus 12:22. The gospel of



John described it, the day of preparation the day before the actual Passover that Jesus was sentenced to death and crucified on the cross. But when the soldiers came to Jesus and found he was dead already they did not break His legs. He died at 9 hour (3 O clock in the afternoon) At that exact time the Passover lambs was slaughtered in the temple. Christ became the Passover Lamb as described by St. Paul for the Christ Passover Lamb has been sacrificed. (1 Cor 5:7) The innocent lamb was slain for our sins. The sixth word is the recognition of His suffering. It is our and His task are completed. Jesus was very obedient to His Father and gives His love to the mankind by redeeming us by His death on the cross.

The crucifixion of Jesus can be called the darkest day of mankind but it became the brightest day for mankind and the gospels as a group captured this paradox. They narrated the horror of this event the agony in the garden the abandonment of the disciples the intense mocking and torture heaped upon Jesus His suffering all alone. The darkness and finally His death were wonderfully portrayed by both (Matthew 27:47-51 and Mark 15:33-38) in the gospel of John the passion of Jesus has expressed His kinship and provided to be His triumphant road to glory. He was introduced at the Roman trial as behold your king (John 19:14) and the way of sorrow or the cross was presented with majesty and dignity as Jesus went out bearing His own cross.

As mentioned in the gospel of John the inscription was predominantly written on the cross In English it was written as “Jesus of Nazareth King of Jews” (John 19:19). The inscription INRI at the top of the cross is written probably in three languages. At that time the loved ones were with Jesus and Him decide to give His mother to His disciple John who loved Him Then He breathed last and handed over the spirit. The gospel of John tells about the Holy spirit of Jesus as living with (John 4:10-11) When He met the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob and during the feast of tabernacle. The symbolism of water for the Holy Spirit would become more in John

19:34. But one of the soldiers who pierced the side of His body fulfilled the prophecy in Zechariah 12:10 they will look on Me when they have pierced. The piercing of Jesus on one side prefigures the sacrament of blood and Baptism as well as the beginning of the church.

### **The Seventh word from the cross**

“Father into thy hand I command my Spirit” (Luke 23:46)

The seventh word of Jesus on the cross was from the gospel of Luke and it was directed to the Father in heaven Just before He died Jesus happened to recall Psalm 31:5 which is into thy hands I command my spirit. Thou hast redeemed me O Lord faithful God. Luke time and again pleaded about the innocence of Jesus with Pilate through Dismiss the criminal and immediately after his death with the centurion and when the centurion saw what had taken place he praised God and said certainly this man was innocent. (Luke 23:47) Jesus was obedient to His Father till the end and His final word before His death on the cross was a prayer to His Father.

The main purpose of His coming to this earth was fulfilled. It means God sent His son into this world to execute three things. They are to heal the seek to spread the word of God and to die on the cross to redeem the sinners of the world. And those things were fulfilled The relationship of Jesus to the Father is revealed in the gospel of John for He said “The father and I are one” (10:30) and also “Last supper” “Do you not believe I am in the Father and the Father is in me” The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing His works” (John 14:10) And regarding His return He said I came from the Father and have come to the world again I am leaving the world and going to the Father” (John 16:25)

The departing words of Jesus were taken from the scripture Psalm 31:5 into thine hand I commit my soul. Jesus happened to bear the torment

of betrayal the anguish Deniel and mocking and abuse putting a crown of thorns and suffering and finally forsaken by His Father (God) led Him to miserable death No other human being in the world would have suffered bodily like Jesus Christ in order to redeem all the sinners. So we can boldly say Lord give us such a death as this as we are the children of God we can be confident in terms of our relationship with Him through our faith. We may accept peaceful death since we reconciled with God. Through the death of Jesus we need not be afraid of God. No matter how violent our death may be no matter how torturing would be our death our heart can be at peace because our Lord Jesus had a promise that is whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16)

Jesus said further my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me, And I give unto them eternal life” and shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father which gave them to me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand (John 10:27-29)

Amidst all the noise and raucousness of our ungodly age the believer in Jesus can join with the first martyr Stephan who said “Lord Jesus receive my spirit”. John has before he was burned at the stake said but I commit my soul into thy hand Thou hast redeemed me Lord Jesus God of Truth. Martin Luther also when he was on his death bed said I pass away I yield up my spirit Father into thy hands I commend my spirit thou hast redeemed me Lord thou faithful God such confessions we can confidently make because our Lord Jesus fulfilled all the requirements for our salvation commended Himself and with Himself all his members to the Father in Heaven.

### **We have an Eighth word from the Angel**

He is not here for He is risen as He said (Matthew 28:6)

So far we have seen read and thought over the seven words that were spoken by Jesus on the cross. From those words we have never drawn

comfort encouragement and strength as we travel through the waste land of this which is morally barren and spiritually destitute earth. All of us know that this eighth word was spoken by the Heavenly Messenger (an angel) He spoke these words He is not here for He has risen as He said. In this connection Apostle Paul in the grand resurrection chapter in his first epistle to the Corinthians wrote. And if Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain and your faith is vain ye are yet in your sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead and became the first fruit of them that slept. Many witness events that substantiate the message of the angel to the women who were desperately looking for Jesus near the Tomb.

The three words fulfilled by Jesus were most important according to the scriptures Christ took up His life again (John 10:18) The Temple that men sought to destroy was raised up again after three days just as Jesus said it would be (John 2:19)

It is the faithfulness of God that sustained the Christian through His life. So every promise of God is Yea and Amen Job also said for I know that my redeemer lives and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth And though after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold” (John 19:25-27)

As the eyes grew dim and the shadows lengthen there echoes through the corridor of the heart because I live you shall live also. (Job 14:19)

## *7. Bearing the hatred of the world*

People who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and personal savior will have deep and unbounded love toward their redeemer. And for the lost and dying world His word, the Bible is quite essential for its salvation. Coming to the Christian life most of the believers love to attend church. Then they like to follow other believers. They even try to acquire more knowledge about the way of life of Jesus mortal life. Because of His concern toward His believers apostle John said we love him because he first loved us (1John 4:19) In other words “God so loved us that He gave His son to rescue us from the faith of eternal damnation and deliver us into the realm of golden everlasting life” (John 3:16)

We also love our Lord Jesus for His incomprehensible act of supreme grace. We love our Lord Jesus, because He Himself placed His unbounded love within us. But when it comes to “the world” there is no love for the Lord. Instead of that we find among people division and disgust we find when we go through the history. And what we have to say regarding our precious Christian faith.

1. There are some comments regarding the Christian way of life. It is said Christianity is the most ridiculous and most obscured and bloody that has ever inflected the world (French philosopher Voltaire)

2. The Christian faith from the beginning is sacrificing of all freedom all pride all self confidence of spirit. It is at the same time subjection and self decision and self motivation (German philosopher Fredrick Nietzsche)

3. To say quite deliberately the Christian religion as organised in its churches has been and still is the principal enemy of moral progress in the world (British philosopher Bertrand Russell)

The above mentioned sentiments of some great men are treated as views from the past. Let us see the opinion of the modern people and what they wish to say. It is like a thing that everyone wants to make Jesus the son of God and Jesus the only way to God. But this information no longer makes me to become a Christian. (This is the impression of the hollywood Actor woody Harrison) T.V. Actor Matthews said the following words I don't think fundamentalism has anything to do with Jesus Christ. They call themselves Christians but if that's Christian count me out fundamentalism is built on fear and greed. They are telling you to give them your money otherwise you are going to hell.

What evil thing Christianity has done to the society? According to history Christianity has been at fore front the society's greatest works of compassion like creation of orphanages, hospitals and care for the elders and disabled when Christians have been doing this kind of noble work the basing on "Service to humanity is service to divinity". Then why should there be hatred toward Christians? What made Jesus say if the world hates you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you? (John 15:18). The Lord's brother James also said something in this connection. He said know ye not that the friendship of this world is enmity with God. (James 4:4) Apostle Paul also addressed Christian directed hatred writing all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

What all this is about? What must have prompted the Lord Jesus and the church Fathers James and Paul had to say something regarding this burning problem. Why should the New Testament focus more on the theme of the word hatred directed at Christians? should the Christians be penalized simply because they embraced Christianity? A script writer of the "Golden Age" of Hollywood, Frank Howard clerk (who penned more than 100 screen plays) said A baby is born with a need to be loved and never out grown it, clerk is correct in his saying. God created human beings with the intense and infinite need to be loved. Whether giving or receiving it. It is clearly

pointed out that the intense desire in the heart of both men and women is to be loved at best to certain degree.

There is no doubt that without love we too like infants left alone, Care to develop or choose to madness and even death whether giving or receiving love is one of the most powerful longings known to humanity. As a matter of fact a person who is depressed of love will cease to grow and develop emotionally and generally recognised by coldness of heart. So such people are not born as an ordinary human beings and their life is loveless existence. But the truth behind this is they did not chose their lives we cannot force people that they should love others and loveless ones are found according to Biblical theology but to recognise humanity and speak with both men and women.

The above mentioned commentators had really sensible observations with insight. They had eloquently voiced the “Natural” then devices of the fast majority of men and women regarding love. In addition to strong desire to be loved is another acceptable need. The truth is that connections the need for acceptance and affirmation actively surpasses that to be loved. Another commentator voiced regarding the pros and cons of love in the following words.

I believe we have become paralyzed  
Paralyzed by our desire to be loved  
Now our founding fathers had the

Wisdom to know that social acceptance and popularity were falling

Humanity is actively programmed for acceptance and love but not rejection and hatred. As we have seen so far there is absolutely no appeal for seeking to be unloved unaccepted unpopular and finding hatred.

The call to be hated actually is what Jesus and the Writers of the New Testament would have Christians embrace. In spite of anything our



national feelings Jesus wanted to ask us not to think of ourselves but to accept his call to be hated by the world. In doing so, the Lord is asking us not to accept the consequences because He himself is not ready to accept. So, He gave a piece of advice to his followers to take upon themselves the mantle of being hated and Jesus revealed that. It was his destiny too. It is said in chapter 7 of John Jesus was confronted by His own brothers the natural born sons of Joseph and Mary. They encouraged Him to leave Galilee immediately where He was ministering immediately and go to Jerusalem as the festival of Tabernacle was going on.

Why His brother asked Him in that way because if Jesus was really the Messiah He need not hide Himself in the remote places but to expose His true identity in the heart of the Jewish Nation. That is Jerusalem. All these stages we can understand that the brothers of Jesus did not believe. The world cannot hate you but me it hateth because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil (John 7:4-7)

The reply of Jesus to His brothers Who requested him to leave Galilee and go to Jerusalem. Jesus repeated the word who hates Him. He was the Messiah but revealed an entirely contradictory understanding of the purpose of the Messiah of Israel. The Messiah came to this world not to save the Jewish people from the oppression of the Roman rulers and others but to emancipate all humanity from the crushing consequences of sin. For that purpose Jesus had to educate the people of the world regarding sin. He also said that the world was a dark place. Added to that the inhabitants of the world, because of sin doomed to an eternity of suffering since Jesus was the light of the world. He guided the humanity to the light and salvation of the souls.

When Jesus was doing this kind of Noble things to humanity, why should He be hated for informing the world of its fatal condition of its people, and at the same time offering a cure for it. The main reason is that the world

and its sinful system were controlled by Satan. Jesus mentioned Satan three times as the prince of this world” (John 12:31, 14:30)

Apostle Paul also referred to Satan as the god of this world (2 Cor 4:4) and prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2). The people who would not bow to Jesus must be the followers of Satan. Therefore the unredeemed would naturally embrace the darkness rather than the light. They hated the one who condemned the darkness that is Jesus. The world also hated His disciples and other followers who exposed its darkness.

Jesus wanted to introduce the same truth to His disciples. So He gathered His men and sent them two by two throughout the towns of Israel to spread the Good News. About the existence of the Messiah and His mission to save the lost sheep of Israel from their sin. He provided everything to His disciples for this noble task by giving them power against unclean spirits to cast them out and to heal all manner of sickness. These were a group of humble men who had given up their occupations and everything. They did all that only to share in the glory of His second coming.

Jesus told them in essence that they would be hated, persecuted and forced death on His behalf. According to traditions all but one of the disciples finally prayed for the safety of their lives and for their loyalty to their master. Jesus made a striking difference between Him and the world. In His opinion the world is a domain of Satan and He made a clear division between the people that belong to Satan and those who belong to Him and His father. Throughout the gospels, Jesus referred to the dominion of Satan as one of the darkest places.

Jesus assured the disciples as they were totally confined themselves to the kingdom of light and they would be natural association objects of hatred and scorn. And Jesus became the target of hatred and finally persecuted to the point of death. In the same manner his disciples also became victims

to the same treatment whatever was applied to Jesus would be applied to His disciples immediately.

### **Hatred of Christians in Action:**

It is an established fact, that Christians have been hated and now let us see how it is playing its role in the society. As a matter of fact for 2000 years it is quite conspicuous that Christians have been taken to task. And this we can see during the Roman rule according to their history. The most notorious king among the Roman rulers was emperor “Nero”. He persecuted and killed many Christians to his credit without mercy. It is said “Nero” used to hang Christians alive to the tree open the skin of their bodies then leave the dogs which were trained to crush them to death. This same tendency has been going on even today in the communist ruled and Muslim ruled nations to certain extent.

If we look into the book of the Martyrs “By fox” we come across many cases of persecution and killing. The author gives us the authentic information since it is the most famous book on the topic. It is focused more with the persecution to know more about the modern day persecution with voice of the martyrs (website [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)) Hatred of Christianity has been increasing and intensifying in the society enormously. It is very simple to scan the internet and come across various stories a week that deal with hostility toward Christians. We hear about teachers here and there more who have been fired for bringing Bibles to a public school class rooms. Home Bible study groups have been vanished because of the complaints of the neighbors.

Christian social groups were formed in schools and college campuses and Christian professors were fired from their jobs for expressing their views on the Bible. Christian prayers are banned in high school campuses and the plalets of the Ten Commandments were removed from their hanging. So the more we engage ourselves with Christian related conversations with

nonbelievers we experience more hatred. nonbelievers may tolerate our view point and our belief that Jesus is our God. If we say Jesus is the only way to reach heaven then the public would get angry After we have just told them even if they are in the state of unbelief that they would go to hell after death. There is really an uncomfortable message to share with nonbelievers but the Bible speaks truth. Though it is a fact it is almost impossible for the heathens to accept. If we are involved in a discussion on this topic, we should not be surprised of the result. After all Jesus warned us in advance that we would be objected for the hatred of the world. If we are hated for the sake of Christ, it is really a blessing it is said So to say the life of a Christian is hardly appealing from the view point of the world but Christ never promised a life of ease and prosperity in this natural world. The truth is that it was Jesus who told Christians in the world. They have Tribulation.

This is a promise Apostle Paul guaranteed us that all will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12)

The cautioned Christians are ready all the time when they would receive the word hatred. Though we are not actually look for the persecution we should be alert when it comes suddenly. Generally we must have spent some time looking at the hatred and persecution simply because we happened to be Christians Then what is the outcome of receiving the hatred of the world? When we accept Jesus as our personal saviour and Lord the result of it would be everlasting life. Again what are the blessings of the world? While Christians have been struggling to experience the persecution and hatred of the world Jesus gave a suitable answer to this burning issue in His Sermon on the Mount.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven Jesus clearly assured all the believers that they would certainly enjoy the kingdom's life and see the glorious kingdom during 1000 years period when we will rule and reign with Jesus He followed this by answering all the believers this wonderful gift.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted their prophets which were before you. (Matthew 5:11-12)

The fact is that Jesus did not say about the nature of the rewards the believers would get for their suffering but it is in heaven and according to Him it must be sure as a startling motivation to endure the great men and women who preceded them in being persecuted for the name of Jesus. Again Jesus plainly said to His disciples and others that there were many heavenly rewards for those who were persecuted for Christ. In addition to that there were earthly rewards also which Jesus pointed out in (Mark 10:29-30)

Apostle Peter also said about Christians that they should willingly accept the bearing of persecution and hatred for the sake of Christ as a mystery and the believers are to rejoice and be glad with exceeding Joy and they must feel happy for any persecution. They receive in saying so Peter did not mean the believers should celebrate persecution. It is really possible to rejoice and feel happy when one of our kith and kin happened to die in a strange place. We simply say “No” Here Peter was giving sincere advice to look beyond flesh and blood of this world and catch a glimpse of the spiritual glory that awaits us.

As true believers it is an honour to share the suffering of Jesus on earth as He experienced. If God has allowed us to be persecuted for righteous living we must consider it an honour but not a punishment. The next point is every one of us certainly feels happy at the glorious second coming of Jesus. But for the unbelieving world. The return of Christ would be frightful time of judgment and for the Christian believers it would be ultimate redemption and the vindication of our faith. The hatred and the persecution we have experienced in this world is over and we begin our new eternal lives of love, acceptance and perfect peace. The next point is that in return

for our persecution and hatred we receive the spirit of glory and of God which shall rest upon us.

## **Conclusion :**

Christians are often encouraged to be “more loving” but not come across a hateful and even vicious Christians would be never guilty of hate based rude nasty or malicious behavior we must try to present the gospel to the people as lovingly as possible and when we take social stand on certain matters we must do them boldly but with fact and grace. At the same time we must not lose the sight of the words of Jesus and the writers of the New Testament. The Lord wanted us to rise to the illustrations of human nature and live in the realm of the spirit as effectively as possible.

Finally we have to understand that being hated for the sake of Christ it must be considered neither strange to the believers nor punishment. Therefore we have to count it and take it as blessing we have to think seriously and look beyond this temporary dying world and glance ahead with the anticipation of the eternal glorious awaiting. The Apostle Paul said it best while dark enduring the hatred of the world in a dark dingy distractible Roman prison cell. So, instead of craving for the riches praises and glory of this material world let us go forward as soldiers of Christ willingly and throw away everything of this world and look for what lay ahead. He said “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but look for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but during, that I may win Christ” (Phil 3:8)

May all who go by name Christians take such a view being willing recipients of the world hatred knowing that one day glorious and comprehensible blessings await them in the eternal kingdom of Christ our Lord and saviour.

## ***8. EL ELYON the Most High God***

What a glorious name and designation God has. It is one of the truly exquisite and supremely important descriptions for God in the Bible. ELYON is a simple designation to our Lord by virtue of using this name ELYON it became very popular among the regular Bible readers. And also this name frequently found in the theological writings with the heading names of God. ELYON is not match a name to God but it is a characteristic of God. EL ELYON literally means Highest in the Bible ELYON is used for both persons and things to express their identical position.

For example Moses as the servant of God said to Israelites. And to make thee high above (ELYON) all the Nations which he hath made in power and in Nature and in honor and that thou mightiest be Holy people unto the Lord thy God as He hath spoken (Deu 26:19). The sovereignty of God wanted to elevate Israel above all other nations in the world. Due to this reason. He said Israel is my son my first born. (Exo 4:22)

The Idea of exaltation is seen for the second time where the Lord sent prophet Isaiah to “Ahaz” (King) at the end of the aqueduct of the upper (ELYON) pool in the high way of the fuller field (Isaiah 7:3). This is the most elevated pool higher than all other elevated pools and this would serve as a land mark for their meeting.

When the word ELYON is used for God in the same manner it means He is the Highest and the exalted one. He is the one lifted far above all other god's either angelic or human real or imaged. On some occasions this designation for deity also used. For example Moses wrote when the most high (ELYON) delivered the nations and their inhabitants when He separated sons of Adam. He marked the boundaries according to the number of children of Israel King David wrote the Lord also thundered in the heaven and the



highest (ELYON) gave His voice and hail stones and coals of fire (Psalm 18:13)

Sometimes this designation (ELYON) occurs with the name “Jehovah” as the Lord Most High and sometimes with the name “ELOHIM” the Most High God. It is found however most frequently in concert in the important title for the deity. EL this name appears for God about 250 times in the (Old Testament). It is thought to be a short form for “ELOHIM” (God) EL is a name for the deity it emphasizes power of God and strength. It comes from the root word which means to be strong

### **EL ELYON and the patriarch Abram**

The mention of EL ELOYON is found for the first time in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. This designation is used in connection with an incident that took place at that time. It was a time in the history of a man and nations that entered into war four kings from the east descended with their armies against five cities along the Jordan valley in the premises of the Dead Sea. And in the war the attacking armies became victorious. Then those defeated people were taken as slaves with their properties and Lot from Sodom was one of them. In such conditions one of the persons who escaped from the battle ran to Abraham and told him that his nephew “Lot” was taken as a slave. The man called him “Abraham the Hebrew” (Genesis 14:13) Hebrew means stranger this astonishing news how four nations with their armies defeated five nations and went with slaves and their booty caused Abraham to react immediately.

*“And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and*

*also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people” (Genesis 14:14-16)*

If we can understand the condensed verses of the scripture we see clearly the account of the extraordinary heroism exhibited by Abraham and his feat of wonderful victory over those kings under different conditions were unimaginable. Abraham fought this battle just to rescue his nephew ‘Lot’ and other captives. He had no time actually to attend this kind of affairs but circumstances forced him and he answered the crisis and returned triumphantly.

While Abraham was returning home he happened to meet Melchizedek the priest most unexpectedly. He was very happy to see Abraham and blessed him with wine and bread. He further said that it was ELOYON the most High God the strongest one who delivered Abraham into the hands of the enemy.

Abraham could have said that the success was the result of his strategy (the timely attack and the courage he exhibited and skill). But to his eternal credit the patriarch Abraham would have none of that. He knew that the omnipotent God (the most High God) and the strongest one the deity who could subdue all kings and the kingdoms. Then the patriarch in a most conspicuous way shared his unswerving allegiance to EL ELYON. He gave tithes (a tenth) part from all recovered booty to Melchizedek the priest of EL ELYON. This particular event made Abraham to take a decision to serve the most High God.

## **ELYON and the Nations**

Since ELYON is the most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, we can presume and believe that he alone shall set right the boundaries of men and nations. Let us see how that concept worked out during the second decade of the twenty-first century. However, the most High God can set right the boundaries of the nations and things have become more important to a

frame of central reference. In the song of Moses the law giver reveals both the geographical hub of the nations and the causes for that hub. Moses wrote when the most high ELYON decided the nations and their inhabitants when he separated the sons of Adam he set the boundaries of the people according to the number of children of Israel.

The late prime minister of Israel Golda Meir once quoted the example of prophet Moses. She said Moses led us through the desert for 40 years and brought us to the only place in the Middle East where there is no oil and vast natural gas fields of her shores. Moses with the guidance of God brought the nation back to the land that God had given to Abraham and to the sons of Jacob as On everlasting inheritance. It is a naked truth to contemplate the boundaries of the nations of the world and the people that inherit those nations are determined by EL ELYON the Most High God and that depended upon the relationship with Israel.

For the present those Nations surrounding Israel are Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Labanan, Saudi Arabia and more Nations which are far away like Iran and Iraq (located in the curdle of civilization) and Lybia even super powers like Russia and China are against the small nation Israel. As we know the fact, Israel is the home of God on earth. Her citizens are His inheritance. So the He drew the map of nations and the peoples He used Israel as the center of reference. There are many ancient major events that depicted Israel as the center of the earth.

## **EL ELYON and Satan**

According to the Bible first rebellion against God was not the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Long before that incident it was Satan (the anointed one called cherub) who rebelled against God. As a matter of fact Satan was the highest of all God created beings. But he was not happy with that position he wanted the post of God the creator Himself. So

he rebelled against His own creator and that motivated rebellion was recorded by prophet Isaiah and pointed out in the following lines

*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the earth, which didst weaken the nations. For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.* (Isaiah 14:12-14)

The pronoun ‘I’ is more frequently used in English language. It reveals the pride of a person when it was used. In this connection Satan used that pronoun five times against his creator in the following way I will ascended “I will exalt” “I will sit” “I will ascend” “I will be like the Most High” in these expressions Satan showed his arrogany and pride against God. Though Satan was aspiring for the position of EL ELYON there can be only one high God. So, far his great ambition which is beyond his imagination judgment was given upon him by God. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell to the sides of the pit. Isaiah 14:15

### **ELYON and the Gentile Rule :**

The gentiles that ruled Israel were Assyrians, Babylonians, Medo-Persians, Greeks, Romans and after the Romans the Anti Christ continued with the support of Satan. Assyrians happened to attack Samaria killed many Israelites and took many more as slaves. After that the Israelites mixed with the Assyrians and the result of their mixing a new race came into existence called Samaritans. Then in Babylon the most popular and powerful king was Nebuchadnezzar. One day he got a dream. His story can be found in the 12th chapter in the book of prophet Daniel. His dream was about a great image and Daniel explained that dream in the following lines...

*“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof*  
*Jerusalem - City of Peace*

*was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay".* Daniel 2:31-33

The image in its description gave the period of time and also gave the time of different gentile rulers. That time began with Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C. That is the gentile period started in 587 B.C. and continued through the seventieth week of Daniel until the return of Jesus Christ literally to the earth. And during the reign of the gentiles no son of David would prosper in ruling over Israel. The image depicted the dynasties that ruled one after another. Then after the heathen rulers the Anti Christ would rule with the support of Satan. That is after Romans in later days merged into Turkish amalgamation of Islamic nations after the gentile rulers a wicked personage will arise embodying with ruthless attributes of the Preceding nations. He will be the ultimate enemy and persecutor of the Jews. And in the word of God this individual is called Anti Christ.

The Anti Christ will rule over the confederation of the nations and ultimately become ruler of the world. He will establish his head quarters at mount Zion in Jerusalem. (Daniel 11:45). He will demand from men and women to bow and worship him. But in the Prophetic words of Daniel his throne and kingdom will not endure evil is not punishment. So, regarding the Anti Christ and his kingdom Prophet Daniel wrote in the following manner.

*"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."* Daniel 2:44-45

Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was an absolute sovereign ruler. He was called the unrievolved world ruler. But his power and authority were given from another. It was the God of heaven who bestowed upon him his authority on earth. He had a second dream also about a tree. This indicated that he was not satisfied with the earthly rule. He wanted what the Anti Christ will attempt to achieve the worship of man by men. While interpreting the dream, Daniel said that the tree represented Nebuchadnezzar.

*“It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.”* - Daniel 4:22

The tree would be cut but the stump of it would remain because it was the command of the Most High. And Nebuchadnezzar for his stubbornness and pride God made him insane eventually a beast. This change forced him to eat grass for seven years as a punishment to make him understand and repent and realize that it was the most (High EL ELYON) ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth to whomsoever he will be the stump represented the king and his kingdom would be restored to him as and when he completed his punishment of seven years insanity. Perhaps this is a typical example for Daniel's seventieth week when men and women (driven by pride) live the life of a beast by sacking man on earth (to deity) and ignore the God of heaven. God further gave Nebuchadnezzar a moral lesson that only God from heaven would rule the world.

Prophet Daniel finally gave the king a sane advice for his acceptance that is he should break off his sins by righteousness and be merciful toward the poor so that God would delay His judgment against him. The king did not heed the counsel of his friend Daniel and remained with his wickedness for one year. when he was about to say something regarding the beautiful city of Babylon and the wonderful hanging gardens which were called one of the seven wonders of the world came to his mind and then said,

*“Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the mighty of man power and for the honor of my majesty”* (Daniel 4:30)

For his wicked nature and harsh temperamant he must have spoken more but surprisingly he heard a voice from heaven saying

*O Nebuchadnezzar to thee it is spoken the kingdom is departed from thee.* -Daniel 4:21

At that time the king became insane and remained in that condition for seven years until he realized and repented that the Most High God (EL ELYON) ruleth, in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whosoever He will like. The pathetic situation here is that he was driven out from the society as if he was untouchable for seven years to eat grass like that of an ox. Anyway at the end of seven years time reason entered his mind and he testified.

*“I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation”* (Daniel 4:34).

With his own testimony the king came to know that God has a redemption plan for his people and the king acknowledged the supremacy of God. He said that the most High God’s (EL ELYON) sovereignty over his people and likewise over his life. In course of time his grandson Belshazzar became the king of Babylon. As a king he stooped down to the level of his subjects in his movements and wished to have parties even and one day for the purpose of party he used the gold and silver vessels his grand father brought from the Temple of God in Jerusalem. But on that particular day, the party was co-insided with the entrance of the Medo Persian army under the leadership of king Darius.



*“Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.” (Daniel 5:3)*

When they were fully in intoxicating condition the army of Darius was already there just behind the great walls. Then the beloved prophet of God Daniel said to the wicked Belshazzar and thou his “son” is used in the sense of heir and successor

*“O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this”* Daniel 5:22

Daniel interpreted the writings on the wall which were quite conspicuous and quite appropriate to the occasion God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it

According to the records of history Belshazzar was fully enjoying his party. And in that occasion he began to boast of his past glory his fore fathers like Nebuchadnezzar brought He felt that he had enough security within the great wall of the city that surrounded But just at that time the soldiers of Medo Persian army of Darius succeeded in diverting the water of the river Euphrates which was passing under the wall into the city. The city people using this water in times of emergency so when the soldiers gained their entrance they were completely in drunken stage. The date of this incident that took place was October 11 or 12 539 B.C

Bible described that the same night Belshazzar the king of Chaldeans was murdered miserably then the median Darius took the kingdom into his hands. This Belshazzar ridiculed the truth of his grandfather that he learned painfully about the God who is the most High (EL ELYON) the second decade of twenty first century may be the momentous period of time in the annals of human history. Humanity and nations were in the stage of convulsion why because the planet earth is like a great shine of yearn is unraveling sin.

Transgression wickedness and rebellion are the marching order of the present day.

- 1) Russia which was dismembered in the late 1980 and early 1990's is again trying its best to become more powerful
- 2) Europe is in chaos and becoming more and more materialistic and goodness
- 3) Israel and Middle East remains a powder keg ready to explode
- 4) China is growing more powerful influenced and aggressive.
- 5) Many third world nations continue in poverty and revolution
- 6) Radical Islam is creating havoc around the globe and has reached the borders of the United States
- 7) America was once the land of free and home of the brave. Such a noble country now became compared to a basket of over ripened summer fruit unfortunately the basket is giving rotten smell and so it is ready to receive the divine judgment even at this stage majority of the Christendom called to be a majority army support of God By living true Christian Life people can proclaim their faith they are getting worse in the world still as Christians are advised by Christ to be faithful and one can completely depend upon God who is EL ELYON the most High God. Power of heaven and earth He will gain the victory everywhere and especially wonderful victory at the battle of Armageddon at the end of the age.

## *9. History of the Tabernicle*

God called Moses to the top of the mount Senai, and gave him some instructions for the Israelites to follow. Along with them, He gave “ten words” in Hebrew called the Ten Commandments by writing with His own finger on the blue stones called Sapphire. Then He gave the plan for the Tabernacle (a mobile tent) called the mobile temple of God. After receiving these things from God, Moses came down to the foot of the mount Senai. But to his surprise he found the Israelites fully engaged themselves in dancing with the golden calf prepared by themselves.

This spectacular scene made Moses terribly angry and threw away the tablets of the Ten Commandments to the ground which became pieces. Then He took the golden calf, put it in the fire and made it into powder. He mixed the powder with water and asked the Israelites to drink it. Moses went to the mountain top for the second time as God called him and brought back the Ten Commandments. This time Moses stayed with God for forty days and forty nights without bread and water.

After he came down, he entrusted the work of preparing the Tabernacle to the concerned workmen and the work started at the foot of the mount Senai in the wilderness. The main purpose of this Tabernacle was to worship God in it. The other details about the Tabernacle can be found in the 13th chapter of the book of Exodus. The priesthood and sacrifices were the other requirements for the functioning of the Tabernacle. It seemed God Himself gave the plan of the Tabernacle. The workers were able to complete the making of the Tabernacle in about four months.

The Israelites reached the mount Senai in about eight months from Egypt. During the work they invited free will offerings for the construction of the Tabernacle. By the time, it became almost one year and it was said they celebrated their first anniversary also. It is already said the Tabernacle

was a moving house of worship. It was smaller in size. It was built in interlocking system with the purpose of relocation.

Whenever a thick cloud was seen in the sky, it indicated the presence of God. Then the priests would shift the Tabernacle from one place to another in the wilderness. In some context God told King David “I have not in any house since I brought up the Israel out of Egypt. Even to this day, but have I walked in a tent and in a Tabernacle” (2 Sam 7:6).

This Tabernacle became a temporary dwelling place of God. He said He would select a permanent place for His dwelling after the Israelites settled in their promised land Canaan. According to God’s plan the permanent temple would be built in the unmovable building but not like the Tabernacle etc., God stressed two more things at the time of the dedication of the Tabernacle. He said, “for now have I chosen and sanctified this house that my name be there forever” (2 Chron. 7:16). In future an eternal sanctuary will be made by the hands of God and established. Then the Lord shall reign Israel in mount Zion from hence forth even forever.

Good models and network became necessary for building better Tabernacle. But unfortunately the workmen could not find amazing beauty in the making because of two reasons. First, they could not portray all the facts about the authentic functioning of the Tabernacle which was made by the artisans for which they spent millions of dollars and costly material. Secondly, the scripture did not reveal any information about the models of the Tabernacle.

Moreover, the Bible did not give full details of the Tabernacle, but only technical details, design etc., At the same time, it was not written as a blue print or as a complete technical understanding for the artisans. But Moses received the plan from God and explained that to the workmen.

The original Tabernacle was not in existence today. But some of the details were established for information. For instance the Hebrew scripture

does not reveal anything about the side panel of the Tabernacle. The temple institutes a Jewish religious organisation located in the Jewish quarters of the old city of Jerusalem. This organisation was dedicated to rebuilding of the holy temple and continued the service in it. This was followed by Rabbi “Israel Ariel” an Israelite paratrooper in 1957 who also helped for the liberation of the temple mount in 1967.

The items produced by the temple institutes were not reproductions of the modelos. They were prepared for the actual service in the future “Third Temple”. The temple institutes had already prepared the required sacrificial vessels for the temple. The rabbis believed that the Art of the Covenant is still hidden in a secret place under the temple mount. The reconstructed items and many pieces of artwork were finally on display in the Temple Institute Modest Museum in Jerusalem.

God instructed Moses to build the Tabernacle

God instructed Moses and gave the plan of the Tabernacle. There are four important items in the Tabernacle to be put -

1. The ark of covenant
2. The menorah
3. The incense altar
4. The table of shew bread

The tent would be surrounded by a rectangular courtyard which contained brass leever and an altar for the sacrifices. God gave some information for the building of the Tabernacle. It was built for the purpose of worshipping the Lord. The original material was acquired through free will offerings only of “any man that giveth it will enjoy with his heart ye shall take my offerings” (exodus 58:25). Then the nation gave free offerings more than is required for its building. Many costly items like gold, silver, brass (blue, purple, scarlet) linen, goats, hair, rams skins, red legions skins, shettim wood, oil for the lights etc., were used.

The making cost of the Tabernacle was no doubt very high in history. The three precious metals used were gold, silver and brass and the quantity of each item was recorded in the scripture. The Tabernacle contained 2,800 lbs. of gold, 9,600 lbs. of silver and 6,900 lbs. of brass (Exodus 35:24-31). Then the copper 0 zinc alloy of brass with the high power melting point of nearly 2000 lbs. was used for the sacrificial altar.

God clearly told Moses “and let My people make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.” Therefore, the Hebrew word “prisham” which means (a dwelling place) became one of the names for the Tabernacle.

## **1. The Ark of Covenant**

The Lord commanded “and they shall make an Ark of the Covenant with Shittim wood” These Shittim trees were common plants in the area of mount Senai. The importance of this Ark was that God proposed this as the first item put in the Tabernacle. This wooden “chest” the Ark of the covenant was the most valuable and most sacred object in the Temple of Israel. They considered that as the greatest treasure to the nation. It travelled with Israel and crossed the river Jordan. Then it was with the Philistines for some time.

During the travel, the Ark was always wrapped with the cloth. It was considered the holiest object in the Temple. As the Ark was a holy item, the people were kept away from that view, because if they look inside of it, they would die. Only the high priest was permitted to come before the Ark on “Yon Kippur” on the single day of the year the high priest would enter the Holy of the Holies to burn the incense and sprinkle the blood before the Ark, for an atonement of “sin” of the people.

The English word Ark is from ‘Arca’ which means “chest”. The Hebrew word for this is “aran” which means cabinet, container, box, chest etc., The length of the Ark was 3 feet 9 inches, width is 2 feet 3 inches and height 2 feet 3 inches. God inscribed with His own finger the two tablets that contained the Ten Commandments were legally binding original

# **JERUSALEM - CITY OF PEACE**

*By*

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# WORD OF APPRECIATION

The title of this book “Jerusalem- City of Peace” is quite apt and appreciable. The author **Dr. Sundara Rao Tsappidi** narrated with suitable presentation of the vivid subjects, the whole topics are spiritual especially Biblical.

Majority of the topics and their themes are well suited to understand the above average people. The author’s noble ideas and intellectual thoughts can be seen in the following topics such as Faith Conquers History of the Tabernacle, what made the Jews hate Jesus?, History of Jerusalem etc,....

In the chapter of what is faith? He touched some interesting topics such as faith is the synonym for the entire gospel, faith is taking God at His word, faith is a gift for daily triumphant living. Very few intellectuals know about the History of Tabernacle Lord specified Moses to build the Tabernacle and gave the plan to build it. Tabernacle is the dwelling moving temple of God.

- 1) The Ark of covenant
- 2) The Menorah
- 3) The Incense altar
- 4) The Table of shew bread

The writer gave *very* much importance to the character of King David, God and satan, particularly how satan tried to show his supremacy over God and man in two chapters.

The writer has very well sketched the character of Jesus Christ. He came to this world

- ❖ to heal the sick.
- ❖ To spread the word of God.
- ❖ To die on the Cross for the sake of Sinners

He called Jesus as the world greatest healer and religious leader, With His sermons especially on the mount, the world's great man of prayer. The Lord's prayer is the most beautiful and supreme.

He gave clear pictures of Biblical sacrifices in which the Lord wanted that each worshipper should identify himself with his sacrifice.

His narration of the Biblical topics are very well understandable by a common man particularly in the chapter of "Faith conquers" the character of Bartimaeus who was a blind man and has the confidence, that Lord Jesus would heal him by giving good sight. He shouted Jesus "the son of David", is a clear cut messianic term. He correctly demonstrated his thoughts of faith.

God wants us to be persistent in our prayers. Among many chapters in this book, "History of Jerusalem" enlightened me much.

The title itself means the 'House of peace' Today mankind requires peace in this world. Many people in the world think that we can get peace only in Jerusalem, because it is only one country rather city in the world and the worship place to Jews, Arabs and Christians.

I must congratulate the writer Dr. Sundara Rao Tsappidi for bringing out many Biblical books especially this "Jerusalem- City of Peace. I pray the Almighty God to give him strength and spiritual knowledge to bring out as many books as possible to the thirsty people in the globe.

**Prof. Dr. Anthony Maddala**

M.A, M.A, M.Phil.P.hD.

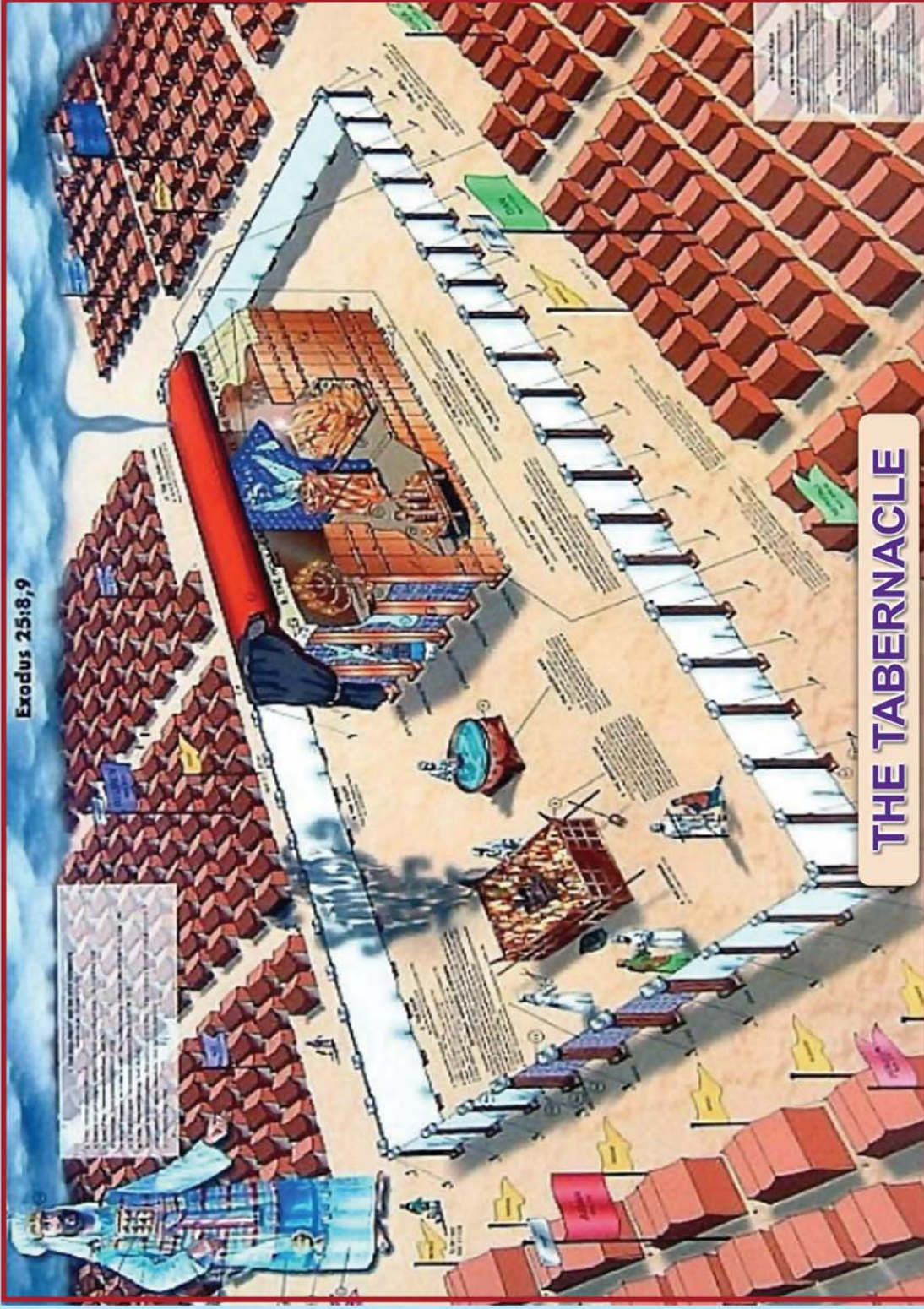
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Exodus 25:8,9



## THE TABERNACLE





## THE ARK OF COVENANT





**THE MENORAH**



THE TABLE OF SHEW-BREAD



**THE TABLE OF INCENSE**





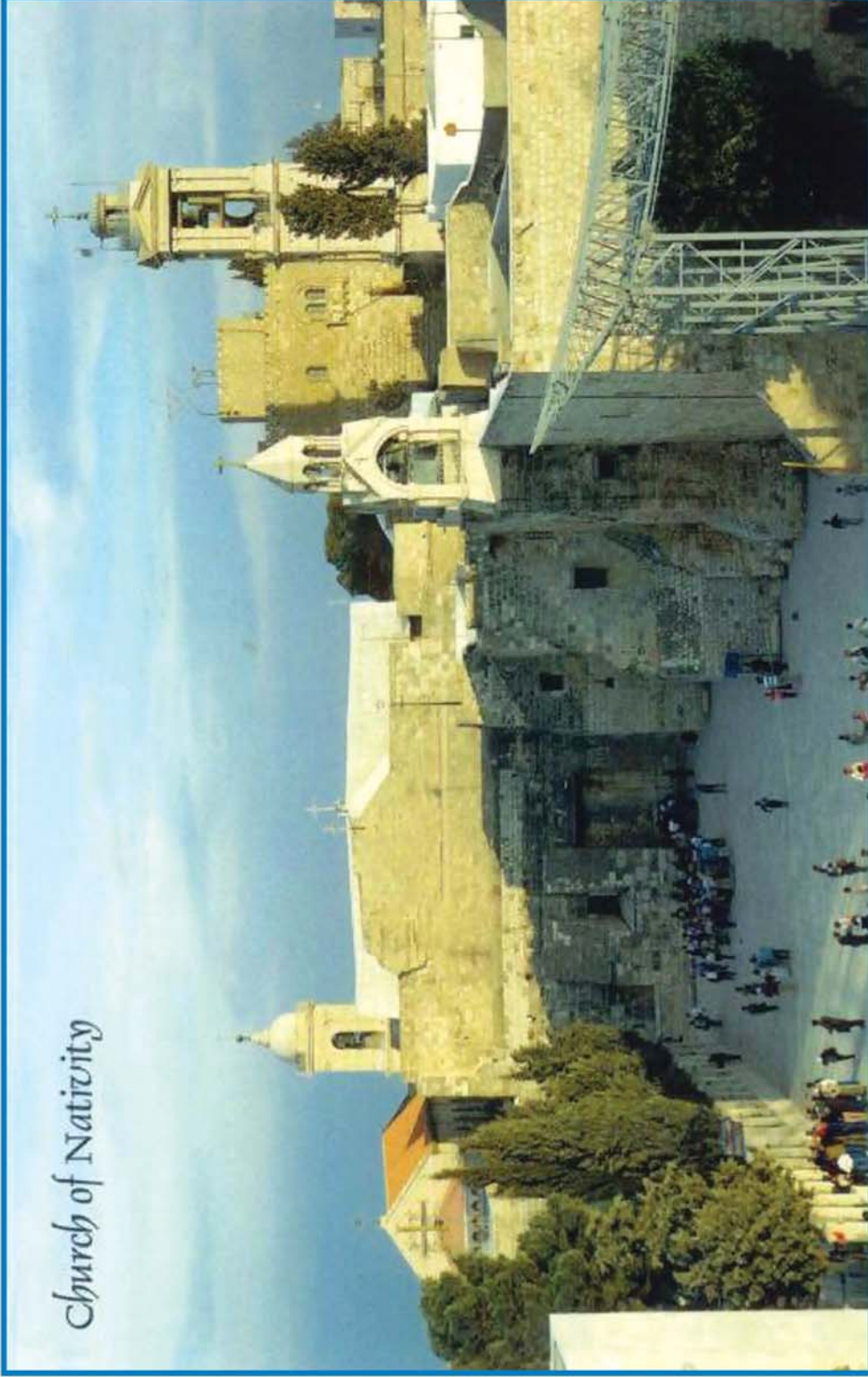
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**THE BIRTH PLACE OF JESUS CHRIST**



*Church of Nativity*



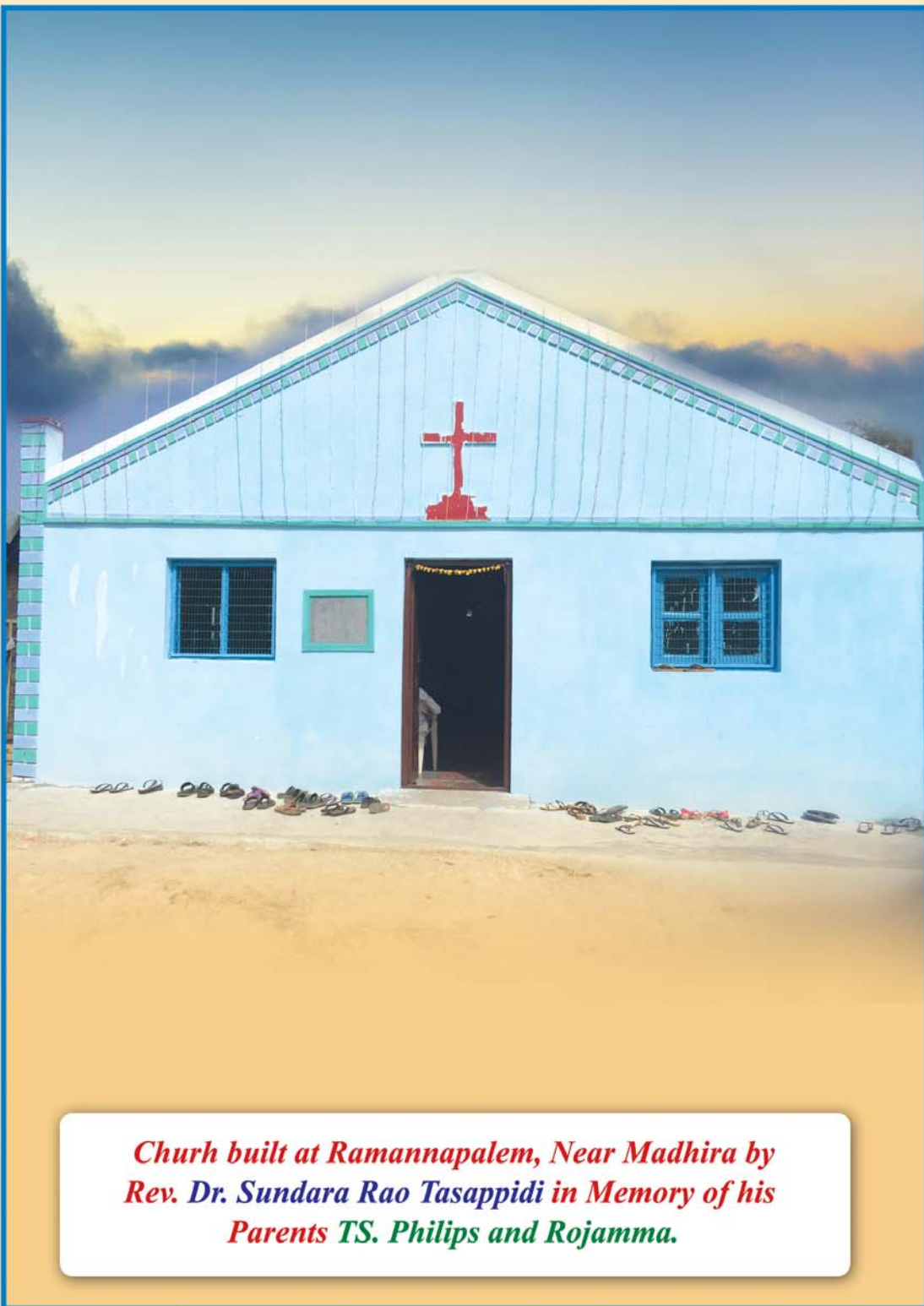
**THE CHURCH OF NATIVITY IN BETHLEHEM**



***Churh built at Manyamvaripalli Near Markapuram by  
Rev. Dr. Sundara Rao Tasappidi in Memory of his eldest  
Son David Ravi Kumar who died in U.S.A.***







*Churh built at Ramannapalem, Near Madhira by  
Rev. Dr. Sundara Rao Tasappidi in Memory of his  
Parents TS. Philips and Rojamma.*





documents of the Mosaic covenant. They were the testimony between God and the people of Israel at mount Senai.

The Ark symbolized God's throne. So king David called it "the foot floor of our Lord". The Ark belonged to God. So it was called the Ark of God. The testimony was safe guarded and its tablets put inside Israel's holy lock box. Two Golden Cherubim's were attached inside top of the Ark near the mercy seat. The Cherubim's were heavenly bodies only but not angels. They will have two eyes like human beings but shape of the feet is like that of a calf and they have four faces.

Satan was also one of the Cherubs. He had fallen down to the earth as a punishment from God. He was actually more intelligent and more beautiful than any other in heaven. So God entrusted him the affairs of the throne in the mountain in the Garden of Eden.

Many incidents took place to the Ark during the time of the Judges that were worthy to mention at least one of them. After the Philistines returned the Ark to Israelites, some men in curiosity looked inside the Ark in Bethlehem. As a result many thousands of men died in judgment. After some time king David brought that Ark to Jerusalem. It is said the Ark contained the following items.

1. Two types of the tablets of the Ten Commandments
2. The Golden bowl (pot) of Manna
3. The staff of Aaron.

They were kept like that to show them to the future generations as God wanted that. It was again stolen from the temple of King Solomon and at present its whereabouts were not known to anybody.

## **2. History of the Menorah**

The Lord commanded "and thou shall make a candlestick of pure gold" This menorah was one of the items of the Tabernacle furniture. It had

oil lamps instead of candles. It was called oil lamp stand or Menorah technically. It was designed systematically with seven branches and three branches projecting each side of its central staff. The branches of Menorah were designed like flower and branches of an almond tree in Israel.

The oil bowls of the Menorah were tear drape shaped like almond kernels and they were pinched at their pointed ends to hold the wicks. The branches of the Menorah were fastened with a single pickle of gold metal and had oil lamps sitting at the top of each branch. The Menorah was considered most important item in the Tabernacle. It stood along the santhom wall of the Holy place. The menorah and its various tools were made of pure gold and it was maintained by the priests of the temple. And to the Menorah pure and perfect olive oil was used.

### **3. The Altar**

The temple of God was identified as the person and the work of Messiah of Israel. The Bible accurately presented the Tabernacle as the picture of the Messiah. The understanding of the temple being an understanding of Messiah. The animal sacrifices mentioned in the Bible showed the Messiah's true sacrifice, Hebrew prophet Jeremiah explained that the Lord offered the Messiah as the one final sacrifice for "sin".

The sacrificial altar was identified as the heavenly altar. The heavenly altar was memorized as the Messiah as the Lamb of God to be offered as the true r- sacrifice. The Messiah was also identified by the high priest as the true high priest. So the scripture emphasized that neither by the blood of the goats nor calves but by His own blood He entered into the Holy place (Heaven) and obtained the eternal redemption for the sake of humanity.

As it is said already the golden altar at the Tabernacle represented the altar in Heaven. Once King David prayed, "Let my prayer be set before Thee as incense" (Psalms 141:2). The incense altar is what the prayers of

believers continuously ascent before God's throne by the work of our high priest, whoever likes to make

## **Intercession**

At present the fate of the Menorah was not known to the people, because the Babylonian king plundered Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 B.C., He took every important thing from the city and the temple and also some thousands of people as captives. After some years the Persians defeated the Babylonians and king "Cyrus" returned everything that was taken by the Babylonian king including Menorah to Jerusalem.

Again when the Romans came to power in Judah, they took away Menorah particularly to Rome because it was a solid gold item. Then after a long time, when the Israel came to power the religions minister put a petition to the Vatican authorities in 1996 for the investigation of the Menorah. In recent times the Temple authorities planned for a modern Menorah. It was composed of 99 pounds (45 kgs) of gold. Its height was about 6 feet. In September 2009 an exciting archeological discovery was announced regarding the Menorah in the ancient village of "Megdal" the native village of Mary Magdalene on the western side of the Sea of Galilee. It was unearthed during the first century B.C. The artist was most likely an eye witness of the actual Temple Menorah.

## **4. The Table of Shew-bread**

The table of Shew-bread was made of acacia or shettim wood (acacia is the English word for it). These shettim trees are common plants around mount Senai and Neg wilderness area. This wood was perfectly suitable as the raw material to the table of shew-bread. It had similar design elements to the Ark. The Shew-bread contained vessels (dishes, spoons, covers and bowels) which were made of pure gold.

The Lord specified that a measure of frankincense was to be poured on the top of each of two sections of the Shew-bread on the table. In this context a historian Flavius Josephus said that frankincense was placed in two golden cups. The table of Shew-bread was continuously displayed. It was arranged into the stacks of six loaves on the table. As per the Rabbanic sources each bread stake was exhibited on the golden rack support and that was attached to the table.

The table of Shew-bread was kept along the north wall of the Tabernacle interior. It was on the right hand side which became more convenient to the priests when they entered and it stood just opposite to the Menorah. The priests used to refresh the table on every Sabbath day, with twelve fresh mechyahs. and new frankincense's. The old incense was burnt on the sacrificial altar itself.

### **Information about the Tent**

The Lord asked Moses to prepare the Tabernacle (called tent). It was rectangular in appearance and built with the wooden frame tapestries and animal skins. The Tabernacle had four covering layers. The first covering layer was often smaller tapestry panels made of three colours (blue, purple and scarlet) wool and fine coat linen. This most spectacular layer was embroidered with Cherubim's made from the gold wire, and this layer was visible at the top from inside the Temple.

The second layer was consisted of eleven smaller panels of black goat hair cloth which appeared like black burlap. The individual panels were of 30 cubits long and 4 cubits width. The third covering layer was of reddied rams skins. The fourth covering layer was made of talash animal skins. The tent was supported by thick wooden panels. Those were known as beams or side walls. The wooden panels and cross were all overlaid with pure gold. The overall foot print of the Tabernacle was 30 cubits long and 10 cubits width.



## **Tabernacle's Construction**

The details of the Tabernacle can be found in the 40th chapter of Exodus, the 13th chapter of Leviticus and the book of Numbers. They preserve permanent record of it in the Bible forever. It was built at the foot of the mount Sinai wilderness about 3,500 years ago. That is, the early spring of 1446 B.C., New years day in Hebrew religious calendar. That particular morning God chose for the consecration of the Tabernacle. After two weeks of this incident they had completed one year of their leaving Egypt. So, they celebrated their first anniversary with the presence of God at the foot the mount Sinai.

The divine meeting was really an extraordinary thing in the history of human beings and in the life of Israel. God revealed the Holy law and entered into a covenant with Israel that is, “He would be their God and they would be His people.”

Moses surveyed his work in the Tabernacle before the early morning. He saw to his left the yellow flame of seven beamed Menorah. On his right, he saw the golden table of the Shew-bread with its matyans and frankincense, displayed before the Lord. The golden incense altar stood straight before the veil of the Holy of holies.

When Moses came to the altar, he saw two large golden cherubim's embroidered on the veil appeared to be hovering. Then Moses poured fine olive oil on the cups. A steam of white smoke came immediately and a few tiny spartikles in orange colour shot upward from the incense.

Moses fell prostrate before the altar and prayed to God for a few minutes when he was about to go to the courtyard all of a sudden a cloud of the Lord appeared on the tent. The cloud raised hundreds of feet high into the sky and fanned out like a courtyard at the top. And finally the cloud

rested on the tent. It filled the area so intensely that Moses could not re-enter the Tabernacle freely.

Israelites at that time could understand that God was in their midst. Then God spoke with Moses from the Holy of holies regarding the sacrifices and ordinances of the priests. God finished His speech and went up. After that Moses took rams horn and made a sound to call all the Israelites to gather at that place before him. He took a flask of anointing oil and went into the tent to consecrate the furniture. The olive oil scented with myrrh, cinnamon and other aromatic and different components as commanded by the Lord.

The inauguration of Israelites Tabernacle and the priesthood remained forever in the minds of Israelites, and the nation. Behold, how good and pleasant for the brethren to dwell peacefully and happily. The early temple of the Lord in its survival and the priesthood would continue to function virtually unchanged for the next fifteen hundred years.

### **Spiritual Importance of the Tabernacle**

The importance of the solid earthly temple both the tent and the constructed one by King Solomon were solitary the Israelites worshipped centre of God. The time vein-with the Lord became rich in spiritual significance. It communicated the critical divine truth for the people of Israel. The earthly temple of the Lord pictured the heavenly reality. It was only a shadow of true temple in heaven. The Tabernacle its altar, its furniture and its vessels were pictured after the heavenly temple which Moses literally saw, when he was with God on the mount Senai. The ark of covenant was identified as heavenly shrine of the Lord. The Holy of holies reflected God's heavenly throne room.

The earthly temple of the Lord was identified as the spiritual truth. As a testimony it communicated to men that they were sinners. Therefore,

they are under divine judgment. Through the priesthood God provided priestly meditation for the separation between Himself and humankind called by 'sin'.

Therefore, the Messiah as a high priest entered the Holy of holies and by remaining there forever, He would sprinkle His own blood. There was no other bloodshed at the time of the crucifixion. He did not carry any blood but of His own through sacrifice.

The veil of the Tabernacle represented separation between a sinful man and Holy God. The earthly veil was torn down in the middle in Jerusalem temple at the time of Christ's crucifixion and His sacrifice. The Messiah sacrificed His life on the cross for the sake of humanity. Now according to the New Covenant God does not remember the "Sin" of the people any more? The single Tabernacle with its single door indicates that there is only one God and through that one door we can come to God.

The Messiah represented the High priest who is clearly seen in His fiery sevenfold fullness of the heavenly throne. The Holy Spirit illuminates the minds of men with the light of Spiritual truth. The Holy Spirit sent the Messiah anointed and empowered the Messianic ministry and it testifies Messiah.

The twelve martyrs represented the twelve tribes of Israel. And Messiah as part of His priestly work will purify His godly remnants of Israel and bring them spotless before God and also their nation into the bond of the new covenant and restore the twelve tribes back to their tribal land inheritances.

The wilderness Tabernacle was like a miniature portable type, of the temple of the Lord and served as the spiritual centre of the nation for about five hundred years. Consequently the first and the second temples came into existence in large scale in Jerusalem. And these temples were greater and far bigger than the Tabernacle.

The three - the Tabernacle the first temple and the second temple were patterned after the heavenly temple. The three were God's earthly houses, where He dwelt among men. At present the earthly temples are not in existence but our bodies are the temples of God in this age. When we trust God as our saviour His Spirit will dwell in us and in that sense we say our bodies are the temples of God.

The Lord promised that He would come again and dwell among men. God also said "I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forever more. My ' Tabernacle also shall be with them. Ye, I will be their God and they will be my people."

Apostle John saw the exciting fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy and his vision of the Messianic future when Heavenly New Jerusalem descends to the mount Zion. Again John heard a loud voice from Heaven "behold, the Tabernacle of God was with men and He would live with them... And God shall wipe out all their tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, sorrow, crying and pain.

God will dwell among men and he commanded John to write those words as true and faithful. God will dwell among His men through the Messiah. The Messiah king will sit at the right hand side of the throne and He will build the temple of our Lord and rule from His throne. The temple will exist for five hundred years or may be for one thousand years. But my sanctuary will remain forever in their midst., "He will be our God we will be His people."

## *10. Return of the Messiah*

Jesus Christ is coming again. The implications of His return are no doubt most staggering and inapprehensible. As a matter of fact even the wisest and the noblest cannot fully fathom the impact of the return of the son of God will make on this planet and universe. The fact here is that

- 1) He is the one who spoke with galaxies into existence
- 2) He is the one who created man from dust of the earth breath into him the “breath of life”
- 3) He is the one who came to die to satisfy; the infinitely holy demands of His father so that sinfulness could be restored to fellowship and enjoy God forever
- 4) He is the one who rose from the grave and became victorious over sin and death
- 5) He is the one who is ascended to heaven and now enthroned on the right hand side of His father

When he returns again He will not return as a “little Jesus meek and mild”. But in His second coming He will be called “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” That is to say His designation will be changed. In His presence the Transgressors will be judged and the faithful ones recovered. Eventually righteousness will be established on earth. The second coming of Jesus is no doubt most fascinating in the history. Everyone and everything on earth will be drawn to His presence and He will control them. Heaven and earth demons and angels the righteous and unrighteous time and eternity life and death all these things will be under the control of this conquering king when He returns, He will bring an end to the rebellious period of humanity and personally establish a “golden age”

When the disciples came to know that Jesus was leaving them and going to His father, They were frustrated in their utter disappointment requested Him to give a sign that would authentically indicate two important points They were

## 1) His second coming 2) the end of the Age

Their urgency actually took place about 2000 years ago and at present there is no other issue except this which has greater significance for their big question

*“Jesus reply is Take heed that no man deceive you” (Matthew 24:4)*

As far as the information is concerned the Bible is amazingly direct. It gives correct point without embellishment when the Bible says “Fear not” (Matthew 1:20) it is because people are sometimes afraid of their own shadows. again when the Bible says *“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* Romans 11:25

It is because people are ignorant regarding a particular thing. When the Bible says “Let not your heart to be troubled” it means the hearts of the people are troubled and we can quote many more such examples

Jesus Christ gave many examples regarding their safety because He said for many shall come in my name saying I am Christ and shall deceive many. (Matthew 24:5)

These will not be men claiming that they are Jesus that is not the main assert. There will be men who falsely claim for themselves the office of the Messiah (Christ). In fulfillment of the “Messianic Hope”, they simply say they can bring redemption (both political and spiritual) to those people who are willing to set aside their weapons and follow their command. It is said throughout Jewish History that there were more than twenty major Messiah’s who were nothing but self proclaimed deliverers. Their programs were delivered in such a way that the people thought the golden Age was nothing more than a vapor without proper thinking. Their speeches were demonstrated to be the cisterns without water (Jeremiah 2:13) and clouds without water (Jude 1:21). They promised but never produced they were simply false Christ’s.

During the Twentieth and twenty first centuries a group of religious political leaders also emerged to exert the messianic life controlled over their followers. They range from TV evangelists to charismatic political leaders to religious cultists. However such wicked men are more dangerous harbingers of even more influential false leaders who will come out in future when the Anti Christ confirms a covenant of protection with Israelites a host of false Christ's will arise. They will proclaim a false message of faith and deceive many.

### **The danger of false Christ's**

The believers of every generation should have the "Tribulation" period and encounter with the false Christ. It is undoubtedly crucial time for the true believers to find out their real shepherd. The problem cannot be set aside as some must have attempted to do by suggesting the believers to live holy. The Lord gave a warning to the believers and it is a specific warning which is related to a unique moment of history. The believers must understand they are exempted from great problems of the "Tribulation" period because they will not be present at the time of warning.

The increasing number of voices from within the conservative circles are giving an alarm. They do not want diversion but lovingly corrective. The concept of rapture before Tribulation period as a comforting appeal but it is a false comfort that would tempt God's people. The concept of the entrance into Tribulation period before the rapture is disquieting but it is a true disquieting that will naturally help people take heed as the Lord warned. It is really very difficult for men and women who are held miserably to a particular doctrine for good number of years.

Whatever many be the consequences the believers in the word of God are advised to seek out the truth no matter in which way it will lead them. During a few decades in the past many people have embraced the pre wrath rapture position because they are mentally considered that it is based on Biblical evidence. The result is that the church may be prepared to enter the seventieth week of prophet Daniel. There are many verses in the Bible



that teach the church will be raptured. It will be raptured pre tribulationally. Attempts are made to prove it's eschatology (the doctrine the last thing) from Ecclesiology (the doctrine of the church) to define pre tribulation raptures on it only serves to underscore the inherent weaknesses of the person. It appears there is no verse in the Bible that teaches us the entire seventieth week of Daniel (the mankind Tribulation period) which is God's wrath. It is a fact church is not holding any responsibility to understand the God's wrath. But it is clearly said God's wrath is to begin following the opening of the sixth seal and in anticipation of the opening of the seventh seal. In this context Apostle Paul wrote "For the great day of his wrath is come" (which means it is about to begin) and who shall be able to stand?

In anticipation of that wrath sinful man and woman will hide themselves in the dens and in the mountains as an attempt for protection from God's wrath (Revelation 6:15) It was exactly as the ancient prophets told (Isaiah in anticipation of that wrath the 144000 people will be sealed for protection (Revelation 7:4). again in anticipation of that wrath there will be cosmic disturbance. again processing as the old Testament prophet told. As we see "The wrath of God is the main subject of this book (Revelation). The wrath of God begins with the opening of the seventh seal and the word wrath is used eight times in the book of Revelation. God's wrath is to begin with the opening of the seventh seal, but the phrase "God's wrath" is nowhere used in the first six seals. As a matter of fact, the seals are not God's wrath?

Here, the seals represent the final rebellious acts of godless men and women who were under the influence of the wicked one. In heaven angels are the servants of God and attend His calls. During that time all the seven trumpets are blown and all the seven bowels are poured out by angels because the trumpets and bowels are God's wrath. Of Christ rejecting world in marked contrast no angelic beings are used in the opening of the seals. God is sovereignty in control but He is not casual agent because the seals are not His wrath. In this connection Apostle Paul taught in (1 Thessalonians 5:9) entering the tribulation period is to experience some of those difficulties

and they do not provide the church from being raptured before God's wrath begins. God always protects His children from His wrath. The second coming of Jesus Christ is consistently portrayed as a singular event and the Bible also consistent on this matter.

- 1) And what shall be the sign of thy coming (Matthew 24:3)
- 2) So shall also the coming of the son of man be (Matthew 24:7)
- 3) Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming (1 Cor 15:23)
- 4) At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints (1 Thessa 3:13)
- 5) We must alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord (1 Thessa 4:1-5)
- 6) And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23)
- 7) Now we beseech your brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:1)
- 8) Whom the Lord shall consume with his spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (2 Thessalonians 2:5)
- 9) Be patient therefore brethren unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (James 5:7)
- 10) The coming of the Lord draweth nigh (James 5:8)
- 11) When we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:16)
- 12) Where is the promise of his coming (2 Peter 3:4)
- 13) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God (2 Peter 3:12)
- 14) We may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at his coming (1 John 2:25)

In many respects and in different books from the Bible the word coming is either modified by the personal pronoun His or thy or most frequently the definite article "the" In every saying His return is mentioned as singular not comings but coming so there is no even a hint anywhere two separate comings. It is quite clear that there is a second coming of Christ

sometime in the middle of the seventieth week of Daniel. But there is no evidence for the earlier second coming to rapture the church. If such unusual event takes place then the Bible is silent about it. And also the great churches and confessions of the church history also remain silent about it. It cannot be found in the Apostle creed. "The Nicaea creed" "the Athenian creed" The west minister confession of faith The Baptist confession of 1989. The Philadelphia confession of faith.

As far as our Biblical knowledge is concerned there is no verse that has taken the concept of imminence that the rapture can occur at any time. It is sign and no prophetic event will take place prior to that. A good number of verses in the Bible explain to us that the Lord will come as a thief in the Night (2Peter 3:10)

It is believed He will come all of a sudden So, the believers are warned to be watchful wait and be ever ready because the return of Christ cannot legitimately be stretched to man's eminence" Such verses do not teach or even infer that prophesied events cannot precede Christ's return.

At His sudden coming the unbelieving world will be caught unprepared because they are the children of darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:2). It will contrast to that those who are the children of God, that is those who accepted Christ as their Lord and savior will not be caught off guard. They will be watched and ready as they are the children of light (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6). It is said the rapture is not imminent and signless. It is expectant and oblige with the indications of Christ's coming for believers who enter the Tribulation period. The Indicators will not reveal the day or the hour of His (return but things will reveal the time period in general.

Just as a fig tree indicated to Israelites that summer was getting close in the same manner the events of the Matthew will indicate the believers living in the "Tribulation" that the rapture is coming close. The criticism that is often heard that in the church events the seventieth week of Daniel is with some differences then the blessed hope is no longer blessed hope. That is to attack deficiently does not negate the blessed hope of the return of

Jesus Christ and the accompanying glorification of the true believers. In addition to that it does not decrease the confronting effect. The emergence of Anti Christ or any other trial either resurrection or rapture of Christ return reminds the believers the anchor of the soul the blessed hope. So to say every period of church history the godliest of fellowship in spite of their own loopholes.

It was a black spot that expect during the millennial period that occurred in the earlier twentieth century. And it is blessed that one day the pendulum of theological thinking will go away from pre tribulational rapturism in sadness.

If there is no enough time and the church happened to go into the Tribulational period then the church will be raptured pre tribulationally. And then she will be surprised confessed and catch completely. In addition to that her faith will be shaken and as a result many believers in the midst of confusion will become important targets for the false prophets who will come out and deceive many people it is nothing but spiritual blasphemy So the church is advised to be prepared to meet the coming storm rather than to rest in hope to escape which can never happen.

### **The Truth Christ Taught**

The seventieth week was explained by Prophet Daniel in three parts conveniently and these components we can find in the book of Matthew. They are the beginning of sorrows (Matthew 24:8). Great Tribulation and the time of Jacob's Troubles. According to the information the beginning of sorrows as

- 1) Coming of false Christ's
- 2) Wars and rumors of wars
- 3) Famines of different types
- 4) Pestilence
- 5) Earth quakes etc.

This assessment is based on the fact that of (Matthew 24:4-8) parallels the first four seals of Revelation 6:1-8. The fifth seal describes the martyrdom of believers who refuse the mark of the Anti Christ. This particular event begins when the Ante Christ breaks His covenant with Israelites in the midst of the seven year period. The reference here indicates the Jews were forced to bow down and worship the Anti Christ who is the embodiment of desolation in the Temple of God.

The most significant thing in this connection is that all four gospels writers described the beginning of sorrows. But the description of the beloved Apostle John about the beginning of sorrows was very late. He portrayed this under the imagery of four horses and the riders. Among them the first one is the white horse that represents the Anti Christ who is empowered by Satan. He is the ultimate manifestation of apostatic religious leaders and who rebel against God. This white horse rider is proposer with bow but it seemed there are no arrows. He will be wearing a crown perhaps he will conquer by deception he will promise to his people peace and a better world. He will offer a false hope and a counter feat kingdom.

The second one is the Red Horse and the rider represents war. The Anti Christ first achieves all he can through deception when that avenue is exhausted he will resort to armed aggression (Revelation 6:4). The third horse is a black horse which indicates famine. This rider is equipped with a scale for measuring and rationing food. Here the imagery suggests that it will cost men to proportionate few days work to purchase the measure of wheat an amount hardly sufficient for his personal needs for one day and no chance for his family members gradually it becomes food shortage for the people. The fourth one is the pale horse literally means (sickly green) and its rider represents death (pestilence) and the grave. The word “death” is used in the Greek language and to translate the Old Testament it is pestilence (Ezekiel 14:21) Death and the grave will be the inevitable result of the downward spiral. All this will start with the emergence of the Anti Christ. (The white horse and the rider) which will lead to famine (the black horse

and the rider) which will result in death (Pestilence) and the grave (the pale or sickly green horse and the rider.

The reality of the destruction of these four horses and riders will be far more greater than the fourth rider description presented here. Even the animal kingdom in such severe condition will lose its normal fear of men. The popular theologian and Minister Joseph Augustus in his important commentary wrote general war and famine bring pestilence As a result the earth becomes depopulated and then it becomes venerable place for wild beasts.

### **We may find some observations in this context**

1) These catastrophes are not attributed to God or an evidence for the outpouring of God's wrath. But they are natural and inevitable outcome of a world that has rebelled against its own creator and gone out of the way which God is sovereignly in control and the Lord Jesus is opening the seals but it is quite clear He is not the casual against those events. The first seal describes the emergence of the Anti Christ and actually that is not the work of true Christ. The fifth seal is about the martyrdom of the faithful and true believers. Who boldly refused to bow down to the Anti Christ? Nobody would suggest the Lord is responsible for the death of his own followers who are really faithful to heaven. Prior to the four horses and the riders appear on the stage of human history an angelic command is given (Revelation 6:1, 3) The command in the Greek language is one word and that is *encomia* and this word is from the frequently used verb denoting within a comet or to go This is actually an official command from the angel rather than a request. The angelic messengers are commanding four horses and riders to be coming or be going from both sides and there is no change in meaning. The sovereignty of God is over everything So, unless He grants permission these horses and riders cannot move. Their actions are permitted by God but they are not originated in God.

Secondly the horses and riders take place neither. The first horse and rider begin his activity for an un disclosed period of time before the

second horse and rider begin his activity. Every horse and rider and something to the predecessor that wars and famines are worldwide. The rider of the fourth horse is particularly said to have outreached authority. His power to kill with the sword famine and pestilence are limited to one quarter of the earth (Revelation 6:8). That does not mean he can kill one quarter of the world population. It means his power and activity are limited to a particular area. He is permitted to kill only one fourth of the world population.

The disciples insisted more about the sign of his coming and the end of the Age. For that Jesus responded by saying and reminding them about the false Christ. That come out who finally represent in one diabolical man the Anti Christ wars famines and pestilences He added that all those are the beginning of sorrows Jesus wanted to caution His sheep not to be trapped under any circumstances. But he wanted to keep them alert to face any kind of difficulties at the time of Tribulation period He wished that such worship should not cause fear in the minds of God's Children but to remain watchful for holy living. If we look into the Book of Prophet Daniel we can find how the three Hebrew kids Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood boldly before Nebuchadnezzar when they were thrown into the fiery burning flames because they were God fearing people and had faith that God would save them.

They refused bluntly to worship the golden image of that king. Then he cast them into the fiery burning furnace They answered if it be so our God whomsoever is able to deliver us from the fiery burning furnace and He will deliver us out of thine hand O king if not be it known unto thee king we will not serve thy god's nor worship the golden image, which thou hast setup Therefore the Children of God should not exhibit less courage at the time of "Tribulation" period but remain boldly like the three Hebrew kids Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So let us pray that the courage and trust of those three Hebrew kids in their God be an example for every true believer in Christ.



## *11. Persecution*

The second coming of Jesus Christ is the greatest hope of the believers. But before that glorious event warned all Christians must be prepared for persecution. The Olivet Discourse of Jesus Christ has been historically presumed as prophetic teaching as paramount important why because it was dealt with the return of Jesus Christ to the Earth. At that time He will deliver the righteous and judge the wicked in order to send them to hell. The significance of that discourse was identified as the event of the world. This discourse would clearly suggest that we are closer to the end of the Age. The word Tribulation or affliction in the New Testament is translated from Greek language which conveys the meaning of pressure persecution affliction anguish and trouble. Even though nobody likes the Tribulation which is unwelcome yet it is inevitable in the life of every believer and it is real. Nobody can escape from that troublesome event.

Jesus taught His disciples that in the world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer I have overcome the world. (John 16:33) The Lord further described and taught His disciples that the future time would be with many difficulties. And He added expect those days of Great Tribulation were not shortened. There should no flesh be saved. (Matthew 24:22). Here the expression “no flesh” is not referring to all men and women everywhere. The truth is all humanity would perish in those days of Great Tribulation are not shortened. Then the term “all flesh” is a reference to the remnant of the believers in the humanity and also those that will not submit themselves to the authority of the Anti Christ nor receive his mark.

As a result thy will be severely persecuted so that if the Great tribulation (which occurs within the part of the second half of Daniel seven year period known as the seventieth week) are not cut short by God then only men of the elect will be physically survive that period of time. Jesus Christ said with thanks but for the elects sake those days will be shortened in connection with the nature of the tribulation of life. One nineteenth century preacher and poet Edwin Chaplin said the brightest crowns that are warm

in Heaven will be tried, Smelted, polished and glorified through the furnace of Tribulation. Another Bible commentator a pious and gifted Matthew Henry wrote that extraordinary afflictions are not always the punishment of extraordinary sins. but sometimes the extraordinary trials of graces sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions.

So, to say a brighter crown spiritual promotions and faithful services are forged in the flames of Tribulation. It is really suitable when Apostle Paul whole heartedly laid the benefits of Tribulation. He taught that not only the glory in Tribulation also knowing that the Tribulation worketh patience and patience experience hope (Romans 5:3-4) Apostle Paul realized that Tribulation is a link in the chain of Christian maturity and triumph. Matthew clearly described the first 3 1/2 years of the future seventieth week of Daniel in this manner. This 3 1/2 years period and the events connected to that are parallel to the four horses and the riders of Revelation 6:1-8. In Revelation 6th chapter and Matthew 24th chapter speak briefly about the sequence of 1) False Christ 2) Wars 3) Famines 4) Pestilen etc. The Lord called those four events and that time frame as the beginning of sorrows Jesus clearly described the great tribulation and its outcome. Many commentators explain that the great tribulation does not begin until Matthew 24:15 where reference is made to the abomination of desolation. On the other hand it is suggested that the description of the great tribulation begins with verse 9 and the following reasons are through careful observations.

It has been already mentioned previously regarding the four horses and their riders (the first four seals) of Revelation 6:1-8 which is parallel to the description of the beginning birth pangs in Matthew 24:4-8. The fifth and sixth seals are also parallel. The fifth seal when it is opened tells about the martyrdom. It speaks about the souls that were miserably slain for the word of God and for the testimony when they gave. The parallel is explained in the following way in Matthew 24th chapter. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you and you shall be hated of all nations for my name sake. Then regarding the sixth seal when it is opened He beheld a great earthquake and the Sun became black as sack cloth of hair and the moon became blood and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth. It is like a

fig tree casteth untimely figs when it is shaken of a mighty wind. The same event we find in the Matthew 24th chapter. He described the cosmic disturbance in the following lines immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened and moon shall not give her light and the stars shall fall down from heaven and the powers of heavens shall be shaken (Matthew 24:29).

So, there is crystal clear and unmistakable parallel between the six seals of (Revelation 6:1-17) and the prophetic teachings of the Lord Jesus. The sixth seal describes the martyrdom of believers who will not submit themselves to receive the mark of the Anti Christ during the Great tribulation the parallel passages describe the martyrdom in (Matthew 24:9-14)

Then the verses 15-28 describe the events connected with the great tribulation. The scripture concerned to this part begins with the expression when ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the beloved prophet of God. The word therefore in verse 15 grammatically links with what follows which immediately preceded it. This is only a dedicated and closely focused explanation of the great tribulation which begins in verse 9-14. Which the great tribulation is universal in its impact its focal points and hottest flames are reserved for the people of Israel Due to this reason the great Tribulation is referred to as the time of Jacobs (Israel's) troubles. So, the events of the world are moving toward Jerusalem with reckless abandon and break neck speed in preparation for the end of the Age. At the same time it is the beginning of the millennium kingdom of Christ.

In a clear description of the great tribulation the Lord Jesus Christ gave a crucial word of warning it's a tragic word of capitulation and a sure word of hope. Those people who are clever enough will certainly follow and understand the instructions undoubtedly the coming conflicts over Jerusalem. They will be strong indications that we are rapidly approaching toward the end of the Age. And finally Jesus will rule the world by keeping Jerusalem as His capital. A crucial word of warning Matthew 24:9.

According to the verse the time of the great tribulation is rapidly approaching. The events of the world are measured by platinum yard stick of the word of God strongly suggest that it can happen in this generation. For centuries those who have lived godly and those who have lived in Christ are to vary in degrees always known to persecution and difficulty. it is a specific time period which the flames of persecution against the true believers by an ungodly world system which is controlled by the Anti Christ and it is directly encouraged by Satan. This method of punishment will surpass in higher degree in all periods of Tribulation. The Lord begins the description of these words concerned to that period He said. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name sake (Matthew 24:9). Here let us remember at this juncture that the Anti Christ will arise and confirm a seven year (Seventieth week) covenant with Israel.

The Anti Christ after achieving all he is able to through subtle diplomacy he will plan armed conflict. As a result he will have the control over the major nations and also seven more smaller nations will be added with those nations. He will establish a new world order. The next step is this satanically empowered individual will try to dominate the world by creating artificial economic crisis in his government for the purpose of operation. The Anti Christ will choose the land of Israel and the temple mount of Moriah in Jerusalem. Why he wants to prefer Jerusalem because it is an important place for Muslims, Jews and Christians.

As a matter of fact the city of Jerusalem and the Temple mount are the ultimate issue in all attempts to resolve the Middle East crises and establish a new world older. Then according to Daniel's middle of the seventieth week the anti christ will break his covenant with Israel. He will stop the reestablished sacrificial system in the Holy Temple of God done by the Jews. Instead of that he will ask them to bow down before him to his authority. He will demand pledge from the Jews to have friendship politically. In the same matter many nations and people of the world will deliver their submission to the Anti Christ. They will accept his mark also. Those people or nations that reject his authority or mark will be penalized and not allowed

either to buy or sell even the dairy necessities. Apostle Paul commented about this momentous event yet the true believers will be called upon to take their stand and renounce the world leader as a false Christ.

All the believers must stand united and declare that they will not accept any sovereign authority except the son of God. Who shed blood on the cross for the sins of all. As a result the Antichrist will try to expand and consolidate his new world order which in course of time may take the forum of Muslim caliphate. However the loyalty of the believers toward Christ will not be without a price. And the price will be very costly. A warning is given to believers who call Jesus as their Lord Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you and ye shall be hated of all nations for my names sake. In this passage the expression for my names sake is most important. The significance of that passage is that the believers show their loyalty and faith to Christ. For what He has done to them like His attributes and His works. The memorable at the same time remarkable work Christ will do for the believers is granting of martyrdom for the generations of believers who enter the great tribulation.

There shall be great urgency about the moment in history because it is conspicuous by its absence. The church has to be taught more from the scriptures so that it can be free from the world obligations and dependence and then committed to Christ only. Contrary to trust most of the churches with some remarkable exertions of not properly taught, distracted and not committed. So, the believers must be prepared for possible martyrdom. It appears to be difficult issue to think in those terms. At the same time the believers are taught to expect to be raptured before the Anti Christ makes himself known to people. And this error has been injected into the life blood of the twenty first century believers of the church and bible by Satan who is the great author of lies. Anyway those who have been taught (believers) will be raptured before the appearance of the Anti Christ but he will be recognized slowly, as a tragic world of capitulation Matthew 24:10-12

It is a fact that those who profess Christ will remain courageous for their faith in the future day. For those who have not heard the teachings of

the Lord then it will be the time to distinguish those who profess Christ only outwardly but they will have no inward experience regarding the teachings of the Lord and also they will not possess the Holy spirit. According to Matthew gospel Jesus taught in His early days the example of wheat (that represents true believers) and weeds in His regular teachings. As per the parable both the plants grow together until the end of the Age or till the time of the harvest. Then after the harvest the wheat and weeds would be separated and the unwanted weeds will be burned and wheat to be kept in the barn. The weed insect Israel was called dar'nd. The truth is that the weed plant was looked like wheat during the growing season but at the time of harvest weeds would appear quite different still the people kept the weeds till the time of the harvest. Why because if they pull in the middle of the wheat crop it would be described. In order to keep the wheat undisturbed. They allowed both wheat and weeds grow together till the harvest time. But at the end of the time of the harvest only both could be separated easily. In the same manner only at the end of the age the true believers (the wheat) would deliver their genuineness through their faith to Christ. They totally refuse to embrace the Anti Christ with regard to the false believers (weeds). They would change their loyalty and embrace the Anti Christ, in spite of the danger ahead.

These false believers were in the mind of the Lord. When he taught them. And then shall many be offended that is tripped up and shall betray one another. We find the same meaningful passage in marks gospel. That is now the brother shall betray the brother to death and the father the son, and children shall rise up against their parents and shall cause them to be put to death (Mark 13:12). And also the gospel Luke is said in this way and ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren and kinfolks and friends and some of you shall they cause to be put to death (Luke 21:16) This type of strange behavior under the strenuous and life threatening circumstances of the great Tribulation should not be imagined unprecedented.

If we look into the history it was not too long ago we find some people betrayed their Jewish neighbors and friends to Hitler "Gastapo" and the gas camps of Europe to demonstrate their loyalty to the intended "new



world order”. It is said These Jewish friends and neighbors used to surrender themselves just for a bottle of vodka actually they were the days of complicated matters in the midst of chaos and confusion. In such circumstances Jesus warns and many false prophets shall rise and deceive many. Matthew 24:11

False sheep will follow the attracting voice of false shepherd. But the true sheep will know the voice of a true shepherd. Jesus said in the parable of good shepherd. “And when he putteth for his own sheep he goeth before them and the sheep follow him because they can understand the voice of their master. And a stranger will they not follow but will flee from him. For they know not the voice of a stranger True sheep never follows false shepherds. False prophets and false sheep complement each other like a hand and glove”. Under the humanistic philosophy of that period of time common morality and decency were nonexistent. Added to that the betrayers and deception under the onslaught of the Anti Christ and wickedness were also the order of the day. some commentators suggested regarding the reference to the diminishing love toward one another in the Christendom. So to say betrayals hatred and false prophets will appear to be silent in the face of rampant iniquity. In these wonderful changes, there is no divine intervention which they expect it. As a result the love of many people for God will grow old.

Lack of love toward God was quite evident that they know not God. The heathens are not here in view but many can be found in the Christendom that such naked truth would cause pastors and ministers to feel sorrow in their prayers about the sheep entrusted to them. The fact is that a living faith works among people. If there is life, there is fruit. If there is no fruit there cannot be any life. In such conditions the lifeless Christians will follow a false shepherd.

### **A word of Hope follows Matthews 24:13-14**

If the description of great tribulation by the Lord is ended at this point then there is no chance for optimism. But the end of the account has not yet been reacted. So, Jesus continued. But he that shall endure unto the

end of the same shall be saved (Matthew 24:13). The fact here is that all will not be martyred for their faith and not all will capitulate to the Anti Christ yet there will be some faithful believers who can endure unto the end. Those that are said to endure unto the end in the Olivet discourse are described as the overcomes of the seven churches of Asia Minor in Revelation 21:11. This is the description of those who will remain faith full to Jesus Christ even after the experience of onslaught by the Anti Christ. True believers are capable of such deeds with their loyalty to their king Jesus Christ.

The disciples earlier enquired of the Lord “And what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world or end of the Age”. As per the Jewish theology of the first century there were two ages the present age of sin and sorrows and the golden age of righteousness and justice (the millennium) which is to follow between the two ages. They understood there would be a brief period of time known as the day of the Lord. When the cup of humanities iniquity is full God will directly intervene on the planet earth. The period of time is referred to in scriptures as the day of the Lord At that time (the end of this age) the righteous will be raptured then the earth and everything on the earth to be judged in his second coming and in preparation for the millennial age to come.

Before the end of the Age however during the great tribulation the gospel of the kingdom (that is the message that Jesus who came and died for the sins of the world is coming again to play an important role in the new age and become king of kings and Lord of Lords His word will be preached everywhere in the world by the remnant of faithful and courageous believers. Finally the remaining bold believers comprise the triumphant church.

### **Salient Points**

1. Matthew 24:9-14 is a general description of the great Tribulation. It is further explained in full details in Matthew 24:15, 28

2. The great Tribulation begins at the midpoint of Daniel's seventieth week (but somehow it is erroneously yet commonly known as the seven year Tribulation period) this great tribulation period that will not continue for 3 1/2 years as generally taught. So to say specifically it is the fifth seal of Revelation 6th chapter. If the great tribulation is not cut short by God all the believers will not be martyred.
3. During the great Tribulation the true believers of Christ who are not being totally saved will embrace the Anti Christ and accept his mark also.
4. The pretending believers will betray the true believers among families and friends to evil incarnate of Anti Christ.
5. Because of the iniquity in the rule of the Anti Christ the love of many for God will become indifferent to know that their love toward God is not genuine.
6. The gospel concerning the kingdom of God will be preached by the true believers though out the world and then the end of the Age will come.
7. The true believers will faithfully bear till the end of this Age in the midst of all difficulties in order to show their loyalty to the Lord.
8. The "end of the age" will actually come into force when Jesus Christ directly interferes in the affairs of mankind in His second coming and this wonderful event is called "the day of the Lord".
9. Immediately before the Day of the Lord commences all the believers who can bear the end of this age will be raptured and the wrath of God will be poured upon a sinful and unraptured world.
10. The age to come during which time Christ will personally rule on the earth (The millennium) He will follow the day of the Lord and it would continue for 1000 years.

## ***12. What made the Jews hate Jesus?***

What must be the cause for the Jewish friends not to hear even the name of Jesus? The reason we can understand is that some issues must have involved behind this controversial remark. Some of the Jewish people at the time of Jesus must have said this in their angry mood and it must be due to the constant persecution of their people by the Roman rulers. Some of the Jewish leaders hated Jesus for His extraordinary intelligence from his early days. Finally this hatred made them to put Jesus on the cross miserably. The rapid growth of influence of Jesus in the public and the spreading of Christianity were also responsible to certain extent for their hatred. Any way there are 10 points mentioned below why the Jewish people hated Jesus Christ and Christianity.

### **1. About the land of Israel:**

If we look into the Jewish history it was the beginning of Zionist movement started by Theodor Hertz during 1900. In addition to that it was evangelical Christians who began to support Israel in the name of Jesus Christ and their plea was for the existence of Israel nation under any circumstances. Added to that Theodor Hertz along with other Jewish leaders and also all Jews in the USA totally supported the noble cause for its success. They extended their whole hearted support for the safe return of Jewish people from various countries in the world. Who happened to flee from their country to different parts of the world due to constant persecution? But it was abolished by the kind hearted ruler Constantine during 325 A.D. At the same time they experienced different suffering in the strange lands for about 1900 years and many generations died without seeing their mother country. This is really a pathetic situation. The evangelical Christians in such crucial conditions pleaded with the British government during the time of the mandate that is during 1917-1947 to allow more Jewish people into Israel.

Then at the time of Independence these evangelical Christians stood firmly beside Israel. They continued their support even for raising funds. In 1967 during and after six day war those evangelical Christians supported and rejoined with Israel at the time of war of “Yon Kippur”. During 1973 also these evangelical Christians extended their support to Israel. In the midst of the controversy probably over the last sixty five years this evangelical Christians union and other followers of Jesus Christ became very close friends to Israel and extended their good will prayers and also helped them financially for their new nation. In addition to that many Christian groups came forward and helped Israel by visiting that country. They extended their help even to the Jewish people particularly why because they were the chosen people of God and so their help was with love toward them. In modern days also many Christian leaders were asked and invited to Israel to settle in that country. And those Christians who settled in Israel used to have discussions frequently about Jesus also.

## **2. Time of Hitler and Jesus:**

In this context Jesus Christ represented human kindness and love where as Hitler was for Satanic hatred. Both were opposite to each other in their activities toward human kind. In the New Testament in the book of Luke 23:34 we find those words “Father forgives them for they do not know what they do” These words Jesus spoke while He was on the cross. Suffering from un bearable pain. In the same manner Apostle Paul in his offer to Christians in Rome said Brethren my heart’s desire and prayed to God is that Israelites must be saved. So, to say this is true Christian spirit toward the Jewish people though their attitude was quite different. It is directly opposed to the satanic hated of Hitler and his people during the dark days and that continued even in the days of second world war in Europe 1945.

The tragic end of the Second World War was that about 60 lakhs Jews were exterminated through concentrated camps and other means. For this mass destruction and heinous act and for this the Satan and the inhuman Hitler were responsible. In the case of Jesus Christ when His own people

(the Jews) put Him on the cross in His physical suffering and pain Prayed to His father for the forgiveness of those people who were responsible to put Him on the cross. The truth is that the important leaders in this cruel act were Jews themselves and Jesus Christ was also a Jew In the present days Of the attitude of the Jews is different. As a Jewish person deplores those who caused for the crucifixion of Jesus simply because He contradicted the religious authority of His time. He might say not to blame them for killing Jesus and he would denounce it.

In the same way a Christian will say today Jewish people need not become the present day Christians for Hitler hatred and persecuted the Jewish people. It was wrong we oppose it and also condemn that evil hatred as Hitler and it has been wrong throughout the centuries. So, the name Jesus does not simply represent Hitler or Nazism but just opposite to that. When the followers asked Jesus which is the greatest commandment in the law? Jesus answered Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with thy mind. This is first and great commandment and the second one also in the same manner “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” And Jesus lived for human kindness and love, where as Hitler lived with hatred toward humanity. This fact was approved when a group of pastors went to the concentrated campus for the proof. What Hitler had done to the Jews who were the children of God

### **3. About Martin Luther:**

Martin Luther began the Protestant Reformation on October 31st in 1517. As an individual he was most courageous and out spoken against the errors of the established church. But at that time people who ever made such condemnation were even killed bluntly with the method of burning at the stack and Luther was not considered in that level. For his out spookiness among people. His speech was unlike the word of politically correct speech which people here at present. The fact is that Martin Luther’s speech was always against those people who met correct religiously. But to his bad luck some harsh and foolish words were used by the evangelical Christians



do not endorse today. The Evangelical leaders express that Jesus was also a Jew. Martin Luther was not against the Jewish people but only against their religious error. He never spoke of the Jews in the racial context. In 1997 many evangelical Christians and many Lutheran Church members in America courageously and unitedly and publicly renounced the remarks of Luther against Jewish people. He did not quote or honour the words of Jesus “Forgive them Father” yet He might have had all humanity in his mind including the gentile Romans as well as Jewish leaders. At the same time the name of Jesus need not be ignored even after fifteen centuries because of Luther’s imperfections.

#### **4. Regarding the papal Decries:**

We have studied so far something about Hitler, the Nazis, about Martin Luther and his reformation. Here let us not equate them. Luther was a hero with some flaws where as Hitler was a noted figure and embodiment of evil and anti Christ, as we find in history

1. People of the middle Ages lived in a period that was normal and they could be persecuted due to the religious differences.
2. People differed from one another as people in the society differ from one another and the treatment of Christians today and in those days was the same. These differences have been continued rather promulgated even by kings and in other places like France, Germany and some other European countries. With ill treatment they forced the Jews to wear yellow dresses so that it caused them to stand out publicly.

In the same manner during 10th and 11th centuries Abbasid and Saljuck caliphas forced non Muslims, Christians and Jews to wear quite different dress to cause them to stand out publicly. This ill treatment during that time was not the ill treatment of Jesus Christ. About whom the true believers of Jesus read in the New Testament. One thing is true in this case. The ill treatment of Jews was not by all the popes.

For example the people of Avignon Benedict XIII in 1415 amidst the dark ages ordered the Jews to wear a red and yellow badge. Then some people must have heard the speech of Pope John Paul II to holocaust victims in Jerusalem on March 23 during 2000 at yad vasum memorial and the outcome of his speech put him in the same cadre. He immersed himself in deep feelings and spoke by shedding tears. In this place of memories the mind and heart and soul feel an extreme need for silence in which to remember silence to try to make some sense of the memories which come flooding back. silence because there are no words strong enough to deplore the terrible tragedy of the shoah (Holocaust)

In this stage our intention is not to define the popes or our Christian brothers. We must give our testimony with the fact that the precious name of Jesus as nothing to do with the errors at any cost. It was the commitment of some wicked individual. Who might be either Christian or catholic or anybody? At the same time we cannot blame all Jewish people who protested who were also Jews and the same Jews happened to prosecute Apostle Paul in the Greek controlled city of Thessalonica (Act 17:1-15).

So, such counter blame and hatred have continued from generation to generation and even for centuries the hatred or persecution continued among the Jewish people. At the same time the teachings of Jesus was under control. The contents of the teachings were totally different. Once he said a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit (Matthew 7:17). The conclusion of the statements of Jesus were that He was quite against hatred.

## **5. The time of crusaders:**

The name of crusaders came into existence in 1096 at element France and continued their authority for about two centuries. They marched in four great crusades and some minor ones until 1300. It was really critical time for the Christians because the Muslims happened to close the doors for them who wished to visit the holy places like Jerusalem and other important places. The Muslim conquered and occupied most of the Christian lands in Euro Asian part with the power of sword during the past half millennium

and those lands really belonged to Christians and Christianity. In addition to that all the Northern part of Africa was occupied by them. Their forces also moved further toward Constantinople and Byzantine Christian empire. In their conquest the Muslim forces finally reached the edge of Europe.

It is believed that pilgrimage to the holy lands had become a must to all the religious persons likewise a sacred pilgrimage to Mecca the Hajj was one of the great places to Muslims. Then who were those crusaders and what was their way of life. And also many books were written about them. As mentioned there were some cadres among them.

- 1) There were some devoted Christians who even sacrificed their lives for guarding the people of God.
- 2) There were some adventurous crusaders who wished to see new lands and places.
- 3) There were some fourteen hunters who wanted gold and other costly things.
- 4) There were some feudal victims who were caught at the point of sword and put in the army of the Duke.
- 5) There were some who wanted to be happy by leaving their past life and their geographic locations.
- 6) There were some wanderers and trampers who found a chance to be something they wanted to be respectable and to be fed with decent meal.
- 7) Some of them were different who never care for God or country. They did not care any kind of people whether they were Jews or devoted Christians or Muslims.
- 8) There were some brutal and wicked people relishing a legal opportunity to kill and be rewarded for that.
- 9) Some were caught up in the age and no way to go.

- 10) There were some who posed themselves as liberators to free the oppressed fellow Christians and to rebuild the torn down churches.

Some crusaders became anti Jewish in their activities. They committed some atrocities which were wicked in their character throughout the ages. They directed their atrocities not only toward the innocent Jews and also toward other people. The fact here is that those crusaders who did such acts were not obedient to the teachings of Jesus Christ. So about such people Jesus said “And then will I profess unto them I never knew you depart from me yet that iniquity” (Matt7:23) Therefore the precious name Jesus shall not be degraded though His teachings appeared to the opposite to their mental set up.

## **6. The council of Nicaea and true Nature of Christ:**

In the year 325 A.D. the Christian emperor Constantine called for a Church Ecumenical council. It was planned to meet at Nicaea (a place) which was about 45 miles from constantnople. The main purpose of that council was that there arose a controversy over the status of Jesus as a person. It became a major issue in the newly freed church namely Arius Church. The controversy was started by Arius and that was whether Jesus was a deity. It is a fact that many Jewish people would accept Jesus as a good rabbi and they mentioned one of the names of God (schema from Deuteronomy 6:4). “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one” to confirm this there is only one God and the name of Jesus was used improperly as a divine person and the church was blamed for that. Since Constantine sat on the throne with the declaration of faith in Jesus Christ, He did good number of things for the progress of Christianity. He abolished cross punishment which was rampant in his time. He made Sunday the Sabbath day instead of Saturday. He made Christianity the religion of the nation. He destroyed all the heathen temples at Beal Beck built by King Solomon for his heathen wives and built churches and so on. But the controversy was over the status of Jesus became a burning topic in the newly found church. It was called Arian Controversy begun by Arius who denied the deity of

Jesus. The question was whether the Bible in its old Testament prophesied concerning the Messiah and in the New Testament show the Christ as Messiah the anointed one has only another human prophet reciting the word of God or whether Jesus was divine in nature or who shared Jesus was the attributes of divinity with God the Father.

We may find different opinions if we look into other books but here let us say that He who asserted “I am the Light of Life” (John 8:12) Where in the old Testament calls God the light (Psalm 27:1) and asserts that the word of God is the light that spiritually illuminates over path (Psalm 119:105) He who claimed “I am the bread of life” (John 6:45) And another “varily varily I say unto you He who says beliveth on me hath everlasting life” John 6:47 All such expressions were recognized by that ancient church council and came to a conclusion that He must be more than a prophet and really He was the divine Christ.

There are many passages in the Bible to confirm that Jesus is the Messiah beyond only another prophet. For instance if we look into John verse 1:1-2 we see that “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.” It clearly points out to the pre existence of Christ while the full doctrinal enunciation of the trinity may be beyond our human comprehension At this critical condition the church at Nicaea confirmed that the messianic prophesy of an Old Testament and the New Testament undoubtedly reveal divine human Christ So, as mentioned in Revelation the resurrect and as ended Christ comes to us in the garb of divinity with majestic words which cannot be uttered by a common human being.

“I am the Alpha and Omega” which means “I am the beginning and I am the ending” or “I am the first and last” So any person who reads the Bible need not be a great theologian or a Church popular historian for understanding Jesus and His name is really wonderful and all of us as true believers utter His name with due respect.

## **7. About the New Testament:**

Some Jewish people may think that they don't want to look into the New Testament and even here His name. They consider the New Testament as un Jewish. That is nothing but misunderstanding of the story behind that twenty five books out of twenty seven in the New Testament were written by the first century Jews and Luke the physician happened to write the book of Luke and the book of Acts who might not be a Jew. He joined Paul at Throes during the second missionary journey as they were about to enter Europe crossing the Hellespont. It was generally believed that Luke was a gentile and not a Jew and this information is also not sure as people imagine about Luke.

The second point is that the New Testament is a historical set of individual book. So, it can be called the book of information. When John a Galilean Jewish fisherman, who became the disciple of Jesus Christ, and who later wrote the gospel of John, made statements regarding what was done by the Caiaphas the high priest and the Pharisees what all he saw with his eyes and wrote which later became history. In the chapters 18 and 19 of his gospel he described what Jesus said and what the Jews did these were the regular usages of the words when one Jew spoke about the other Jewish people. Regarding the New Testament statements? The Jewish people said this or that is not the evidence of Anti Jewish documents nor is it a historical document. As a matter of fact it is a lovely book and tells about beautiful Jesus. There is no scope for any fair minded to stop uttering the precious name Jesus.

## **8. About Greek and Hebrew Names:**

As we see Christ is the first name of Jesus which means Messiah. Regarding the name itself we read in Matthew 1:21. And she shall bring forth a son and thou shall call his name "Jesus" for He shall save His people from their sins. This Jesus is a Greek name used throughout the New Testament of the Hebrew Joshua and Yeshua which means Jehovah saves. It was Moses who gave that name Joshua and the True meaning of that



name was salvation or deliverance and with Moses adding the divine prefix to Oshua and making it Yeshua (Joshua) Jehovah saves. It is said some good and well meaning Hebrew Christians expressed their desire that the Hebrew form Joshua should be used instead of the Greek form Jesus.

While the Hebrews Aramaic form was the name that was no doubt used for Him among the Jews when He walked on the earth. Yet it was the Greek name Jesus which the God inspired the sacred scripture to have written during the New Testament time for the coming Generations.

## **9. The character of Jesus:**

The truth is that our intelligence is not enough to describe the Noble character of Jesus Christ. As we find in the New Testament He was the most wonderful and extraordinary character. The most upright and decent one. He loved God who was holy and lovable. He was kind hearted and clever enough. He was fearless and most courageous and the same time very humble. He always tried to correct people who tried to walk in the wrong path. He was poor but the rich people wished to be like Him. He was wiser than any politician or Pharisee or Sadducee or scribe. He healed the sick, comforted and blessed the poor. As we know He came into this world to fulfill three things, to heal the sick, to spread the word of God and to die on the cross to redeem all the sinners He never deviated from the course of honouring His Father God and loved His disciples. All the above said truths are crystal clear in the four gospels and also His perfect character now we find in the entire literature. So to say such a great personality can be liked and loved by everybody.

If we read the chapter 6 through 9 of Matthew we can understand Him as the greatest religious teacher with His sermon on the mount. He was treated as the world's greatest ethical teacher. He was also called the world's Greatest healer. And behold there came a leper and worshipped (reverenced) him saying Lord if thou wilt thou canst make me clean and Jesus put forth His hand and touched him saying I will be thou clean and immediately his

leprosy was cleaned (Matt 8:2-3) He is our immortal friend for His immortal word. Which touch our hearts? “Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am weak and much lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is lowly and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:29-30)

In Luke 23:34 we see Him as the supreme forgiver then said Jesus “Father forgive them for they know not what they do”. He was also called in the Christendom the world’s greatest man of prayer and the Lord’s Prayer is most beautiful and supreme. When we read the parables of the kingdom of Heaven we certainly realize that Jesus was the most profound story teller who ever lived He was a good friend of women also and for that we have the example of the Samaritan woman and the woman who was caught in the adultery. He simply told her “sin no more” By taking all the above said salient points we can boldly say that Jesus is the best and His name is best. If there are people who do not want to hear His name does not know Him still.

## **10. Regarding Evangelism:**

Because of the persecution the Jewish people experienced for centuries. Many of them were under the impression that the Jewish converts into Christianity portrayed their God and turned their back against their own people. They made the most foolish mistake in their life by embracing Christian faith. They looked at the converts as those foolishly lured themselves from the faith of their fathers. Some other considered the converts as those who supported Either the Nazis who through ages oppressed wickedly the Jewish people. Therefore the true Christians must share their faith with sympathy and love Israel. As readers the truth here is very simple. If Jesus is really the Messiah who came from God to Israel they would hear Him and trust in Him. Then believing in Him is really doing God’s will the outcome is that all the misunderstanding about Jesus would be dispelled and the name of Jesus be said and sung with immense joy as the Old Hymn proclaims “Jesus is the Sweetest name I know” Amen.

## *13. Different Biblical Sacrifices*

God offered His first sacrifice with Adam and Eve who attempted to cover their sin and shame with fig leaves in the garden of Eden.

Animal sacrifices were already in existence among heathens and many pagan Cultures. But Israel's sacrificial system was not borrowed from heathen culture or idolatrous nor it was conceived in superstition darkened mind to appease the harsh forces of native Israel's sacrificial system was originated and received from the "one true God". And Prophet Moses appeared to have recorded word by word as commanded by God. He laid his hand upon the head of his offering and killed it before the Tabernacle of the congregation (Leviticus 3:8). Those sacrifices were supposed to have offered in the Holy Temple which the Lord called the house of sacrifice.

The sacrifices were considered to be most important in the temple worship. The technical details and the law regarding the sacrificial system were staggering over one hundred laws approximately and twenty percent of the laws of Moses related directly to the sacrifices. There were different types of offerings given as gifts to the Lord in the Temple. Apart from other things Israel gave the animal, silver half shekel first born animal and tithes from the harvest. According to history animal sacrifices began even before the existence of earthly temple of the Lord. In the beginning God offered the first sacrifice. God offered Adam and Eve who tried to cover the sin and shame with fig leaves; which were called agricultural product. Then God gave them animal skins in the place of fig leaves, for covering their sinful bodies. Before sin entered the world there was no death, hence no need of sacrifices.

The sons of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel also offered sacrifices. But Cain's sacrifice was of agricultural product like his parents choice of fig leaves which was rejected by God because it was not a sacrifice clubbed

with blood. We can find in the Bible what kind of sacrifice God liked was done by Noah and Abraham. They offered animal sacrifices only. The sovereign Almighty God didn't need outside of Himself. He didn't need the flesh and blood of animals. As a matter of fact, these sacrifices were divinely introduced for the benefit of man.

Sacrifices were offered by people for two reasons. Some sacrifices were made at the time of worship as an act of offering one's self or one's possessions to God. The second types of sacrifices were made for restoration as a substitute for safety and God's judgment. These sacrifices were a pleasant "aroma or sweet flavor to God. The sacrifices achieved several positive results. The first one was that it satisfied God's justice and it was God's righteousness that should judge the sin. The penalty for sin is death. The soul that is committed sin should die.

Therefore, the sacrifices fulfilled the legal requirement in God's justice for judgment. The second point is that the sacrifices provided substitute. God in His love and mercy allowed an innocent one to be exchanged for a stand in the way of guilty one called the worshipper. Since the innocent animals had no sin by nature, they were used as sacrificial substitutes for sinful man. That is in the case of worship the animal gave up its life to God. The third point is that the sacrifices were atoned for sin. So, the Lord said, "for the life of flesh, and the blood and I have given it to you upon the alter to make an atonement for your soul". The New Testament reaffirmed and almost all things were by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no repression.

The fourth point is that the sacrifices enabled man to approach God. The Hebrew word for sacrifice is Korban. "Which means to draw near"? Coming to the Biblical sacrifices when they were offered in faith and repentance they could restore the broken relationship between God and man. The sacrifices undoubtedly brought the worshipper near to God. It is said two kinds of items were offered on the Holy altar. Animals were sacrificed

in the Temple. Some sacrifices followed agricultural products then a libation of wine and fine meal flour and it must be mixed with olive oil.

Basing on the notion of sacrifice the grain flour or raw flour was used and then baked into unleavened bread. For the purpose of Temple sacrifice sheep and goats were raised at a place called “MegdalEdar” which is in southern part of Jerusalem, and a few miles away outside Bethlehem. That plain area is also called Tower of the flock. The places become very famous for grazing even from the time of Jacob.

Prophet Micah also prophesied that Messiah would come out of Bethlehem. And you “o” daughter of Zion, unto thee shall come even the first dominion the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem (Micah 4:8). The Lord had provided provisions for the animal sacrifices. Which were supposed to be done in the Temple only?

At the time of Babylonian exile the Jewish people that lived and remained in the land continued their periodic sacrifices on the Temple Mount.

Unfortunately at the time of exile the Temple was completely destroyed but the site was not desecrated. After some time some people like Zerubbabel came back to Jerusalem from exile and did something for the improvement of the Temple. Then the sacrifices continued only on the rebuilt altar and Temple foundations.

To-day there are no sacrifices on the Temple Mount because, that Temple Mount was desecrated by Islamic shrines. At the time of Temple sacrifices proper animals, cows, sheep, goats, turtles, young, pigeons etc. were used. The sacrifices

were done without any blemish or faults in the animals so as to be perfect and valuable. That is it must be best of its kind. You shall not sacrifice to the Lord your God any bullock or sheep if there were blemish or any flaw because it would be an abomination to the Lord your God. Your sacrifices

must be free from leaven and honey because leaven breed causes fermentation and decay and it is an indication of sin.

Therefore, it was strictly forbidden on the altar of the Lord. Honey is produced in the stomach of bees and in the digestion process it becomes sugar.

Sacrifices had to be performed with salt, as it is used to preserve anything. Each sacrifice was sprinkled with rock salt that is drawn from the dead sea . Sacrifices had to be done by means of slaughter (Leviticus 3:8) which might be called sacrifice with blood and the blood was the basis for physical animal life. The two words blood and life are interchangeable and in the Bible whos sheds man's blood by man, shall his blood be shed for in the image of God made the man.

Shedding of blood and the death of animal were the indication of true sacrifice. The animal had to die because the penalty of sin is death and also the death of the sacrifice would atone sin. Sacrifices had to be offered immediately after the slaughter (Exodus 23:18). Then the blood had to be poured or sprinkled on the altar before it was coagulated (became thick and partly spoiled). The flesh had to be offered before it was spoiled. The sacrifice must be done properly, so that it would be a strong and perfect one. It mustn't be older than that and infirmed. Lambs, kid goats and calves of one year, rams and bulls of two years should be used for the sacrifice.

Sacrifices must be completely devoted to God Almighty only. It should not be parted or shared by any. It must not be for personal profit. It is clearly said that sheep shouldn't be sheared first and cattle mustn't be used first for work. Sacrifices had to be offered with pure and perfect heart. Sacrifices would be effective only when the worshipper has a repenting heart and strong belief in God and god's word is always clean in this matter. The Lord declared "The sacrifice of a wicked is an abomination to the Lord but the prayer of an upright person is his delight" (Proverbs 15:8).



The Lord wanted that whoever sacrifices without genuine faith and repentance commits the most abominable act. He that kills an ox is as if he slew a man. He that sacrifices a lamb is as if he cut off a dog's neck. He that offers an ablation is as if he offered the blood of a swine. He that burns incense is as if he blessed an idol. It is highly impossible for anybody to please God without faith and repentance.

God wants us to behave justly to be merciful towards others and walk humbly with our God. The devotion of a person to God can be found in his heart and then in his outward activities. The whole sacrificial system was called in the Hebrew language "Avodah". This means "service or work". The sacrificial system was divided into different procedures for convenient. The worshippers were asked to bring their sacrifices before the Lord (Leviticus 1:3-4).

The worshippers would bring the sacrifice or sometimes they might purchase it at the temple. During the time of the mobile temple called the Tabernacle, the place for this ceremony was courtyard door of the Tabernacle near the sacrificial altar. But in the days of the temple the location was the court of Israelites section of the inner court. The worshippers would take their sacrifices

to the priests for identification and then for the confirmation of what type of sacrifice they would like to have. The priests used to examine each and every animal whether it had all Biblical requirements. Then the priests checked each animal whether it was healthy without any blemish.

The Lord wanted that each worshipper should identify himself with his sacrifice. Then he must put his hand upon the burnt offering that means it was accepted by him to make atonement for the worshipper. At that time, the worshipper would face the west towards the Holy of Holies and then press his hands down upon the head of the animal to personally identify himself with it as his substitute. After everybody was satisfied a ceremony

was conducted for all animal sacrifices except the birds and Passover animal the Lamb. Then the high priest would lay his hands upon the notional scapegoat during “Yon Kippur” (Leviticus 16:21) i.e. (person of incompetence).

The worshipper had to press hands strongly between the two horns of the animal and then recite prayer. If the animal was for the purpose of peace offering, the worshipper must offer praising and if the animal was for the purpose of burnt offering sin or guilty of something the worshipper would be asked to confess his sin. For the scapegoat the high priest had to confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel and in all their transgression, in all their sins putting them upon the goat. Some guilt offerings were also needed to be waved before the Lord. The animal was finally taken to the sacrificial place which was on the Northern side of the altar and then slaughtered. The Hebrew word for slaughter is “Sachet”. The sacrifice should not be stabbed one or clubbed to death. A special long regular sharp enough razor was used. The priest had to slit the throat of the animal which was brought to the sacrifice for an immediate painless death in which the blood was spilled. The blood of the animal was collected in a silver vessel as it would be separated from the neck of the animal. At the bottom of the vessel, it became a point to prevent it from being set down. If not the blood might coagulate before it was applied to the altar and invalidate the sacrifices.

In the Bible we come across different types of offerings and sacrifices in the temple. The Lord created the burnt offering, meal and drink offering, peace offering, sin offering and guilt offering. These Biblical sacrifices are described mostly in the “Book of Leviticus” the legal hand book for Israel’s priesthood. Let us have a glance at each of them.

### **1) The burnt offering and its purposes (Leviticus 6:8-13)**

This burnt offering would be done in the Temple as an act of consecration and surrender to God. A burnt offering was required for a

woman after child birth and a healed leper. In these burnt offering young bulls, lambs, child goat's young pigeons were used. Among these offerings the most important was the Lamb which was offered for the nation on every Sabbath day both morning and evening.

## **2) The meal and drink offering (Leviticus 2:6. 14-23)**

This is not technically a sacrifice. But it followed burnt offerings and peace offerings. It could be also offered as "Free will" offering. The most important of meal offering was the high priests daily offerings. It was twelve loaves of bread baked with olive oil.

## **3) Peace offering and its purpose (Leviticus 3:7, 11:21).**

This would be done as a thanks giving offering for God's blessings. It was like pledge for the answered prayer and free will worship praise.

## **4) Sin offering and its purpose. (Leviticus 6:2, 4:30).**

This offering was atonement for unintentional Sin. If the sin is done intentionally, for that kind of people the punishment is death.

## **5) The guilt offering and its purpose (Leviticus 4:6, 7:40).**

It is like sin offering and non capital offering only. Normally it is always personal offering for his guilty activities and never concern to the nation.

It is said the blood of the sacrifice must be handled by the priest only and the worshipper needed a mediator. They should not perform their own atonement but the priest alone carried the "Mizhak" bowl of blood to the altar.

In the case of sin offering the blood was sprinkled on the upper horns of the altar. The remaining blood was then poured at the base of the altar. If the sin offering was for the priest of the nation, the blood was first

sprinkled seven times inside the holy of holies. For the burnt, peace, and guilt offerings, the blood was sprinkled or thrown from the “Mizrak” on the four corners of the base of the altar.

The sacrifice was to be burnt in Holier part on the altar. If the sacrifice was for the offering the animal must be first skinned and the skin would be given to the attending priest before the fat, kidneys and liver parts were burnt on the altar. Then the animal had to be cut into pieces and sprinkled after the pieces were mixed with salt and placed on the fire. The internal organs were also washed properly and put on the fire. If the sacrifice was with regard to the guilt or sin and concerned to the individual it would be eaten by the priests themselves in the inner court yard. And that is supposed to be prepared according to their desire. If the sacrifice was concerning to peace offering the attending priest would receive the breast and shoulders and the remaining parts of the meat was taken by the worshipper.

After it was boiled they must eat it only inside the walls of Jerusalem.

Coming to the Passover sacrifice it was in practice among Israel after they left Egypt. But it also became part of the Samaritan Passover. It is really Surprising that there are only one thousand Samaritans remained in existence today. They were the decedents of Israelites who remained in Northern part of the kingdom. The twelve tribes of Israel were separated as two parts during the reign of King Salomon for his sins. God could not tolerate the sins committed by the king Solomon. So he divided the nation as Northern kingdom of Israel with ten tribes and the southern kingdom of Judah with two tribes. These Israelites in course of time mixed and mingled with assyrian and they almost forgot their origin and even forgot God who brought them from the bondage in Egypt.

The two tribes of the southern kingdom were the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. And their capital was Jerusalem. The Israelites were forced to remain in Northern kingdom, especially after the Assyrians

conquest in 721 BC. Most of the Samaritans community lived in a village of Nablus. They did idol worship for 2300 years. There were some similarities between Samaritan religion and Judaism.

The Samaritan religion was based on the first five books of Moses, called Torah or Pentateuch. But they totally rejected the remaining Hebrew Scripture. They continued their sacrifices on the Mount Gerizim the worship center of the ancestors, Temple but not in the Temple of Jerusalem. Every year the Samaritans used to kill goats and eat a good number of lambs with unleavened bread. It was like Jews when they celebrate their Passover festival when the Temple was in existence.

There was a rift or confrontation between the Samaritans and the Jews, which takes us back to the days of Babylonian exile. The Samaritans forcibly resisted the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 4:1-9). This rift and misunderstanding continued and intensified during the reign of Alexander the great. The situation became more critical, when Joseph Manasseh brother of Jewish high priest John married the daughter of Sanbarat the leader of Samaritans

(Antiquities 11.72). Foreign marriages were strictly forbidden by God. So the elders of the priesthood planned to banish Manasseh from the society and Jerusalem, if he did not divorce his foreign wife. In such circumstances Manasseh's father-in-law got a wonderful plan.

Manasseh was made high priest to the Samaritans. In the mean time Sambarat got permission from the Alexander the great and constructed a Samaritan temple on the mount Gerizim which was patronized after Jerusalem. Then what is said about the sacrificial Lamb of God?. Different types of sacrifices mentioned in the Bible might appear to an atheist or to a secular person as barbaric or unscrupulous. In the same way for a modern man it is quite different. It was concern to a sinful man and sovereign God and reconciliation to God through death a sacrificial substitute. But for those

people who are spiritually blind the above said examples are sheer madness in their view.

This is clearly seen in the Passover when the fresh form of legal action was launched against orthodox Jews in Jerusalem. With same advice the Jews might be prevented from demonstrating about the sacrificial technique on a single lamb before the meat was donated. It is not at all important because hundreds of thousands of cattle and sheep have been butchered every day by the people in the world. Even for the dedication of Jerusalem temple at the time of king Solomon 22000 oxen and 120000 sheep were killed at that time. But all these sacrifices were not intended nor comfortable and not even pleasant to our minds.

God is always merciful, but he can never pardon sin. Now coming to the main topic regarding the sacrifice of the lamb, understanding of the Biblical sacrifices is more important. According to the book of Hebrews, the sacrifices in the Bible have some link with our spiritual life. Those sacrifices gave us a wonderful insight into the Messiah's sacrificial work on our behalf. The result of His sacrifice on the cross the sin of man was taken away by Himself. That is to say the Messiah sacrificed His life for our sins.

The Messiah became our substitute. He was miserably wounded on the cross for our iniquities and the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And we are healed of our sins with the strips He received from the people who crucified Him and the Lord that laid on Him the iniquities of all of us. Our sins were put on Him and He bore them in His own body on the tree and He was a ransom to many of us. The sacrificial death of the Messiah was absolutely necessary because through this only He could fulfill the Biblical prophecy. Prophet Isaiah in his prophecy said that the Messiah would be an offering for our sins. He willingly submitted Himself to His Mission like a Lamb which would never resist the shearers. Among many



Hebrew prophecies, Daniel foretold “And shall Messiah be cut off but not for Himself”. Another example “And so the Messiah gave Himself for us as an offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephe 5:2).

The sacrificial death of the Messiah had become cruel necessary because it was to deal with the sin of man. He stood in our place by means of His death and received our judgment which satisfied God’s anger. The wonderful result of His death was that, it took away our sin, redeemed us, relieved us and justified us made us righteous, healed us, gave us new life made us a new creation, brought to us everlasting peace, made us children of God; forgave us, cleansed us, brought us into a new covenant and finally reconciled us with God.

The sacrificial death of the Messiah was a basis for His future plan exaltation. All the creation one day must fall down and worship Him as the sacrificial Lamb of God. The Lamb that was slain was worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessings forever. Animal sacrifices were limited. They were certainly good and wonderful gift of God. In spite of all that they were temporary until the Messiah provided ones and for all permanent sacrifice to take away our sin. The animal sacrifices were atoned for sin but they could never take away man’s sin. After Jesus had accepted sacrificial death, He sat down and then entered the Holy of Holies in Heavenly Temple, once through His own blood but not the animal. His sacrifice was completed, and never to be repeated. He paid completely for the sins of all, those who trusted Him, He died in our place and now as a high priest representative He sits before the Father night and day. Jesus came in flesh and blood as the Lamb of God. He became one of us and then sacrificed Himself.

We human beings always in need of God who also provided Christ as our savior.

## *14. Faith Conquers*

This is the story of a blind man by name “Bartimaeus” who succeeded in his persistent efforts to meet Jesus to get his blindness healed. This story, quoted from the book of Mark 10th chapter . It is considered one of the best episodes from the Bible, especially in the persistence of Bartimaeus to achieve his goal.

We may find qualitative and moral teachings from this episode, toward our constant effort to receive anything from our Lord. Jesus expected similar persistence among His disciples that Bartimaeus possessed. So, Jesus said, “Ask and it shall be given to you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened” (Matthew 7:7-9).

The main purpose of persistence is like teaching within the family. “James” the brother of Jesus in his typical blunt way had said, “you fight the war, yet you have not because you ask not” (James 4:2). It means, if we desire anything, we must ask God, and ask for it persistently till we get it from Him. There are two main points to note in this context. First, whatever we desire from our Lord must be done with devotion and faith. A Hebrew author expressed a similar idea, stating that, without faith it is impossible to please God. We must therefore ask in faith and we must ask persistently. Secondly we must not ask God simply what we have in our mind. Before we ask anything, we must think whether God is willing to grant our desire. Our willingness for something and God’s willingness to grant that must coincide for any success.

That is to say, we must ask God only things He likes Apostle Paul points out “if you abide in me (Jesus) and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will it shall be done to you”(John 15:7). Abiding in Jesus Christ requires both persistence and familiarity. We must spend more time

with Jesus in prayers and meditation, so that over time, we hope to be with His will. To remain strong in faith requires persistence and in order to achieve that we must look into the story of Bartimaeus.

Bartimaeus, an Israelite, was born blind. He struggled a lot during his life but found peace in Jesus' heart through undying persistence. So in our lives, God wants all of us to be like him, considered the best example for persistence and also referred to as the king of persistence for his untiring efforts.

Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem to participate in the Passover festival. That time was very crucial for Jesus because He was entering the city where His life would be taken away from him shortly. During this final week, His glorious three-year ministry would be culminated, and that emotional week would change the course of human history for eternity.

Bartimaeus was somehow known to the community of Jericho and was designated as the blind Bartimaeus. His brief account was also given by Matthew, (Matt. 20:30-34), highlighting two beggars without names. In this case the name Bartimaeus was depicted, as a concerned beggar. The meaning of this name Bartimaeus was “the son of Timeout”, and the meaning of his father's name “depicted”. Some scholars were of the opinion that the father of Bartimaeus was also blind. In those days blind people were born that way or became blind, which was considered a curse or punishment from God.

## **Faith Conquers**

Bartimaeus had a designated permanent spot, sitting and begging on the highways. On that day Jesus was passing through that highway with His disciples, disturbed the usual day of begging for Bartimaeus. If we lose a limb or a body part due to whatever reason, we become unhappy. And if it

involves our vision, no one can guess how we feel throughout our life, as we can't see anything in this world including our kith and kin. So, to be blind is generally considered the most miserable feeling in this world. Bartimaeus understood the great commotion around him was due to the arrival of Jesus. At that time, among the various kinds of people gathered there, some commented that Jesus was a God. Some believed He would bring political freedom to Israel from the Romans. And some shouted against Jesus in a hateful manner. Bartimaeus also shouted. He zealously cried out to Jesus, not to be denied by Him from his desperate condition.

“How did Bartimaeus address Jesus”? He shouted “Jesus the son of David, have mercy on me.” By referring to Jesus as the “Son of David” a clear-cut Messianic term, he correctly demonstrated his thoughts. He must have come to this understanding through his abundant Faith in God. The ministry of Jesus proclaimed Him as the Messiah of Israel. Many people didn't believe this proclamation, but among those who believed Him, Bartimaeus was one.

Wherever Jesus went, He also had enemies. So when Bartimaeus was shouting at Jesus, some people in the crowd warned him to refrain from doing so, and charged him to hold his tongue. There were three kinds of people in the crowd with different opinions about Christ. The first type who believed the words of Bartimaeus when he called Jesus “Son of David”, but his shouting had disturbed their peace. The second type of people, who didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah, as they seemed to have heard it for the first time. The third type had faith in Jesus, and believed that Jesus would be made king of Israel, and that He should not be associated with common society.

The constant shouting of Bartimaeus irritated the first type among them in the crowd described above. When some tried their best to silence him and control him, He The Redemption Plan of God defiantly began to

shout louder than before. He never seemed to care for their obstructionism, and appeared to say - “the more you tell me to shut up, the more I am going to shout”. Until that time, the blind beggar was shouting for alms, but this time he was straining more, as the gift of healing for his blindness by Jesus was more precious than anything for him, and incomparable in any capacity to his regular alms. Therefore he was constantly shouting “Jesus, the son of David, have mercy on me”.

He had confidence that Jesus was capable of restoring his vision because of his faith towards the Messiah. He was right in his sayings about Jesus, and was appealing to Jesus to take up his case to heal his blindness. Many walking people shouting other things stopped moving in surprise. Jesus picked up this lone man from a thousand screaming voices. Some were screaming for healing, some for their devotion towards him, and some hailing at him in derision. But the voice of Bartimaeus was sincere and coated with purity, devotion and longing. His persistence in pursuing Jesus was really wonderful and persuasive enough to induce the king of the universe to stop walking. Jesus, undoubtedly an expert in dealing with this kind of situations appropriately, heard Bartimaeus and commanded him to come closer. It is certainly fascinating to see that Jesus, who was about to change the history of the world within a week by His crucifixion, would actually spare some time to meet the needs of poor people like the honest beggar Bartimaeus. He had a pure and perfect heart. His heart and soul were filled with strong faith and belief, the kind that easily touched the heart of God.

The blind beggar’s faith based persistence was more effective probably due to his blindness. Everything came to a standstill when Jesus stopped and the murmuring went on. We must guess whether the blind beggar was responsible for the hubbub. Jesus also might not have called Bartimaeus directly, but must have sent some one towards him. At that time it seemed

there were many blind people gathered there, hoping for some miracle to take place, so Bartimaeus had every reason to “Be of good comfort”.

When the divine directive order had come to Bartimaeus saying, “Rise He calls thee” - with these words, one can understand what must have been in the mind of the beggar. We are not sure how long he knew Jesus, but we can be sure of one thing that he was a staunch believer in Jesus. And now all that he heard about Jesus, all that he believed, and all that he trusted through his faith would be revealed to him soon. The beggar was in darkness until then, and now he was going to see the light of the world. Bartimaeus wished to meet the light of the world (Jesus) face to face. He threw away his garment (shawl), probably to free himself. That shawl appeared to be an expensive one and someone might come out of the crowd and claim that one. The people around him also gave him the way. As he was a blind man there is every possibility to lose his way. And finally Bartimaeus met Jesus. It was a Messianic meeting, a wonderful success in his life. He boldly crossed the crowd to meet the Messiah of Israel. It was the culmination of the blind beggar’s wasted dark life.

Bartimaeus was shouting before the Lord. He said “Son of David, have mercy on me”. Then Jesus summoned the blind beggar that shouted. He was really interested to show mercy upon the beggar. Jesus being omniscient what the beggar wanted, he would have given him. But it was the habit of Jesus to question the people that meet him. He knew what we need before we ask him.

Jesus is our loving Lord. He likes to meet His children and talk to them. He wants to have relationship with us forever and that relationship involves love and communion. Jesus always loves us even if we don’t love Him. He wants us to spend some time in prayer and meditation.

Jesus was ready to bless the blind beggar, but questioned him in a casual manner. He asked the beggar “What do you want me to do for you”?



There was something going on in the crowd. Many people simply heard the name of Jesus, but they didn't know who He was. They were going to see His actions, also in regard to the blind beggar through a miracle. The second point is that Jesus was going to teach the crowd something more important as all were His children. As everyone was important to Jesus in some way or Jesus was more important to all of us. The third point was concerning to Jesus Himself and His child Bartimaeus

what He would do to him, as within a week, Jesus was going to be crucified for him and for all of us.

The blind beggar was seeking vision from Jesus. So he loudly said, "Lord, might I receive my sight". The original word that Bartimaeus used for the Lord was "Rabbani" which means "My great one". The word Rabbani was among the most honorable vocabulary in those days and the blind beggar used that word freely. This man knew from the beginning that Jesus was capable of giving him sight. Jesus also announced in the beginning of His ministry that He came to do many things, and healing the sick was one of them.

The spirit of the Lord was with Him. The Lord also anointed Him into the world to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, and restore sight to the blind. The remarkable faith of Bartimaeus brought him two gifts, though he was seeking just the restoration of his vision. After granting both gifts, Jesus said, "Go your way, your faith has made you heal". It is fascinating to note here, Jesus practically spoke nothing about his granting of sight. But he had stressed more for he was made "whole". This is another way of saying that his soul had been saved from hell. The beggar didn't come for redemption, but for healing his sight. His virtuous devotion and unbounded faith brought him salvation. And by this, God made him the citizen of eternity. Bartimaeus precious life was responsible for his two valuable gifts, the sight as well as salvation.

What he was seeking all the time became reality. The actual physical healing was different from the inner reality, which Jesus said that Bartimaeus had been made “whole”. This reference was perhaps understood by only a limited number of people from that crowd. However, everyone must have understood the significance of restoring the sight because, such miracles could be done only by the Messiah. Jesus banished blindness from Bartimaeus.

Jesus made perfect, the healing of the blindness of Bartimaeus. There was no effort, no error, or ineffectiveness, when the creator of the universe did that. The work of God is perfect. Whoever comes to Jesus for any need, He will help him and accept him as His child and this is proved in the case of Bartimaeus. He became grateful to the Lord for the reward he received. Let us study the verse again. The original phrase by Jesus in this context was, “Go your way”.

This is another way of saying by Jesus, “Go in Peace”. Instead, Jesus could have told him “Everything you have asked me to do for you I have done and more. Now go your way in peace, you are completely healed”. It was not the intention of Jesus to say it like that in order to get rid of the people, but to make sure he had completed the work of healing. It was His way of telling him “All is well”.

Finally Bartimaeus was healed. He got his eyesight. He expressed his gratitude to Jesus for this reward. But there were many more waiting anxiously with the hope they too would be healed like Bartimaeus. If they were successful, they would go back to their places and tell their friends and relatives about the miracles of Jesus and so on. Though Bartimaeus was healed, he didn’t want to leave that place, because he was in the presence of the Messiah. In this short story, we are given the vision of a man in full worship mode, we understand someone whose persistence was driven by his wonderful faith. This Galilean was not a simple magician who performed

a variety of miracles, but also a savior of humanity and the Lord of all. There was no doubt that the immutable faith of Bartimaeus had brought Jesus to that highway from Jericho city. It was his faith that prompted him to cry out to Jesus. It was his faith that did not allow him to remain silent. It was his spotless faith that brought him physical healing and spiritual salvation. And finally it was his unchangeable faith that carried him along to Jerusalem, praising and worshipping the Messiah as he went.

Persistence in Christian life is not persistence for salvation. But as true Christians we can be persistent to our benefits from our God. If we desire anything from our Lord, we must keep asking for it persistently. We must always be in touch with God and keep communion with Him. This, we learnt from the story of Bartimaeus. Jesus was very much impressed by the character of Bartimaeus and wished to spend a little time with him. Jesus considered him His beloved and faithful child. So God wants us to live the livable life filled with persistence. God wants us to be persistent in our prayers. We must spend more time in prayers because through prayers only we can become close to God. We can have direct contact with God. Persistence in us is a perfect spiritual two way street between Jesus and us. This is the moral we can learn from the story of Bartimaeus, the blind beggar.

## *15. Israel becomes an Unwalled Nation*

“And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them, dwelling without walls and having neither bars nor gates” (Ezekiel 38:11).

This article might appear to Israelites as untasteful and divert their attention to different thinking. Whatever might be their attitude, all believers of the world love Israel and Jerusalem, particularly because she is a Holy Land and thus pray for her peace forever. These believers whole-heartedly under the impression that God will certainly fulfill all the Biblical promises He had made to His beloved people. In the meantime, Israel, like other nations in the world, has been struggling with problems like sin and immorality. Keeping all such things in view, the main purpose of this article is to show the desperate need of our Lord Jesus Christ to come to the rescue of Israel. This article also illustrates how the present issues of sin and immorality would lead the nation, possibly to the fulfillment of prophetic events regarding the future of Israel.

It is no doubt very interesting to watch the sensational news about Israel without a reference to the nation's military power. But as far as the size is concerned, she is equal to any other nation on Earth. In this connection, let us look into one of the end times prophecies of Israel. “After many days, thou shalt be visited in the later years, thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword and is gathered out of many people against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely, all of them” (Ezekiel 38:8).

Let us examine some important words mentioned below- *dwell safely* and *Israel*. Before we examine the confusing statement, let us study the concerned part of the scripture deeply. The above said prophecy is addressed to “Gog”, the land of “Magog”, the chief prince of “Meshech and Tubal”

(Ezekiel 38:2). To speak the truth, it is not possible to give the true picture of Gog, the land of Magog, the prince of Meshech and Tubal, but what is important in this context? It is about their invasion of Israel in the last days. The invasion with taken place primarily from the nations of north of Israel, and also several countries from the south of the Holy Land, the aggressive countries like Russia, Turkey, Iran, Libya, Ethiopia, and many other countries. The most fascinating news about the attack of all these nations is that God Himself in forced them to do so.

In Ezekiel 38:4, it is said “and I will turn thee back and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth and all time army, horses, and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords”. So, Israel shall be invaded in the end days. Even then, all Israel at that time will dwell safely when all the surrounding nations warned her to obliterate her from the face of Earth. In addition to that, article 22 from the infamous P.L.O., chapter 1964, states Zionism (Israel, the Jewish state) is a political movement originally associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to every action, for liberation, and to progressive movements in a world. It appears to people that she is a racist and a fanatic in her nature. The P.L.O. is aggressive, with the tendency of expansionism, and the intention of colonialism. It is a naked truth that the liberation of Palestine will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence, and at the same time it will contribute to the establishment of peace and harmony in the Middle East. So, the Palestinians look for the support from countries of the world, for liberation of their home land.

Such type of proclamations by the Palestinians would never give the hope of dwelling peacefully and safely. Another saying of Ezekiel asks us to swallow and digest “And thou shalt say I will go up to the land of unwalled villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them, dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates.” “Unwalled village”, “A people who are at rest safely, and dwell without walls,” Israel.

It is not possible to allow herself to be unwalled and at the same time unarmed. As readers, we can understand the quantum of hatred that the surrounding nations have towards Israel. Following is a speech given by the Iranian president during 2012. The Zionist regime and the Zionists”cancerous tumors”; even if one cell of them is left, if one inch of Palestinian land is left, in the future this story (the Israel existence) will repeat. The nations of the region will soon finish off the usurper Zionist in the Palestinian land. A new Middle East will definitely be formed. With the grace of God, and the help of other nations in the new Middle East, there will be no trace of Americans and Zionists. The statement of the president is not the only one against Israel, but many people are wholeheartedly supporting the total destruction of Israel and wanting to wipeout the nation in the world map. No one can understand this evil plan of the Middle East but Israel only. In such dangerous circumstances, how can Israel remain peaceful without military support and how, according to Ezekiel’s prophecy, will it be an unarmed nation at peace?

As Israel is threatened by the neighboring nations, she has decided to have a strong military camp. Accordingly, she has planned and at present, Israel ranks 10th in the world in maintaining military power after the U.S.A.,

Russia, and China, but ahead of other powerful countries like Germany, Brazil, Palestine, and Egypt. Having 10th place among the powerful nations is really most amazing if we consider her population, which is about 7.8 million only, and she is the 45th country in the availability of soldiers. Israel has a strong military force of 3.6 million. But this figure is dwarfed by China, which has 750 million, India, 615 million, and America, 145 million. Israel’s considerable military power is then more surprising if we think of her 51st rank among the nations in land mass. Again, Israel ranks 14th as far as land weapons are concerned. She has acquired an extraordinary 5th rank in total aircrafts and 15th in defense spending. Israel has proved herself as the most dangerous and can defend herself from any unexpected attack. She has done and proved her efficiency for more than 6



decades. But her position of self-sufficiency seems to be decreasing day by day and the country is becoming a passive peacemaker due to some genuine reasons. The main reason is forsaking God. Let us have a brief look at Israel's disobedience towards God and her present condition at spiritual bankruptcy. If we still go back in history to 3500 B.C. when the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, God promised them that He would bless their nation if they remain obedient.

“And I will give peace in the land and ye shall lie down and none shall make you afraid and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land, and ye shall chase your enemies and they shall fall before you by the sword” (Leviticus 26:6-7). As clearly said in this passage, Israel's only responsibility is to remain obedient to the Almighty God, but they miserably failed in it. In this context, prophet Isaiah also said “Hear O heavens and give ear O Earth for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished, and brought up children and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider, Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corruptors, they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward” (Isaiah 1:2-4). It is no surprise that Israel's disobedience led to her banishment from the land. What we can understand through this passage is that if obedience would have given them proper security, then disobedience must take them to exile.

So, the final result of their disobedience forced the Lord of their forefathers to bring upon them the king of Chaldies called Nebuchadnezzar, who slew young and old indiscriminately in the house of their sanctuary. The king had no compassion for young men, maidens, and old men that stooped for age; but God gave them all into his hand. All the vessels of the house of God, big and small, the treasures of the house of the Lord, the treasures of the king, and his princes- he brought them to Babylon.

That was the brief historical background of Israel and what they learned from that background. Let us have a glance of that. As prophet Isaiah pointed out in his passage, Israelites had forgotten their God, not even knowing Him as the ox and donkey know their masters. To say the fact, ancient Israel was a people who had completely forsaken God. Unfortunately, the same temperament is going on among Israelites even today. As far as religion is concerned, Israel keeps tight grasp on Judaism but largely in the cultural sense. To say more clearly Israel practices her religion, but she does so far the most part faithlessly.

If we question the majority of Israel Jews why they keep fasting on the “Day of Atonement”, they simply say “Because it is the custom of our people”. Therefore, today’s brand of Judaism in Israel is with some exceptions without God. Recent statistics of Israelites’ faith gave the following assessment. According to that, 42% of Israelites identify themselves as secular. Then, 25%

Considered themselves non-religious not strictly following Jewish law, 13% of them identified themselves with true religious bent of mind and observed everything according to the law of Moses. 12% of Israelites called themselves religious. They used to light the candles on the Sabbath day and attend the service at Synagogues regularly. And 8% of Israelites call themselves “Haredim”

(which means the most conservative form of orthodox) Judaism. They are the embodiment of God’s consciousness. Basing on these figures, we can come to a conclusion that only 33% of the people are with religious bent of mind, and the rest 67% have no religious inclination and this is the pathetic religious condition of the people that are living in the Holy Land. Regarding the true religious faith adherents, only the Haredim possessed the historical as well as biblical background. They are the only people completely devoted to God

Almighty with their energy and zeal; but it is a zeal of their own making. Therefore, their faith is also in error because it is misdirected. So, apostle Paul also speaks about such skewed faith as- “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved, For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:1- 3). Here, this passage speaks about the best Israel’s modern brand of Judaism has to offer, not its worst. There is zeal alright, but they are applying it in all wrong places. Judaism in Israel is a system of works, but not faith, idealism, not truth, non-centered, not God-centered. In addition to ancient Israel’s blatant disrespect to God, she also exhibited blatant immorality, a state of which is given by prophet Amos. “Thus, said the Lord, for three transgressions of Israel and for four, I will not turn away the punishment, thereof because they sold the righteous for silver and the poor for a pair of shoes..... and a man and his faith will go in unto the same maid to profane my Holy name” (Amos 2:6-7).

This particular passage of Amos paints the true picture of Israel nation’s moral degradation. The image of both father and son engaging the same woman for sexual intercourse is unpardonable and noteworthy, and this is really a heartbreaking situation that the same woman is used by both father and son as a prostitute. We have another notable prophet who openly condemned the immoral activities and the whoredom of Israel was prophet Hosea. He says, “I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom nor your spouse’s when they commit adultery for themselves are or separated with whores and they sacrifice with harlots, therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall” (Hosea 4:14).

The main point in this passage is about prostitution. In the Bible, the word prostitution is used in two-fold purposes. They are physical and spiritual. Just as prostitution is one type of a husband’s unfaithfulness toward his wife, likewise religious prostitution- idolatry is another form of a man’s

spiritual unfaithfulness to the Lord. Such moral and spiritual degradation of Israelites made God to cast them out of the land. Another startling news of August 2,2012 is really heartbreaking. It is said that about 4,000 people marched in

Jerusalem's 10th (not first) annual "Gay Pride Parade", and finally the city became a prime international vacation spot for the gay community. This growing acceptance of homosexuality is just in one area which Israel transgressed. The walk of Israel takes place to protest against the male dominated society that becomes sexual harassment, or rape on a woman's appearance. The prime aim of this march is to enlighten women to wear certain types of dresses, so that nobody will criticize them and show disrespect in the society. The leaders of the march have said they prefer the Hebrew term "Shamuta" which means a woman whores sexually open to get rid of the negative connotation of the word. Shamuta is to present feminine sexual openness in a positive way.

So, the main problem here is the pattern of dress used by women to attract men for sexual intercourse in order to earn money also. In such conditions, it is advisable to call the attention of the people to the horror of sexual harassment or rape. Women are also advised to behave properly in the society and always wear a neat dress which brings honor to them. And this is appreciated well even by Israel media. But the most cursed and pathetic issue is concerning the prostitution which is made legal in the Holy Land. This is unfortunately not new to Israel. This is in the form of brothels. Regarding this practice, we have some examples in the Bible also; in the first book of Genesis Chapter 38, the case of Judah and Tamar. That is to say prostitution was in practice from the time of the book of Genesis. Anyway, the problem of prostitution in the society of Israel and now with us is considered to be a sinful act. It is really pathetic that the rate of prostitution has grown in Israel more alarmingly, and the tragic numbers of her growth are mentioned below.

The 2011 trafficking report released by the U.S. State Department is no doubt stunning in Israel. That department treated Israel as a “tier two”, counting for human trafficking. There are some other tier two countries like Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, India, China, Russia, etc. It is estimated by the authorities that between 500 and 600 women a year are brought to Israel illegally for the immoral activities. Israel’s prostitution and sex abuse brings about 500-700 million dollars a year. Then the average age of a woman who is forced into this profession in Israel is in between 12 and 13 years. This is really lamentable. Since 1990, it is estimated that about 25,000 women have been brought to Israel for this sinful act. Before we continue this topic, let us look into some more information regarding the surprising numbers that are mentioned above. According to the statistics, these numbers would have been no doubt abnormal about 30 years ago in Israel. When we consider the population of Israelites in 1948 as they got independence in that year, they lived a clean and moral life.

The population was roughly estimated at 8 lakhs (646,000 Jews) to 7.9million today, with almost 6 million Jews. As per the information, Israel’s moral degradation started with the incoming Jews to their mother land from countries like Russia. This thing happened during and following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. From 1989 to 2003, approximately 9, 50, 000 Russian Jews migrated to Israel. Even though many of them were upstanding citizens and contributed to the fabric of life in Israel, many others made their livelihood by means of prostitution and drugs. They also contributed much for the immoral activities in Israel. The same way of life was found among the immigrants that came from Europe and Africa.

In ancient Israel also, when the iniquities or immorality went very deep, God simply banished the nation. The northern kingdom of Israel was deported to Assyria in 722 B.C., and the southern kingdom of Judah was exiled three times at different dates like 606 B.C., 598 B.C., and 586 B.C. One major difference between ancient Israel and the modern one was that the ancient Israel had taken centuries “to drink God’s cup of fury” (Isaiah

51:17), whereas the modern day Israelites could have that experience in a little more than a generation, after once again it became a nation. In spite of the fact that God wanted to shower His abundant blessings upon ancient Israelites, but their faithlessness prompted Him to reject them and give punishment. Prophet Jeremiah had also something to say in this context. “Neither say they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God that giveth rain, both the farmer and the latter in his season, he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest; your iniquities have turned away these things and your sins have with-holden good things from you” ( Jeremiah 5:24-25). We have seen so far how the modern day Israelites have seemingly done everything to displease God in order to separate themselves from Him. Actually, God has preserved and protected them for centuries. God also returned His people to their homeland after nearly 2 millennia away under the circumstances “What has to be done with the Israelites?”

When they have become “unwalled and unarmed” people. Added to that, they were not in a position to defend themselves from the most powerful and deadly invasions. Israel, as a nation, totally separated herself from God, religiously as well as morally. To speak biblically, there are no God-fearing people in that nation. Probably very few must have been there to call themselves believers. So, it can be called a humanist nation, completely dependent upon diplomacy, military power, and precarious friendship of western powerful countries like North America.

But a situation might arise sooner or later that Israel will be attacked by any neighboring country, or an attack of lethal weapons. In such case, Israel will certainly launch a preventive attack first. Among all the surrounding nations, which one will tempt Israel and attack her first? We cannot judge immediately. But according to authentic information, Syria hates Israel more than any other country. So, she might take the initiative to attack first. It is said that Syria is storing a huge quantity of weapons for that purpose. Finally, the Jewish brilliant spy network- the Mossad, will uncover the undesirable event of the brutal attack. And Israel is backed by this expert



intelligence that will strike first. When she strikes first, it means that will be a dangerous one. This possible and expected nuclear attack by Israel's powerful army on Syria would turn into the curtain raiser to Israel's new role of an unrivaled country. Let us study here for a while, even though Damascus will become a ruinous heap; Israel will also suffer, like Damascus, as the gleaning grapes shall be left in it. The final result of that attack will be that Israel has to experience severe destruction through nuclear fallout from her own weapons.

But one thing is clear- this nuclear attack will make the neighboring nations afraid of Israel. So, the surrounding countries with fear will certainly approach Israel for peace if the Holy Land agrees with the elimination of all modern weapons. In such circumstances, Israel will mock at those neighbors who are seeking peace because she has no belief in the words or promises of such people. If we look into the history after they got independence in 1948, which is called the Rebirth of Israel, we can understand how they have been struggling for everlasting peace from the neighboring countries as she has been exhausted with wars all the time. So, when such favorable time comes, this nation may stop nuclear attacks only after the other nations give full assurance for permanent peace. For centuries, the Muslim countries have been hating Israelites for no fault of theirs, even though they were the children of one father as we see in the Bible. They are like east and west directions in the society. In this critical position, for the purpose of achieving permanent peace,

they require the third party to negotiate this issue. Then, which is that suitable party to solve this problem amicably without favoring one party? "It will be none other than the one referred to as that man of sin and the son of perdition" (2 Thessalonians 2:3), or more commonly known as Anti-christ. He will give assurance to Israel because he can understand her unwillingness for peace and say to disarm herself (dear Muslims) and he will guarantee her peace. Israelites may have to say these words because they can never believe the mental setup of Arabs. In this context, we are

reminded of the prophecy of prophet Daniel 9:27, which will be automatically fulfilled. According to his prophecy, the Anti-christ will confirm a covenant with many in Israel. He will give guarantee to Israel's peace if she dismantles her nuclear stock-pile. And the result of negotiation by the Anti-christ is that Israel will be "unwalled and unarmed". She cannot have any kind of weapons to defend herself.

Therefore, the whole history of Israel has been leading to this- Israel has said "no" to God again and again, and no doubt she will say the same thing at any time without repentance, until God's fury forces to hand over the stiff-necked Israelites to the enemy for good discipline and cleansing of their habits. It is said when the "gog led confederation" of nations attack Israel during the last 7 years of old history, she remains in helpless condition without any defense.

At that time, the Anti-christ who has promised to preserve Israel would turn his back and indirectly suggest her to stand on her own legs and defend herself. The Anti-christ would betray Israel by refusing to defend her. Instead of that, he would emerge, encourage, and even lead the "gog" attack. Then God, after seeing the desperate condition of His people plunge into action and save His chosen ones. "And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God. Every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood, and I will rain upon him and upon his bands and upon many people that are with him an overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus, I will magnify myself and sanctify myself will be known in the eyes of many nations and they shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezekiel 31:21-23).

The attack of God on Gog will be two-fold. The first one is, He will cause the people of Gog to turn against one another. The second plan is, He will punish Gog and his forces with plagues as well as with torrential rain, hailstones, and burning sulfur. As a result, Gog will be destroyed and Israel saved. But the most memorable and remarkable thing in this incident is,

God will reveal Himself as great, more powerful, and holy. And also He will make Himself known to all heathen nations, whether those heathens will turn towards Him in repentance or not. The heathens will at least know that He is the savior and God of Israel, the trustworthy God of the Holy Bible. He is undoubtedly the true, most powerful, mighty, and everlasting God who reigns forever.

Having studied the pros and cons of the historical background of Israel, her moral degradation and spiritual vacuum will lead the nation to remain as unwallled and unarmed, and she will be on the point of destruction. In this stage, we have the reference of Prophet Zechariah. He mentioned about God's plan; "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die and the third shall be left therein" (Zechariah 13:8). The master plan of God is revealed here. He will rescue the Israelites from the attack of Gog. Yet many of Jewish citizens will perish miserably in the hand of the Anti-christ. Even then, God will preserve the remaining of them who are redeemed of Israel and for those remaining people, God will fulfill the glorious promises He made to the ungrateful people. Regarding the remnant, "God will bring the third part through fire and refine them as silver is refined, and then try them as gold to be tried. They shall call My name and I will hear them and finally I will say they are My people, and they shall say that the Lord is our God".

From that day onwards, Israel will never be forsaken, either physically or spiritually. Then, the Lord will proclaim- "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein, for I saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire roundabout and will be the glory in the midst of her." (Zechareah 2.4-5)

## *16. History of Jerusalem*

The name 'Jerusalem' is in two parts. 'Jeru' means house, 'Salem' means peace. So Jerusalem means 'house of peace'. It is also called "*Jebus*" because a tribe by name Jebusites ruled that city for a long time. Even the Judas could not drive them away and so they lived together in Jerusalem even today. First the name Salem was given by Melchizedec who later called himself king of salem.

Melchizedec was from the family of Sidon and grandson to Canaan. He was a shepherd boy. He knew only feeding the sheep and nothing else. God was with him and liked his innocence. He also won the wars with Nimrod. God had chosen Melchizedec from all generations of men as God chose Mary among all women for the purpose of the birth of Christ. He chose Melchizedec and anointed him to be the High Priest of the Almighty. Then God asked him to go to a distant place which He would show and build a city in His name. As per the Word of God, Melchizedec left his duty of a shepherd boy and traveled a long distance. He laid the foundation for a new town which he called Salem, that later became Jerusalem. He became the king also to that city, Melchizedec, 'King of Salem' (Genesis 14:18).

He remained there permanently and served bread and wine at the Altar of high God. He found the surrounding place as a place of milk and honey and called it Canaan the name of his grandfather Canaan. The place was given to Abraham later, as a promised land to his seed Israel. Melchizedec was called the King of Salem. The King of North and the King of Righteousness.

Once, Abraham met Melchizedec while he was returning from the battle with other kings who took Lot his brother's son. Melchizedec was happy to see Abraham. He blessed him and served him with bread and wine. He also gave Abraham the shepherd stick of his young age as a presentation.

Abraham in return gave 10th part of his property to Melchizedec which he got from the Kings. So, giving tithes to God started from Abraham... Since then Melchizedec remained in Salem permanently serving bread and wine on the altar. It was he, who laid the foundation for the present Jerusalem. It was he who gave the name Canaan to the land of milk and honey. As a narrator he told the whole story about the genealogy of Noah's family to his servant boy "Ali" and Jerusalem was in existence even at the time of Abraham who lived in about 2000 B.C.

### ***Jerusalem had some other names***

1. Jebus
2. The House of Peace
3. Holy City
4. City of God
5. City of David
6. Mountain of the Lord
7. Zion of the Holy One of Israel
8. City of Sunset

### **Jerusalem is**

1. The nerve center of the world geographically (Ezekiel 5:5)
2. The salvation center of the world spiritually. ( John 4:22)
3. The story center of the world prophetically (Zach 14:19)
4. The glory center of the world ultimately (Isaiah 2:15)

The old city Jerusalem had a wall around and it had eight gates.

1. Jafa gate
2. New gate
3. Damascus gate (It is also called Shechem gate)
4. Herod's gate (It is also called flower gate by Arabs)
5. St. Stephen gate (Also called the Lion's gate)
6. Golden gate (Called the Eastern gate)
7. The dung gate
8. Zion gate (Arabs called it the gate of David prophet)

When God created beauty He created 10 parts of it and gave 9 parts to Jerusalem. When God created 10 parts of knowledge He gave 9 parts of that knowledge to Jerusalem. When God created 10 parts of suffering He gave 9 parts of that suffering to Jerusalem. It is the holiest place to Jews, Christians and even to Muslims after Mecca and Medina. Israel got independence in May 14, 1948 from the British Government. Prior to that, it was ruled by many dynasties. It is said about sixteen dynasties waged wars and ruled Israel. Jerusalem is first Mentioned in the Bible in (Genesis 14:18) as “*Salem*”. Melchizedec, the king of Salem (Genesis 14:18) the word Jerusalem is used 600 times in the Old Testament alone. There are some important places in and around the city of Jerusalem.

### **They are**

1. Mount of Olives,
2. The Mountain ranges of Moriah,
3. The Gethsemane garden, and
4. Via Dolorosa.

### ***The Mount of Olives***

This is just East of Jerusalem across the Kedron valley. It is about 2641 feet above the sea level and it is 318 feet higher than the temple mountain area. There are eight churches on the mountain, built by the people from different countries, and the church of Helion is one of them. It was built by her son Emperor Constantine in memory of his beloved mother. Its Northern summit is marked by the “Ascension church”, built by the Russian orthodox people.

### ***Its importance***

1. It is called the Mount of Olives because the Eastern part of it is full of olive trees.
2. It is called the Mount of Offence (1 Kings 11:4-8)
3. David fled from Absalom’s rebellion (II Samuel 15:20-32)



4. The servant gave provisions to David on this mountain. (II Samuel 16:1-2)
5. Jesus' triumphant entry (Mathew 21:1-11)
6. Jesus stayed here for the last week of his ministry (Luke 21:37)
7. Jesus wept here for Jerusalem's future destruction particularly for the destruction of the temple (Luke 19:41-44)
8. Jesus cursed the fig tree (Mathew 21:18-21)
9. The olive discourse (Mathew 24:25)
10. Jesus went to that mountain after eating the last supper or Passover (Mathew 26:30)
11. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to his disciples (Luke 24:49)
12. Jesus ascended to heaven from this mountain (Acts 1:9-11)
13. Jesus will return to this mountain on His Second Coming (Zach. 14:4)

### ***Eight Different Churches on the Mount of Olives:***

People of different countries constructed churches on the Mount of Olives.

#### **They are:**

1. In 378 A.D. "The Matron Poemenie" founded "The Church of Ascendancy". But this church was destroyed by the Persian rulers in 614 A.D.) Later it was renovated by the crusaders. For the second time, it was destroyed by the Muslim rulers and a Mosque was built in its place.
2. The Russian Orthodox people built one church there. Its name was "The Church of Ascendancy".
3. The Lutheran "Church of Ascendancy" with the name "Augustus Villa"; was built at the highest part of the mountain.
4. The Greek Orthodox Church people built another church, "Viri Galilee". It is for the members of Galilee. It is referred to the Messengers of Galilee.
5. "The Church of Peter Noster" (Latin), it means for our father. This was the place where Christ gave the Lord's Prayer to his disciples.

6. “The Church of Heliona”. This was constructed by Emperor Constantine in memory of his mother who became Saint later. This is also in memory of Christ and his preaching to his disciples.
7. “Dominus Flivet” This Church looks most beautiful with its wonderful structure. It was built by the people of Franciscan Church. This Church tells us how Christ wept for the future pathetic condition of Jerusalem and the temple.
8. Russian Church of “Mary Magdalene”. It is built with gold plated onion shaped domes. It can be seen even from a long distance. “Czar” Alexander 3rd of Russia built this church in honour of his mother “Maria”. Today it is under the control of Russian Orthodox Nuns”.

### ***Mountain Ranges of Moriah***

This place is known to the people from the time of Abraham because he tried to sacrifice his son Isaac on this Mount. Its area is about 35 acres of land.

### ***Its importance***

1. Abraham offered his son on this mount (Genesis 22:1-2)
2. David bought the Jebusite threshing floor of Araunah (2 Sam 24:18-24)
3. Solomon built God’s temple on one of those mountains called Mount Zion (Chronicles 3:1-2)
4. The second temple was also built by Zerubbabel on the same foundation (Ezra 3:8-13, Ezra 4:22-24)
5. Herod the great rebuilt and enlarged the temple in 20 B.C.
6. Jesus was presented at that temple on the 8th day of his birth (Luke 2:22)
7. Jesus came to the temple when he was 12 years old (Luke 2:42)
8. Jesus Christ drove out the money changers ( John 2:13-15)
9. Jesus attended the festival of Tabernacle ( John 7:10)
10. Jesus gave the judgement on Pharisees and Sadducees (Mathew 21:23)

11. The disciples mentioned, the temple rebuilt by Herod, to Jesus (Mathew 24:1-2)
12. Peter and John went to the temple to pray (Acts 3:1)
13. The Muslims believed that Muhammad prophet Ascended to heaven from this mountain.
14. The rock on which Abraham tried to sacrifice his son was changed into a mosque.

### ***Gethsemane Garden***

If we want to go to the Mount of Olives we must go through the garden of Gethsemane. There had been some graves in between the two places and those graves have some historical importance. According to their belief, Christ on His second coming would come down to the Mount of Olives. Then He would pass through the Gethsemane garden and enter Jerusalem city through the golden gate and finally go to the judgment hall. So, when Christ would come to the grave yard, all the People might rise from their graves. With that belief all the important Jews and prophets like Haggai and Malachi were buried there. Christ, before He was arrested from the garden by the Roman soldiers, sat on a rock and prayed to God painfully. So that rock was called the “*rock of agony*”. On that rock, a church was built later with the contributions from about 16 countries. It is said that the church is more beautiful than any other church today. The name of the church is called “*the Church of all nations*” and also “*the church of agony*”. Later three more churches were built on that area. The latest Church was built in 1924. At present this church is maintained by the Franciscans. In that garden there were eight olive trees at the time of Jesus Christ people had a doubt when Titus destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D, He must have cut down the trees also. But there are two trees we see today which are the over growth of the trees of Jesus’ time.

### **Its importance**

1. Jesus agonized in prayer in Gethsemane (Mathew 26:36-46)

2. Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested by the Roman Soldiers.  
(Mathew 26:47-56)

### ***Via Dolorosa***

It is also called “the way of cross or the way of sorrow”. It is a traditional route that Christ carried the cross on His shoulders to the mount Golgotha. It is now located outside the old city. There are fourteen stations on the way and the last four are in the church campus of the church of the holy sepulcher.

***The following are the names of incidents that took place in those 14 stations:***

1. Jesus was committed to death
2. Jesus took up the cross
3. Jesus fell under the cross
4. Jesus met his mother
5. Cyrene Simon was forced to carry the cross for Christ.
6. Veronica wiped out the sweat from the face of Jesus
7. Jesus fell down for the second time
8. Jesus consoled the women of Jerusalem
9. Jesus fell down for the third time
10. Jesus was stripped off His garments
11. Jesus was nailed to the cross
12. Jesus died on the cross
13. Jesus was taken down from the cross.
14. And Jesus was laid in the tomb.

### **Its importance**

1. Jesus walked out of the judgment hall at the beginning of the Via Dolorosa. (John 19:13)
2. Paul made his speech to the people of Jerusalem at the site of Herod's fortress.

As Christ was crucified on Friday, people called it, “Black Friday” for 200 years. Later it became God’s Friday and at present it is called Good Friday. Even today the Franciscan church members used to go in a procession on every Friday singing songs in praise of Christ. Some tourists also join the Franciscan church members and go in the procession to Via Dolorosa.

### ***Jericho***

According to historical information this city Jericho was called the oldest city built in 7000 B.C. It was here the tax collector Zaccaeus touched by the spirit of Christ and gave half of his property to the poor. It was also here Barthimeas a blind man happened to be cured of his blindness. This city is called the fragrance city of palms and it is also famous for date fruits. There is Elisha spring we can see it even today. The Jericho city is located at the Northern side of the Dead Sea and at the West coast of the Jordan River. It is 17 miles from Jerusalem and about 853 feet above the sea level.

### **Its importance**

1. It is called the city of palm trees (Deuteronomy 34:3, Chronicles 28:15)
2. Rahab a harlot received the spies into her house. (Joshua 2)
3. Jericho was the first city that Joshua captured.
4. Jericho’s destruction
5. Joshua uttered a curse against all who try to rebuild Jericho (Joshua 6:26)
6. Elisha’s translation (II Kings 24:15)
7. Herod the great built a luxurious palace and made it his winter capital.
8. The mount of temptation can be seen from Jericho

### ***Nazareth***

Today Nazareth is called one of the holiest places in Israel. At the time of Christ its population was about 150 people only. It is in two parts today. The upper Nazareth, where majority of the Israel Jews were residing and the lower Nazareth, where Israel Christians and Muslims residing together. At present its population is about 70,000. It is in the mid way

between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea. It was an unimportant village at that time. It was about 1230 feet above the sea level.

### **Its importance**

1. It is the place where the Angel announced the birth of Christ. (Luke 1:26-35)
2. Nathaniel said “*can any good thing come out of Nazareth?*” (John 1:46)
3. Joseph and Mary left here to go to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-7)
4. Joseph and Mary came back from Egypt to live here after the death of King Herod. (Mat.2:19-23)
5. Jesus spent his early years here (Luke 2:51-52)
6. Jesus preached His first sermon from here (Luke 4:16-30)
7. Jesus was called “*the Nazarene*” by his enemies. (Mathew 21:11)
8. After the sermon and the rejection of him Jesus never returned to Nazareth.

### **Capernaum**

It is two and half miles from where the Jordan River enters the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum is called God’s own Town. It is situated along the trade route from Damascus to Mediterranean coast and Egypt. Tolls were collected by the Roman government and it was here Jesus called Matthew. It was a military center for Romans in Jesus time. The town had about 10,000 population at that time.

### **Its importance**

1. Jesus asked peter to pay the tribute money from the mouth of a fish. (Matt 17:24-27)
2. Jesus made his head quarters here (Mathew 4:15-16)
3. The centurion’s servant was healed (Mathew 8:5-13)
4. Peter’s mother-in-law was healed here (Mathew 8:14-15)
5. Greater multitude was brought for healing (Mat. 8:16-17)
6. A man sick of palsy was healed (Mat. 9:1-8)



7. A woman with an issue of blood was healed (Mathew 9:20-22)
8. Two blind men were healed. (Mathew 9:27-30)
9. Raising of a ruler's daughter. (Mathew 9:18-19)
10. Healing of the demoniac (Mathew 9:32-34)
11. Capernaum failed to repent so it came under Christ's Judgment. (Mathew 11:23-24)
12. Noble man's son was healed. (John 4:42-54)
13. Jesus "*the bread of life*" discourses took place here. (John 6:24-71)
14. The synagogue of Capernaum was built by a Roman centurion. (Luke 7:1-6)

### ***Bethlehem***

'Bet'lehem means House of Bread It was an agricultural village. Emperor Constantine built the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem. Because Christ was born here it was called the holiest city for Christians. In 614 A.D, the Persians invaded and razed all churches. But they spared this church without much damage. Later this church was renovated by Emperor Justinian. In 1333 the Franciscans were permitted to conduct prayers in the church. Then in later years the Church of Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher were jointly maintained by Franciscans Greeks, and Armenians. The Church of Nativity was built in 335 A.D with 44 columns on either side of the church. It was built on the same cave or "*grotto*" where the birth of Christ took place. Along with that there were two more caves. One was named after 200 boys of less than two years old and who were brutally killed by King Herod. The third cave was named after St. Jermy who translated the Bible from Greek into Latin.

### **Its importance**

1. When Rachel died she was buried here after she gave birth to Benjamin (Genesis 35:16-18)
2. Ibzan, the tenth judge of Israel was born here (Judges 12:8-12)
3. The story of Ruth is centered in Bethlehem (Ruth 1:4)

4. David was born here.
5. David was anointed here as the king of Israel (1 Samuel 16:4)
6. David killed a lion and a bear here (1 Samuel 17:34)
7. David tamed his father's sheep here (1 Samuel 17:15)
8. David poured out a drink offering here (2 Samuel 23:14)
9. Jesus was born here (Luke 2:7)
10. The shepherds worshipped Jesus (Luke 21:5-17)
11. The three wise men called Magi, presented Jesus some gifts here (Matthew 2:7-11)
12. King Herod slew about 200 innocent baby boys here (Matthew 2:16-18)

## ***Hebron***

The original name of Hebron was “*Arba*”. Arba was the name of a great man among the people of Arkins tribe. The place was famous for constant wars. There was a city with that name also which latter became Hebron. Hebron is situated at the south west of Jerusalem. The distance between Hebron and Jerusalem is about 19 miles.

## **Its importance**

1. It is also called Kiriath Arba in ancient times. (Joshua 14:15, 20:7)
2. In Arabic language it is called Elkhilil which means friend (Isaiah 41:4)
3. Abraham came here to dwell after he was separated from Lot (Genesis 13:18)
4. God appeared to Abraham concerning Isaac's birth (Genesis 18:1-15)
5. Abraham made an appeal to God to save Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction. (Genesis 18:16-33)
6. Sarah died at Hebron but she was buried in the cave of Machpelah. (Genesis 23:1-20) After her Abraham Isaac Rebecca Jacob, and Leah were also buried there and it was known as the tomb of patriarchs
7. Isaac also lived here for some time (Genesis 26:1-35)
8. Jacob lived here after the death of Rachel (Genesis 35:1-20)

9. The spies took a branch of grapes and bananas from Kadesh and went back to their place (Numbers 13:22-23)
10. Joshua captured Hebron when he took the land (Joshua 13:36-37)
11. Caleb received Hebron as an inheritance (Joshua 14:10-15)
12. Hebron was called one of the 6 cities of refuges. (Joshua 20:7)
13. David was crowned as the king of Judah here (2 Samuel 21:4)
14. David reigned here for seven and half years before he became the king of Jerusalem (2 Samuel 2:11)
15. Absalom head quarters was here after he rebelled against his father David (2 Samuel 15:7-12)
16. The huge Haram sanctuary was built by Herod the great over the cave of Mechpelah

### ***Western wall or Wailing Wall***

This is Jerusalem's holiest site and the closest part of the original Structure of God's temple. The western wall is also called the synagogue of the wall. Every day the Jews would come and pray to God by beating their heads to the wall in devotion. After that they put a letter also in the holes of the wall which is like a message to God. It is said that the wall is 200 feet long and 90 feet high. The upper part of the wall was built by Ottoman, the middle and the lower part was built by King Herod during his time. King Solomon built this God's temple in 1057 B.C, the Ark of Covenant and the Ten Commandments were kept in this Temple. But they were destroyed by the king of Babylon in 586 B.C. Then in 440 B.C, people like Zerubbabel tried to rebuild the temple on the same foundations called second temple. The king Herod renovated the temple and expanded it in 20 BC.

### ***The sea of Galilee***

It is 13 miles long and seven and a half mile wide. It is 700 feet below the sea level and 200 feet deep. The rabbis used to say that Jehovah created seven seas and the Sea of Galilee is a delightful one. Josephus a popular historian called it "the ambition of Nature".

## **The Sea of Galilee has five names :**

1. Chimerieth (Numbers 34:11, Joshua 12:3)
2. Kimereth
3. Gennesaret (Luke 5:1)
4. Sea of Tiberius (John 6; 1, John 21:1)
5. Sea of Galilee (Mathew 4:18, Mark, 1:16)

The cities surrounding the Sea of Galilee are Magdala, home of Mary Magdalene. Plain of Gennesaret, Tabgha where Jesus fed 5000 men. Tiberius, Capernaum and the Mount of Beatitude.

## **Its importance**

1. Jesus performed the miracle of the draught of fish (Luke 5:1-11)
2. Jesus stilled the winds and seas (Mathew 8:23-27)
3. Jesus walked on the stormy water to his disciples. (Mathew 14:22-33)
4. Swines plunged to death after Jesus healed the Demoniac (Mathew 8:28-34)
5. Jesus promised his disciples in Galilee after his resurrection.

## ***The Dead Sea or Salt Sea***

The Dead Sea is called the lowest part of the earth. It is about 1294 feet below the sea level. The lowest part in the United States is the Death Valley in California 282 feet below the sea level. The Dead Sea is formed with the water of Jordan River and other small rivers. It is 60 miles long and 13 miles wide. The Dead Sea lies between the Jordan River and the Judea mountain side of Israel. The depth of the Dead Sea is about 1300 feet. The sea has no outlet and it is estimated that 7000000 tons of water flows into the sea, daily and about the same amount of water will be evaporating daily.

The fresh water that evaporates daily may have salinity and the mineral content of 30 percent in the water. The salt Content is 7 percent. Sodom and Gomorrah existed at the lower end of the Dead Sea, called the tongue. It is also called the Salt Sea. (Genesis 14:3)

The name Dead Sea is suitable to it because no living Organisms will survive in its water. Its geological bottom is full of minerals like sulphur, iodine, and potassium. The Dead Sea is seven times dense as the sea water as 25 percent salt content. People who take dip in the sea water apply mud to their skin and wait for some time. Again they take a dip. After that they come out and take bath with fresh water. People float on the water of the sea because of the density. The mud found at the bottom of the sea is medicinal for skin diseases. Actually skin products are commercially produced from the factory which is built near the Dead Sea. Towards the Southern end of the Dead Sea, we can see the pillar of salt emerge from the water, not far away, from the region of Sodom and Gomorrah.

### ***About the Holy Land***

Holy Land is a unique and beautiful land, rich with variety of historical, archeological and religious sites. Visitors are charmed by its sweeping vistas, hospitality of its citizens and inspirational images. This country is an enchanting mixture of ancient and modern culture. In the holy land, you can experience the special thrill of walking in the footsteps of the Bible characters. Abraham roamed these sites four thousand years ago. About three thousand years have gone by since king David reigned here but Christians follow the steps of Jesus in the Holy land constitute its ultimate moment. In these regions Jesus the son of God was born. Here He grew in wisdom and stature. Here He was crucified. Here God raised Him from the dead. We can see the divisions as three regions. North, center and South. In the Northern and Central regions, Jesus visited Jerusalem, a sacred city and it is the Soul of the country. Southern areas are included because of its significance to patriarchs, prophets and kings of Judah.

This book will unlock the messages of the Bible and engage your mind and heart in the Wonderful world in which Jesus lived. We believe that this book is special as it describes the facts of the ministry of our Lord with the sites that recall his work & adds a rich new understanding to the

meaning of the work of Jesus of Nazareth we trust it will also bring back many pleasant memories for those who visited the lands of the Bible. This land is unlike any other. This region has been called by various names such as Canaan, Palestine and new Israel in Biblical times. It was considered to be the center of the world and for three monotheistic religious Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It has been the focal point of their respective religious beliefs. In Judea the Jewish people are still waiting for the messiah. For Christians, the new testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the messiah that is spoken of in the Old Testament has indeed become a reality in the person of Jesus Christ. For Islam on the other hand was founded in 6 AD by the Prophet Mohammed & both play an important role in this land. For Jews this land was predestined long ago by God. God also made them the chosen people, through Abraham and his descendants. For Christians this land is the cradle of Christianity for it was here that Jesus was born, lived dead & resurrected.

### ***Physical Features***

1. The holy land is a region situated in the Middle East on the southeast shore of the Mediterranean.
2. Its position is at the cross roads of three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe.
3. The Northern boundaries of the Holy land are Lebanon and Syria.
4. Its eastern boundaries are the Jordan River and Jordan proper.
5. Its Southern boundary is Egypt.
6. The Holy land has three principal plains going North to South.
7. They are the coastal plain, the central plain and the Jordan Valley.

### ***History***

Palestine was the cross road of international highways which linked the super powers of different areas such as Egypt and Mesopotamia in 4000 B.C. and Greece and Rome from 300 BC to 300 A.D. It was also the land bridge where great trade took place with Pompey's invasion of the Holy



land in 64 BC until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD by Titus. The land was ruled by the Romans as a depending of Roman state. During Herod the great reign (4 BC to 37A.D.) the country prospered. He built the temple of Jerusalem, theaters in Caesarea and fortress and places such as Massada, Cyprus and the Herodium. After Herod's death, Samaria and Judea were put under direct Roman rule and Galilee was given to his son Herod Antipas. During the time of Jesus birth, Emperor Augustus was reigning and the next Roman Emperor Tiberius Caesar (14-37 AD) ruled while Jesus was a teenager and an adult. It was Pontius Pilate the Roman procurator who presided at the trial of Jesus. The New Testament alone mentions 26 healing 'miracles, 9 nature miracles with over 32 parables.

### ***Bible Guide***

Trip to Israel is like looking through the pages of a living Bible and the illustrations you can't see anywhere else on earth. You can see your favorite passages come to life. Visit the domed church on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs.... Travel through Judea to Jericho, the River Jordan, and Bethlehem, birth place of David. You can still visit the grotto where Mary placed the infant Jesus because "there was no room for them at the inn." From there, a sevenminute drive (an hour by donkey) will bring you to the gate Zion, walk around her, counting her towers of admiring her walls, reviewing her places.. "(Psalms 48:12). Page by page, town by town, you'll. Re-live Biblical epics. And you'll follow the words of Jesus and His disciples, "through the cities and the villages, teaching and journeying..." (Luke 13:22). When you come to Israel, You won't need to buy a guide book because you've already got the best one ever written in the Holy Bible.

### ***The Holy Land tour***

In the Old Testament those who love Jerusalem are blessed. (Psalm 137: 5, 6) It is only because of King David. All over the world, Jerusalem is famous for its Glory and for King David's regime. More persecutions were

done so many returned to this place. In modern town like Tel Aviv the population is estimated about 1, 53, 800. The reason for their return to their place is that God had a specific plan for His own chosen people.

### ***Brief note about Israel:***

Many prophecies were declared by many prophets that Jesus Christ would be born as a King of Jews. Many were fulfilled. (Luke 21:28, Mathew 24: 22, 33) . The people of Israel were compared to fig trees. In Hosea, they were compared to vineyard. Joel 1:7, Mark 11:11, Luke 13:6, Isaiah 5:7.

1. Jews were loved by God before Christ was born prior to that, Ezekiel prophesied in 37:1. Vision of dry bones. So now the Israel people are being benefited by receiving benefits from Government regarding education and living.
2. In 3000 B.C. many forgot the language of Hebrew. (Jeremiah 31:23). It was the national language. After 2000 years were passed Hebrew language was reviewed as national language. According to Mathew 17:27. Shekel is now being used as currency.
3. In 1935-1945 German Nazi Dictator Adolph Hitler's Cruel treatment was remarkable during Second World War. According to the world history 60,00,000 Jews were completely perished only by letting all in a dark place without air provision, poisonous snakes, gases were sent to destroy them. As Prophet Ezekiel mentioned in his book 37:11 they were like dry bones. Within one hour, 10 Lakhs of Israelites soldiers walked on the roads to fight for their country. In modern Israel cultivation of land by new procedures made a wonderful yield with green beauty all over the nation now.
4. All that happened is only based on the Biblical truths Ezekiel 37:19, 38:1. "Japan & Israel will be one "The dead will be raised". This is the only blessed hope for all Christians. In Jesus all of us have a blessed hope of meeting him. Now the country Gog represents Russia. All the Jews will come back to Israel.

### ***About God's prophecy***

1. In 1982 the Jewish population was 24,000 only.
2. In 1914 during First World War, they were 85,000.
3. In 1927, 1, 50,000 Jews living in Palestine.
4. By 1947 Jews increased in number they were 6, 26,000.
5. Israel got its independence on May 14, 1948. When we see the promise of God in Isaiah 43:5, 6. "I will establish and spread your Kingdom was fulfilled with the help of British, Germany, Australia and people of Italy helped the Jews to return to their own land.
6. The world Jews populations is estimated as 1,50,00,000 out of which 30,00,000 are in Jerusalem 60,00,000 in America and the remaining 60,00,000 are all over the world.
  - a) By 1953 the population of Jews increased to 50% as 87% of Eastern nations and Europe and oriental nation helped 10% for their return.
  - b) From the West and from Libya people came back and too many people are from Tunis, Algeria and Latin America.
  - c) From North Czechoslovakia Europe, Turkey, and Bulgaria too people came.
  - d) From South Yemen and from old South Arabia 1,48,000 Jews, returned and the Muslims dominated and humiliated Jews to suffer. Out of 10 members of Jews eight were dead without proper shelter and because Huge flames spread all over the place.

On the second day in old city of Jerusalem before the Wailing Wall man used to gather and pray since 1897. The hope of the people was strong at that time. Israel Chief came closer to the original wall of the temple and said "This is a great day that many did not see. After two days soldiers of Jordan entered in Jordan River, coastal area, who were chased by their enemies. Then the mighty people of God, Israelites came forward with great courage like those in Joshua time reached the place of the Dead Sea. Then the Arabs started cease fire that the Russians provided three billion worth of weapons and reached Sinai desert area. After that the blessing of God was visible as they fought and got their place to live.

The reason was how they got miraculous victory in 6 day war. The victory of 6 days war was the victory of God's people who believed in God's promises. Israelites fought for their own land. They were humiliated by their enemies for about 1900 years. They did not have shelter, but now they are enjoying their land of milk and honey. As we see the beauty of Israel one cannot describe the green and fertile land. Israel people fought for their victories thought out their lives. They strongly decided to drive out the enemies always at any cost.

The strong hand that gave victory for Israel people only gave them that victory for sure. The British Chief was a native of Zion. He had the great foundation and great faith in God. He only taught many techniques in the army. His name was Orde Wingale. Then with creative skill he did his job. Next, the general of Israel was Moshe Dayan admired the Chief as a great teacher "If 100 people happen to fight with 3 men, each man will be equal to 50 people. All were reminded about Gideon from Judges.

### ***Israel in the Past***

Israel is a promised country where the eye of God is always on it with His glory since 2000 BC, according to His promise to the Patriarch Abraham. At first God called Abraham from Ur and asked him who depended upon God. Genesis 12:1-3. Abraham got promised son Isaac, and from him got Jacob who was father of 12 sons. God blessed the 12 tribes of Israel and saved them from poverty. Joseph was chosen by God to uplift the lives of his brothers. They stayed for complete 430 years in Egypt and became 3 million. Moses comes next to be remembered for his meekness and for the leadership of the Israelites. In 1451 BC Joshua was the leader next to Moses to lead the people to Canaan. He too faced so much opposition. During 430 years many judges took the responsibility for the people of God, Israelites. (Acts 13:20). In 1050 B.C. Saul became the first King of Jews who ruled for 40 years. IN 1010 BC, David defeated Goliath the strong supporter of Philistines and become the king in 1010 B.C. He too ruled Israel for 40 years. David's son Solomon built the temple of God, after he arranged

everything for his son to take complete responsibility. Solomon's son Rehoboam, during the time of his reigning in 931-913 BC, the twelve tribes were divided into two, as the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. In 722 BC the Assyrians caught hold of Israelites the ten tribes and also the city Samaria, the capital of Israelites. The other two tribes belonged to southern part called Judah and in 600 BC. they were captured by enemies. The Jews were pilgrimaged from Babylon to Judah in three stages, and in 536 BC the first group was taken care by Jerubbabel.

### **Mt. Carmel and Haifa**

It is a beautiful coast of Israel's sea gate way. It is here where thousands of Pilgrims and immigrants first saw the land of the return. It is Israel's third largest city. It has 207,000 population. It is a center of heavy industry, with International trade technological training and research. Liners and Cargo ships unload in Haifa. The beautiful Carmel mountain rises above the Mediterranean Sea. It has thick, natural vegetation that remained all year green around and affords magical vistas of sea, mountain and plain. Haifa has remained as the junction of the Carmel mountain ranges and the Coastal regions port city and an industrial commercial and it is service center for north and entire country.

According to the Bible history it is a famous place (1st Kings 18:17-40. And two villages are famous also Dilyat - el Carmel and Isliya Sletha.) Peak of the Carmel Muhraqa is one of the eastern peaks of Carmel ranges and there is a monastery surrounded by a national park. The view is spectacular as the Jezreel valley upholds below. Here Elijah defeated 450 prophets of Baal and succeeded in proving that the God of Israel is the true God. Mount Carmel is Vineyard of God (2 Chro. 26:10). The King dugged many wells and many farmers were existed. King Solomon appreciated its beauty in Song of Solomon, 7:5. We can see beautiful description from the Bible. Isaiah 35:2. Jeremiah 46:18, 52:19.

When the mountains are spoken of as Languishing, this is a sign of God's Judgment on the Land. Nahum 1:4, Amos 1:2, Isaiah 33:9. A great history of the prophet. 1Kings 18:19-39, 41-45. Elijah prayed to the living God. He ran and hid himself (1 kings 18:46).

The cave of Elijah is located at the foot of Carmel, where it is believed he hid from the anger of Israel King Ahab and Jezebel. This place is very holy because once God's mighty power was revealed. The caves are like honey comb shape and looks very interesting. Many monks lived lonely here to the South of its mountain places (I Kings 18:40.) There was a famous water fountain. From that spring only Elijah poured water on the altar. Twelve stones were placed in the altar and a huge statue was put in a high place which reminds us of that great day that the visitors admire and worship God's power there.

### ***The Mount of Beatitudes***

From this we can learn the lesson on the values of Christianity.

Many historical places, the messages of salvation and valuable preaching's of Gospel of Jesus are seen here: (1) Charity, (2) Justice, (3) Prudence, (4) Hope, (5) Faith, (6) Fortitude, (7) Temperance, (8) Virtues. The eight valuable messages are all included in the preaching's. In 1911 Antonico Barluzzia a famous artist showed his talents in the decorations of the churches and some instructions were given to the pilgrims to follow: 1. Honour the nature, 2. Be Silent, 3. Dress in Modesty, 4. Keep the premises clean. From this beautiful spot north of the Sea of Galilee above springs of Tabgha, Jesus gave his most famous address Sermon on the Mount.

The church was built there surrounded by well maintained gardens. The church was built in 1936-8. It was designed by Barlezzi who took special pride in its architecture. The Building is Octagonal to represent eight beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount. On the mount there is an incredible vantage pond overlooking the Sea of Galilee and see the ruins of the ancient church dedicated to the Sermon on the Mount. Inside the church of beatitudes,



golden plated lid for altar part eight beautiful decorated windows were placed. This is the place where Jesus taught to His disciples before the trial.

### ***Jerusalem in the world History***

The city of Jerusalem has held a unique position in God's program for Israel, and it will continue to play a prominent role in the future. At the dedication of Solomon's temple, the Lord said through Solomon, "Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I, any man to be a ruler over my people Israel: but I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel" (II Chron. 6:5,6). The city of Jerusalem has had violent history, and it will experience extremely difficult times in the future, according to Biblical prophecy. Both the past and the future of Jerusalem are referred to in the Gospels.

Luke 21:20 says, *"When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh". Notice that the sign of desolation was an encompassing of the city by armies. When this sign occurred, the instructions were "Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not that are in the countries enter their into. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things, which are written, may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give such, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people"* (vv. 21-23).

These are the recorded words of the Lord Jesus Christ. He concluded these statements by saying, "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captives into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles, be fulfilled" (v.24). The tragedy predicted here was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when Titus, the general of the Roman armies, destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the Israelites among the nations. The people of Israel will remain scattered "until the time of the

Gentiles be fulfilled”. Another prophecy concerning Jerusalem is recorded in Matthew 24. Christ said, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand) then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains” (vv.15, 16). Notice that the sign given here concerning Jerusalem’s destruction is “the abomination of desolation” standing in the holy place. This refers to the Antichrist, who will stand in the third temple during the Tribulation and demand to be worshipped.

Although there are many similarities between Luke 21 and Matthew 24, there are also significant differences. The sign given in Luke 21 was the encompassing of the city by armies; the sign given in Matthew 24 is the abomination of desolate look in the holy place. Luke 21 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in A.D.70. It also foreshadows the surrounding of Jerusalem by armies in the future. Matthew 24 refers to the enemy’s coming in, although the city is not completely destroyed.

Matthew 24:27-31 tells what will occur at the end of the seven years of tribulation. The Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth. At the Rapture of the Church, referred to in I Thessalonians 4:13-18, the Lord will only appear in the clouds to catch away believers from the earth. But at the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return to the earth (see Zech. 14:1-5). Notice particularly that verses 4 and 5 say, “His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and towards the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall be removed towards the north, and half of it towards the south.

And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountain shall reach unto Azal: Yea, Ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah the 10th king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee”.

## ***17. FOUR IMPORTANT COVENANTS OF GOD***

People now a days are speaking about covenants but in ancient days, people spoke of cutting a covenant why because blood which is the essence of life had to be spilled.

If we look into history when people or nations enter into an agreement, they used different methods to finalize them. Some of such methods were to be formal and legal and some other methods informal and personal. Accordingly those methods used to “seal the deal” and they were called treaties accords, contracts, compacts promises, pledges and covenants. Among those methods the Heavenly father God chose covenant to enter into a special relationship with man and God particularly entered into four covenants which were major and they were committed by Him with the most prominent personalities in the Holy Bible. Here those covenants were not simply an over statements but people must try to understand them correctly, how they work and what the meaning of them

- 1) God Himself committed those covenants to do certain things in relation to man
- 2) Those covenants would have direct impact on the life of every human being on earth.
- 3) These covenants used be in operation whether men are aware of them or not.
- 4) Those are the covenants that if people embrace them. they would bring joy, peace blessing and eternal life with God.
- 5) These covenants are so valuable and if they are rejected would bring sadness, cursing turmoil and eternal separation from God.

The first of God’s covenant was with Abraham called “Abrahamic covenant” It was made with him as the father of Jewish nation (Israel). The

second covenant was called “Mosaic covenant” which was made with Moses. Who was also called the law giver of Israel. The third covenant was called “Davidic covenant which was made with king David of Israel. He was also called man after God’s own heart” (1Sam 13:14). The fourth covenant was called “New Testament” it was called so because it was started by the son of God (Jesus Christ) Himself.

Now we can understand that the first three covenants were made during the Old Testament period and the forth covenant was introduced with the New Testament. In this connection Jesus said for this is the blood of my New Testament covenant. Mathew 26:28. It may not be too much to say here that during the period of Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic and New covenant men and nations have found their history and eternal destiny. The word covenant in the Bible comes from the Hebrew word “beril” and the meaning of the word is “to cut” or “to Divide” these covenants were generally entered into in connection with a solemn ceremony primarily entered upon the death of an innocent animal.

“God said to prophet Jeremiah “And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof” Jeremiah 34:18

While it was cut into pieces arranged in two lines, then the covenanting parts would pass between the slain animal for those people who would do it was a solemn and sacred ceremony. The main purpose of this was May what has happened to this animal will happen to me if I do not keep my part in this covenant why it is said so because in ancient Israel an animal had to die. Now a days we speak of making a covenant that the ancients spoke of cutting covenants because blood was the very essence of life and that had to be spilled. But in the words of Lord Jesus for this is my blood of the New Testament. For about 2000 years, people have been sacrificing the innocent animals for redeeming their sins. But they all pointed out to Jesus a permanent sacrifice for the sins of the whole world So; His

death introduced a New Testament or covenant. As mentioned in the Bible covenant is a clear statement of God's purpose. Its main intention is expressed that it would find God by a solemn both to perform what He promised.

**The Abrahamic Covenant:** A Biblical covenant is a clear statement of the purpose of God and intention. It is expressed in terms of that which would find God with solemn oath to perform what He promised. The covenant made with Abraham was the oldest of the four covenants in terms of importance. So, with the divine command God gave five promises to Abraham

### **They were**

1. God promised He would make Abraham a great nation though at that time Abraham had no child at all.
2. God promised that He would make Abraham a rich man and as a result the patriarch became a wealthy man.
3. God promised Abraham that his name would be made great. So to say even today Abraham has a great name, among the followers of Islam who look at him as their great prophet The Jews call him father of the nation. The Christian found in him spiritual heritage and the father of faith.
4. God made a promise to Abraham that he should be a blessing and his blessing flow to others through the Lord and saviour Jesus Christ when humanity was traced to Abraham.
5. God promised Abraham that He would bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him. This principle can be traced through history to men and nations in relation to their treatment of the Jewish people.

After some time and the death of his father in Haran Abraham along with his nephew Lot proceeded to the land that God led him which was called Canaan. At that time the land was occupied by wicked people called

Canaanites. As mentioned in the Bible. And Abraham passed through land unto the place of sarchem unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was there in that land (Genesis 12:6) Abraham first came to the place which was located between the mount Ebal and mount Gerizim near the modern city of Nablus. After Abraham reached the Promised Land God appeared to him for the second time it is said in the Bible and the Lord appeared unto Abraham and said unto thy seed will I give this land and there builded he an altar unto the Lord who appear unto him (Gen 12:7) That place was actually the very centre of Biblical Judea and Samaria (today's west bank) where God appeared to the father of Jewish nation and promised him He lived there as the everlasting inheritance of his seed.

A Gain God appeared to Abraham and repeated His promise regarding the land as an everlasting inheritance to his seed And the Lord said unto Abraham after Lot was separated from him. Lift up now thine eyes from the place where thou art northward or southward. ...Arise and walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it for I will give it unto thee (Genesis 13:14-17)

For the fourth time God appeared to Abraham. This time Abraham happened to battle with the enemies who took Lot as a slave from Sodom and brought him back. After returning with victory he pledged his allegiance with EL Elyon the Most High God and refused the spoils of the battle.

As time passed on Abraham happened to question himself whether he had taken hasty decision without accepting EL Elyon as his master or whether he should have some of the spoils of the war. After those things the word of the Lord came unto Abraham I am thy shield (he did not err in pledging loyalty to EL Elyon the Most High God ....And he brought him forth abroad and said Look now to ward Heaven and tell the stars if thou be able to number them and He said unto him so shall thy seed be (Genesis 15:1-5) Abraham's response to the promise of the Lord was the loftiest and most important testimony of faith in the entire scripture Abraham simply believed in God. As a result he was called father of faith and also father of



righteousness. The word believed in expression and he believed in the Lord came from the Hebrew root from which we got the word amen Literally It might be said that Abraham amenid or affirmed the Lords promise of a seed that would come from his own lions and through which the world would experience the blessing of God. In the same day God made a covenant with Abraham saying unto thy seed have I given the land from the river of the Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: (Genesis 15:18). Then Abraham enquired “Lord God where by shall I know that I shall inherit it what Abraham wanted to say hire was that he needed some affirmation a covenant regarding the land God promised.

For that God responded and commanded Abraham to kill some animals and cut each of them into two pieces (Genesis 15:9-10). Then God caused a deep sleep to Abraham. While he was sleeping the presence of God came in the form of a smoking furnace and burning lamp and passed between the pieces that were cut of animals. Here the action of God seemed to be not proper because generally while commanding the covenant an animal was slain then its severed parts and the covenanting parties passed together between slain animals. The Idea here is what was done to the animal would be done to that particular person if he did not fulfil the part of the covenant and God Himself passed between the pieces of the slain animals the point is that neither the patriarch nor the dependence had to do anything to keep the covenant in effect and bending upon God.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. (Hebrew 11:17-19)

So, God was pleased with the willing obedience of His servant Abraham which was the evidence of his faith. As a result God took oath in Himself

“And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice”. (Genesis 22:16-18)

The hope set before us what the author has in his mind is the return of Jesus Christ to consummate the blessing promised to Abrahamic covenant. So, to say every spiritual blessing that the believers had known for the past 4000 years, every joy and confidence that the real church possessed has been dependent upon the covenant which God made with Abraham the patriarch and father of the Jewish people. It is reasonable to say that Jesus himself became a promised seed from the lions of Abraham who said salvation of the Jews (John 4:22) So, something concerned to the spiritual benefit has been provided from the promise of the unconditional character of the Abrahamic covenant.

### **The Mosaic Covenant:**

The Mosaic covenant was also like Abrahamic covenant which was confirmed in blood. Behold the blood of the covenant the Lord had made with you ... After about 400 years God made his second covenant called Mosaic covenant. The first one was made with Abraham which was concerned to the Jewish people as there was no nation at that time. But the second covenant was made with Moses which was concerned to the Jewish nation itself. These Jews left Egypt wondered in the wilderness for forty years and finally reached their Promised Land Canaan.

Jacob (Israel) the grandson of Abraham with his sons and their families numbering 70 in all happened to go to Egypt because there was famine in Canaan. As long as Joseph was their they prospered well. But after his death and some time passed they were made slaves. And for about

430 years they remind as slaves in Egypt under Pharaoh. Finally they cried unto God for delivery. Even for such a long time God did not forget His covenant with Abraham. So, He appeared to Moses in the burning bush and said

“I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slavery, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. (Exodus 3:7-8)

At that time the Jews were most unwanted dirt stuff and group of slaves. They forgot the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Actually more than 400 years had passed since the time of Abraham. Nobody wanted them and nobody cared for them in the society. But God called them my people He had not forgotten His covenant He did not forget His promise that through the nation of Israel all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

So, God chose Moses and with a mighty hand delivered the Jews from slavery and brought them to Mount Sinai. As slaves for centuries they completely forgot the God of their fore fathers. In order to make the multitude civil and understand about God. Moses gave the Jews the code of conduct and the Ten Commandments that he brought from God. Along with them He gave 7 festivals to celebrate when He visited them on the eve of the first anniversary celebrated at the foot of the Mount Sinai. Since Moses was divinely appointed leader of the people and so the second covenant would naturally bear His name as Mosaic covenant or the Law of Moses. He was finally called the lawgiver to the Jewish people.

The true structure of the Mosaic covenant was not at all new or unknown to people at the time of Moses. There were formal covenants in the ancient Middle East. That were often made between a ruler and his subjects. The major point in the covenant between a ruler here is God in the

Mosaic covenant and His subjects the Jews are quite conspicuous in the scriptures.

1. In this covenant the author is identified and His title given and God spoke all these words saying I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (Exodus 20:1-2)
2. This covenant had a Historical introduction. It dealt with the acts of the ruler on behalf of his people and why they needed to enter into the covenant with them.
3. This covenant had stipulations and those were the principles that controlled the relationship between the Lord and His people. This covenant included the Ten Commandments and some other laws (Exodus 21:1-29)
4. This covenant contained the promise of blessings and cursing. In this part blessings were promised if the people would hear and follow the instructions of the Lord (Exodus 23:20-33). Here blessings would convey the idea of bestowed life and goodness. Whereas cursing would convey the idea of death and badness.
5. Finally this covenant had an oath. This covenant required pledge on the part of the people to observe what all indicated in it. And Moses came and told the people, all the words of the Lord and all the judgments and all the people answered in one voice and said all the words which the Lord hath said will we do (Exodus 24:3). Here it was the willing acceptance of the covenant by the people.
6. The Mosaic covenant like Abrahamic covenant was made with blood and Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words." (Exodus 24:8). The writer who wrote the book of Hebrews said the following words regarding the covenant

“When Moses had proclaimed every command of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll on all the people. He said, “This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep.” (Hebrew 9:19-20)

There were a number of principles mentioned concerning the Mosaic covenant

- 1) First of all the Mosaic covenant was unlike Abrahamic covenant because it was conditional in nature. The people of Israel wholeheartedly accepted the covenant of the ruler God in this case did not promise unconditionally and swear to keep his covenant. The Mosaic Law in its importance was a code of performance which could be superseded by the Lord if the conditions were not fulfilled. They said all that the Lord hath spoken we will do. (Exodus 19:8). And if they did not respond positively as they agreed. He would nullify the covenant.
- 2) The Mosaic covenant was neither replaced nor modified the Abrahamic covenant, and this point could not be emphasized too strongly. In this covenant Apostle Paul wrote

“And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ,[j] that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise”. (Galatians 3:17-18)

- 3) The law which never superseded the Abrahamic covenant was not a way of Life. Nobody could gain entrance into the Heaven by observing the law. Abraham believed in God regarding his promise of the coming seed and this was considered his righteousness. In the Mosaic covenant those who wanted to keep the law with proper motive were not saved

- 4) As a matter of fact the law was good but its weakness lay not in the rules themselves. Actually they swore to uphold the law and said all the words which the Lord hath said will we do. But they could not do because it was beyond the ability of their fallen Adamic nature.
- 5) The attention of the Old Testament was drawn from the inadequate and temporary character of the mosaic covenant by keeping the new covenant which has to come. In this connection prophet Jeremiah wrote

*“The days are coming,” declares the Lord,  
“when I will make a new covenant  
with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.*

*It will not be like the covenant  
I made with their ancestors  
when I took them by the hand  
to lead them out of Egypt,  
because they broke my covenant,  
though I was a husband to[d] them,[e]”  
declares the Lord.*

*“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel  
after that time,” declares the Lord.*

*“I will put my law in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.*

*I will be their God,  
and they will be my people”.* (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

The New covenant would surprised the law and instead bring written tablets like the Ten Commandments but God would put His law in people's inward parts and write it on their hearts. So, under the new covenant men and women are super naturally able to please God because they have been given a new nature the purpose of one of the laws was to be a school teacher to lead men and women to Christ and grace by vividly demonstrating that they could not keep the law.





Life is a function and thinking is functionary. People think or imagine so many things but they cannot put them into black and white, unless they are awarded with the gift of writing from the heavenly Father. God blessed me with that gift of writing and I started at the age of seventy. So far, I wrote nine books and “Jerusalem -City of Peace” is the tenth book. The theme of all those books is historical background of the Bible, regarding the events and personalities.

I studied so many books on the Biblical History in America and excited to find new information. I wished to share what all I know with other Bible readers primarily with theological students. So that they too can make use of my books in future as the servants of God. In this connection, “I would like to mention what Francis Bacon said,” Reading maketh a full man conference a ready man and writing an exact man.

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