

# Jewish History

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# **JEWISH HISTORY**

By

**SUNDARA RAO TSAPPIDI**

**PHILIPS PUBLICATIONS**

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Sundara Rao Ts.

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(C) The author

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## A WORD ON THIS OPUS

Bro. Sundrara Rao has been my best friend for over three decades as we have been in the same profession of teaching. In the recent years he has given himself to acquiring Biblical erudition and the result is some books he has penned. His knowledge of the history of Israel is praiseworthy. This present book, JEWISH HISTORY, I'm confident that Christian world will be benefited by reading this wonderful book and educate themselves about God's people-the Israelites in history-yesterday, today and tomorrow.

I'm privileged to give a write-up on this book Bro. Sundara Rao has completed. I find the information in the pages to be profound and useful. The language is so simple that any lay person with some exposure to English will be able to comprehend the contents. His style is easy. All the chapters have a unique presentation juxtaposing the ideas he had wanted to convey. Personally, I have come across the Replacement theology to be nicely incorporated in the context. Chapter six is a very clear presentation of the History of Israel

Many people want to do something but their ideas never come to reality. Some people do something but wouldn't get the acclaim. But Bro Sundara Rao has excelled those and made his vision real and useful to the readers. He deserves our applause.

May our Living Lord bless his endeavors for glory, especially this piece of work. November 12, 2013 in the year out of Lord

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## *My Testimony*

I was born in a village in Prakasem district, Andhra Pradesh on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 1936 and my father was an Evangelist in Lutheran Mission. I did my post graduation in the university of Saugar, in English literature in Madhya Pradesh. After working as a lecturer in different colleges and even as a principal in Cuttack Orissa state. I finally settled in Vijayawada as a lecturer in one of the degree colleges.

Since 1968, God used me for various purposes. I was made treasurer for the Lutheran church Vijayawada one town and served in that post for some years. Then I was taken as a member by the authorities of international conferences like “ICCC,” and “FECCC-” International Council of Christian Churches headed by Dr Carl Macntire of New Jersey, U.S.A. and Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches headed by Dr Rev. Queck from Singapore but I could attend some conferences of both due to my regular job.

God blessed me with three children- two sons and one daughter. The first one became an engineer in U.S.A. but died under mysterious circumstances. The second and third became doctors and they also settled in the U.S.A. I retired from my job in 1994 and from 2000 onwards myself and my wife used to visit our children in the U.S.A. But America is not a suitable place for old people like me regarding climatic conditions and social life. As idle man’s mind is devil’s workshop, many foolish ideas used to come to my mind and one of them was man’s mortality. Then one night I got a dream, a most unusual one.

The dream in nut shell was that I died and went to heaven. There, God received me and caught me by HIS hand. Then we both walked together for about 2 furlongs on a brick red road and the roofs of the houses on either side of the road were also with red brick tiles. At the end of the road, God showed me a beautiful church and told me, “Yours span of life in the material word is not completed”. So, go back to your place, guide the people to read the bible,

and attend the church regularly.” He also advised me to teach people how to pray for their eternal life and glorify God. I suddenly woke up from my dream and found myself on the same bed. Then I thought God had extended my life for some more years like King Hezekiah with some purpose. This dream story took place when I was at the age of 70.

This memorable incident is a turning point in my life. God gave me a chance to visit the Holy Land with my wife. Then, after I returned from that tour, I happened to tell one of my friends what I had seen in Jerusalem and around. He immediately suggested me that I must put all in black and white. I was tempted by his suggestion and prayed to God by shedding tears to grant me the gift of writing and God granted me that. Then, I preferred to pen the historical background of some personalities and incidents in the bible. So far, I have written 5 books and the sixth one is getting ready. They are 1.The Legacy of God’s People 2. Quest for the Living God 3.Offsprings from the Tabernacle 4.The Redemption Plan of God and the title for the fifth book is “The Everlasting Kingdom of God” And the Name of the Sixth book is Jewish History.

My prime aim of writing this biblical history is that the matter maybe useful to theological students and young preachers to know more about the history behind the characters and the events in the bible. In addition to all this, I built a church in a village near Vijayawada for a good congregation with my pension money and it’s name is “Jehovah-ji-reh.” Another church is under construction in the village of my Grand Father Near Markapur, Prakasham District. It is in memory of my eldest son who died three years back in the U.S.A.

Then, two years ago, God prompted me to visit an elementary boarding school that I studied 65 years ago. I was surprised to see the pathetic condition of the students, probably my third generation and provided them with decent clothes and Christmas dinner with some support of UECF from New Jersey, U.S.A. Some interesting believers are reading my books in some countries in their computers through [WWW.UECF.NET](http://WWW.UECF.NET), (United Evangelical Christian Fellowship), a non-denominational church and I am a member of that church.

When I began my sixth book with the title “Jewish History” I actually became weak and lost some more eye sight. Then my Grand Son an eleven year old boy Sohan Simon Koduri came to rescue to help me per typing the articles, for telling me correct spellings for certain words when I could not see at all. To speak the truth I could not have published my sixth book without his help. He did the maximum help which is beyond his age. Though he is my Grand child I sincerely extend my thanks to him and pray for his prosperous life. He is really God fearing boy from the age.

Now I am seventy-seven years old, still praying God to give me strength and good health, so that I can glorify Him through my books in future to the best of my ability basing on the dictum “Service to Humanity is service to Divinity.” May God bless us all.

Yours in Christ,

SUNDARARAO TSAPPIDI



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## *How Dark the Night Is?*

The word “Anti-semitism” is a very ugly one, and people are afraid of using that word at any time. Still it remains with people as a bad dream. Many people like historians, social scientists, philosophers, and theologians were asked to explain the exact meaning of that term called “semitism”. It was as old and ancient as Abraham, the father of Jewish people. According to biblical history, many races like Amorites, Egyptians, Amalekities, Assyrians, Phoenicians, Philistines, Babylonians, Persians, and Macedonians tried to plunder and harass the children of Jacob. In fact, all these nations experienced the chastisement of God, and with some exceptions of antiquity persecuted the Jewish people that are no more at present.

After the death of Jesus Christ, the Anti-semitism is not only continued, but also intensified. The people that were antagonistic to Jews happened to be Roman soldiers, Islamic fanatics, Christian crusaders, Spanish inquisitors, Russian cassacks, Nazi S.S. troops, and in recent years, Palestinian terrorists. No nation, race, or religion experienced such continuous harassment or persecution for centuries in the world except Jewish people who were the direct descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Another wonderful thing in this case is that in spite of many hurdles and persecution, the Jewish people are still in existence. Actually, God Himself prepared a formula for destroying the Jewish race.

At the same time, God defended His chosen people by saying that if humanity could destroy the sun, moon, and stars, then only they would be able to destroy Israel. But as long as the heavenly bodies are in existence, Israel’s nation also remains in existence. This wonderful statement of God about His chosen people, is praiseworthy even though they forgot Him. The universal dispersion of Jewish people with their continuous persecution was prophesied about 1,500 years ago by prophet Moses before it came to pass. “And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even

unto the other, and there, thou shalt serve other gods which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease neither shall the sole of the foot have rest, but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart and falling of eyes and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night and shalt have none assurance of thy life.....” (Deuteronomy 28:64-66).

Even after the death of Jesus Christ, the enmity between Jews and Roman rulers continued for 40 years more. The Jews tried to rebel against the Roman rulers as they did against the Greeks about 200 years before. Someone from the Roman rulers tried to loot the temple and interfere with the worship on Mount Moriah. So, when the Jews tried to rebel against the Romans, General Titus was set by the authorities. The Jews were crushed, and as a result, they took shelter behind the city’s strong walls of Jerusalem.

As Jesus predicted 40 years earlier on the Mount of Olives that the temple would be destroyed without a stone upon stone, that prophecy was fulfilled in 70 A.D. under the leadership of Titus. The city of Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Romans. They ruined the temple, the sacrifice system was terminated, and the priesthood ended. As Jesus predicted, not even one stone was left upon the other. And the final result of that war was thousands of Jews crucified, many were sold as slaves, and many fled to different nations to save themselves. So to say, the worldwide dispersion, or scattering, had begun.

The remnants of Jews stayed in their places, only to surrender themselves to Romans instead of going to strange places to face all kinds of harassment or hardship. After 65 years that is in 135 A.D., those remaining Jews could take off the yoke of Roman oppression one more time. Then it was on that occasion a highly esteemed Rabbi, Akiba, came to lime light as a long promised messiah and a deliverer of Jews from the clutches of Romans. With Rabbinic sanction, a great number of Israelites joined their hands to fight against the hated Romans. The situation was so pathetic that about a half-million Israelite men, women,

and children were killed in that battle. Rabbi Akiba was also captured, then tortured, and finally killed. The whole city of Jerusalem, where the house of God was in existence, was leveled and ploughed over. Then the Romans built a city of their own by name “AeliaCapitdina”, and Jews were not allowed to step into that city and whoever trespassed, the punishment was death. But in 476 A.D. after a few centuries, the Roman power began to decline due to corruption and other mistakes. Just at that time in the deserts of Arabia, a new religion came into existence. The founder of that religion was Mohammed, otherwise known as Prophet Mohammad.

He visited Mecca and Medina, then he understood clearly the word of God in both Judaism and Christianity. He finally wrote his own book to Muslims called “ The Quran”. It is the holy book of the Islamic faith with Ishmael rather than Isaac, the son of Abraham to be sacrificed by him. Then in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the followers of Mohammad left Arabia and attacked some places like Persia (the modern Iran), then southern France, and Israel also they conquered many nations.

In some places of Jerusalem where Abraham tried to sacrifice his only begotten son, Isaac, to God on the Mount Moriah, the place where King Solomon built the Temple of God and Herodiam; all these places were taken by the Muslims during their regime. Then they built the Dome of the Rock, a place according to Islamic teaching, Mohammad went to heaven from that place only. They built “AL AQSA”, the mosque which was considered to be the most sacred place after Mecca and Medina. All this happened when Muslims were in power. They occupied the places of Jews and made them their own. Now, continuous struggle and misunderstanding has been going on between the Jews and Muslims today in Jerusalem. The Muslims were in power for about 5 centuries, and then came the Crusaders.

The Crusaders in Europe thought about the Holy Land, how it was in the hands of Muslims. They wanted to do something to the Jewish nation. They were under the leadership of “Richard Lionheart” at that time. They

launched an attack against Israel in 1099 A.D. Their aim was to liberate Israel from the cruel hands of the enemy. So, those Crusaders, with their armies, marched toward the Holy Land from Europe because they were under the impression that if they do anything good for the people of God, they would secure a place in heaven. This idea prompted them to come all the way from Europe to Israel, the Promised Land. But they killed, raped, and robbed the Jews on the way while passing through some villages. Finally, the first batch of Crusaders reached the Holy Land. These people, in their eagerness, wished to cleanse the Holy Land, which was polluted for centuries. They rounded up as many Jews as possible, pushed them into the synagogue, and killed men, women, and children with fire. By this act, they cleansed the Holy Land, but also for the salvation of the sick and sinned in the world.

After they entered Israel, they controlled her for about 100 years. Then, they were also driven out by the troops of Saladin the Magnificent from the east. The Holy Land was continuously drenched in blood until it was captured by the Ottoman Turk in 1516. In his rule, the land owners were heavily taxed, basing on the number of trees they possessed in their lands. So as to reduce the tax amount, they began to cut down the trees, they even cut the trees in the forest and made it barren. These conditions did not stop the wars. In the year 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte of France came with a powerful army and entered Israel through Egypt with the confidence of destroying the Ottoman's Turkish empire. But he was miserably defeated in a place called modern Heifa and returned to France.

This ancient land had her own historical and biblical importance and glory in the days of King David and King Solomon, and many other kings ruled with the banner of Davidic dynastic rulers. It was also the birthplace of the son of God and the son of man. Such a great nation lost all her pomp and glory because she was ruled by heathens only for many centuries. It remained as a small town surrounded by almost ruined villages. Then it was just ruled by a governor appointed by the Sultan in Turkey. For many centuries, this

Holy Land was governed by Romans, Muslims, Crusaders, Saracens, and Turks. This promised land, where the house of God was built, where the son of God was born, where the glory of the omnipotent pervaded such a spiritual center of the world was looked down upon by all types of heathens. They misused the land, they abused the land, and they persecuted the land. All these dynasties ruled this land according to their whims and fancies. They had gone and they were no more. But the Jews, God's chosen people, remained in that land by bearing all kinds of atrocities because it was a chosen land of their forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The heathen rulers, particularly Assyrians and Romans, made them scatter into many nations, and they lived an ignominious life for centuries in those strange places.

### ***Spreading of Persecution***

The atrocities and persecution committed by various people upon Jews and the Holy Land were remarkable and beyond comprehension. In the year 1096, as many as 12,000 Jews were killed in Germany within three months. Many Jews were banished from England in 1290. In 1306 also Jews were banished from France. Then, in 1348, Jews were blamed for the spreading of European plague that caused the death of many. The year 1492 was very important in American history because Christopher Columbus, a world famous adventurer, discovered America. In the same year, Ferdinand and Isabella wanted to make Spain a completely Catholic nation. So, with that motive the Spanish inquisition compelled all the Jews in that country to take Baptism and convert themselves into Catholics. If not, they would be either killed or imprisoned or driven out of their country. By this means, they were necked out from country to country. And in their journey also, there was no safety for them as they were met by highway robbers and murderers. False news was also spread that the Jews were killing the children of Gentiles and used their blood for the observance of Passover. In some places, they were asked to wear badges to identify themselves as Jews.

The women were also forced to use bells at the bottom of their dresses as a mark of shame. In 1516, Jews were clubbed together and placed in a ghetto in Venice within the restricted area, and it deprived of normal facilities to them like food and water to survive. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the largest Jewish population in the world was found in Russia, and in 1883 the government permitted an infamous program. It is said more than 500 villages were victimized through about 1200 programs, and more than 60,000 Jews were killed and many more of that number wounded. This elimination program reached its climax between 1933 and 1945, the greatest genocide in the world history. It was the time of World War II. The Satanic empowered Adolf Hitler of Germany, snuffed about 6 million Jews in the death camps, gas chambers, and firing squad. The Jews experienced the life of hell in his hands. No government nor any country tried for the immigration of the Jewish people. No country opened her gates or borders for the entry of those people. At that time, the Jews shouted and cried bitterly because God had forsaken them and left them in the air. No country had shown even an iota of sympathy toward them. For 1,900 years these words “No Jews Wanted” must have been written by most of the nations of the world at their borders.

### ***Anti-semitism or Twisted Theology***

The only accurate explanation for anti-semitism is to be found in the fact that God sovereignly chose Israel through her greatest son to be the channel for universal blessing and the ultimate defeat of Satan. To retaliate, the secret purpose of Satan, therefore, has always been to destroy the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and thereby frustrate the divine plan for redemption of mankind. This is the fundamental principle for understanding 4,000 years of human history.

Then what was done by the Jewish people? Or what might be their crime? And why should there be everlasting persecution that has been going on them? Some scholars were of the opinion that it was nothing but the national rejection of acknowledging Jesus Christ as the Messiah and then lack

of correct understanding of the word of God. This is the worst type of anti-semitism. Some people suggested that the hating of the sons of Jacob was the main reason, which is the part of their strange religion. When polytheism was given more importance as they believed in one God. Their dietary laws, their strange dress, their code of conduct, and their aloofness from all people in the society, all these points caused to look at them as strangers and defenseless people. Another set of people argued that the Jews' peculiar character, excessive wealth, and great influence among other people are the root causes for the hatred of them. There are many people in the society with ungodly attitude, and they bring shame to the name of Christ by calling themselves Christians.

Jesus Christ is not a usurper of anything like Satan, who usurped the Earth to rule over. God sent Him only on two purposes, to heal the sick of all diseases and to spread the word of God. So as to achieve a place in the kingdom of God, He will return to this Earth for the second time as the rightful heir to the throne of David. He will be according to prophecy The King of Jews, The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords and, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah." Satan has been using his power from the beginning of the Creation to do some harm to God's people, or His believers, as he could not take revenge directly against Him. He has been taking revenge against people by interfering in the government politics, religious affairs, and individual matters. And with the same Satanic influence, the Crusaders, programs, inquisitions, ghettos, burnings, and butchering are being done. Though the Jews were oppressed at all levels, they could withstand everything miraculously and kept their identity. The strong belief of Jews upon God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob prompted them to survive. With the mercy of omnipotent God; they faced two World Wars and yet returned to their motherland safely. They stumbled for many centuries and stumbled out of them.

### ***Can Bones come to Life?***

Prophet Ezekiel looked at the Valley which was full of bones. He went on looking at them with utter disbelief, whether they could have life again.

The bones seemed to be very dry, which indicated they were very old ones. They were not very few, but the Valley was full of them. As he went on looking at the heaps of bones with a prophesied mind, God posed a question to that devoted servant. "Can these Bones live?" (Ezekiel 37:3.) The prophet Ezekiel was no doubt a man of deep faith. So his response was simply, "O Lord God, Thou knowest." He said to God, "These bones look dead to me, humanly speaking I don't see how they could possibly live, this is not a case of curing the sick, but raising the dead. But Lord, you cast the stars into space, you spoke the world into existence, you fashioned man from the dust of Earth. If you want these bones to live they can live, O God! thou knowest."

Then the prophet prophesied and he was commanded, "There was a noise, and behold, a shaking and the bones came together bone to his bone, and when I beheld lo the sinews and flesh came up upon them and the skin covered them about, but there was no breath in them." (Ezekiel 37:7-8). It is quite clear that nobody can question about that miraculous show because God Himself, answered in the most wonderful way. He said the dry bones symbolized the despised Jews driven away from the Promised Land in 70 A.D. and again in 135 A.D. by the Romans. As a result they were scattered among many nations of the world, so the nation of Israel died physically as well as spiritually and lay deep in the grave. The noise, the shaking, the coming of the bones together, the sinews, and the flesh coming upon them, spoke of Israelites' physical Resurrection, and restoration to their homeland. But the restoration would be unbelievable because there was no breathe in them that means that there is no life in them. It is also clearly said in the Bible that Israelites' physical restoration to that homeland must precede their spiritual regeneration in the land.

So an urgent requisite thing in the end time events is that Israelites' must be prevented from their disbelief in God and making a covenant with the anti- Christ. According to Biblical History, the Jews were taken as captives by Babylonians in three stages and returned home in three stages over a period

of 91 years. The first batch came under the leadership of Zerubbabel who was appointed as a governor in 536 B.C., then the second batch came under the leadership of EZRA in 458 B.C., and the third batch came under the leadership of Nehemiah in 445 B.C.

The Romans who ill-treated and persecuted innocent Jews ruled them from 63 B.C. to 320 A.D. They were supplanted by Byzantines who ruled the eastern part of the Roman Empire after it was divided and Constantinople was their capital. They did something good to the Jewish nation but were defeated by Arabs in 436 A.D. These Arabs continued their rule until they were unseated by Seljuks (The Turkish Dynasty) in 1072 A.D. Then came the Christian Crusaders from England, France, and Germany and wrestled the power from Seljuks in 1099 A.D. They were defeated by the Mamluks (Egyptians) in 1187. It became a continuous process the coming of one Dynasty after another and the next change fell on the Ottoman Turks in 1516. These Turks kicked out Mamluks and ruled unrivaled for about 400 years and they were also dethroned by the British government in 1917 A.D.

All the above said people came and ruled Israel with some evil intention and God knew it. He dethroned them one after another at the appropriate time. But these Jewish people wandered like vagabonds or gypsies as they scattered among the nations and led their pathetic lives for about 19 centuries till they got independence in 1948. Only after that the omnipotent and all-knowing God planned to bring them back from all nations to their ancient native land. Actually, no one can give the exact date when the dry bones began to make noise in Ezekiel's Valley. After thorough examination it was decided upon 1897 logically. Added to that the suitable occasion was the first Zionist congress convened at Basel, Switzerland. The luminous figure at that time was Dr. Theodore Huze who said later, "At Basel I laid the foundation of Jewish state." After 5 or perhaps 50 years everybody will realize it.

It was really a strange statement. Even then, amazingly and exactly after 50 years that is in 1947, the U.N.O. has separated Palestine and Israel and both were declared independence. But the anti-semitic fever which had been fanned by the Dreyfeus caused a shock to Herzl and European jury. He felt very angry at that and wrote a pamphlet “Der Judenstaat” (the Jewish state), calling for a homeland to the wandering Jewish people. It appeared that God was in it for His people. Because of the importance of the contents, the pamphlet was translated into many languages in large numbers and the result of that, the first Zionist congress was convened. MaxNordeu, one of the distinguished delegates of the congress, prepared a document regarding the aims of Zionists. The opening statement was an acquired definition of Zionism. According to him, Zionism wanted to establish a home for Jews in Palestine basing on the law. Unfortunately, the Jewish people were facing many problems regarding their nation from the very beginning. It is paradoxical that many Jews opposed to have a state of their own homeland as it would ignore the new waves of anti-semitism. Some Jewish people prepared to have a new homeland in Palestine because they could not achieve that as Palestine was in the control of Ottoman of Turkey at that time. Many suggestions were made for the establishment of a state in places like Argentina, North America, the Sinai Peninsula, and Uganda. These proposals were examined and finally rejected.

At the end, the invisible divine’s magnetic power over their homeland was invincible, and it would come into existence. In spite of different opinions about Herzl, he went to the Sultan of Turkey and offered him money to purchase some land for the formation of Jewish nations in Palestine because it was in Turk’s control at that time. For Herzl’s trouble of asking the Sultan a piece of land, he offered three medals of honor, but no land. Still, this man (Herzl) with piercing eyes of a prophet who once commented, “If you will it, it is no dream,” pressed on as if possessed. It is really strange and wonderful how some Jews opposed to have a homeland and some others wished to have it fully with the divine understanding. The Jews used to feel that possessing a

house was not an ordinary thing in Jerusalem. In spite of many hurdles, Dr. Herzl and some other important persons of different nations tried for the establishment of a homeland to the Jewish people. Another important thing in the study of Dr. Herzl was that in his home library, there was a special Bible presented to him by Mr. A Holland Surrey England on August 24, 1900. While presenting, it was written on the fly leaf of the Bible by Mr. Holland: See Ezekiel's chapters 36 to 39 (which speak glowingly of the resurrection of the land of Israel and the restoration of the people to the land). On the second fly leaf, Mr. Holland had written references to Isaiah chapter 53 (which describes the fact of Messiah's death) and Daniel 9:25-27 (which foretells the death of Messiah) and the New Testament fulfillment in Matthew 26 and 27. And what must be particularly meaningful to the author, or the words inscribed for the presentation to Dr. Herzl- Kindly accept these Old and New Testaments, His pure word from a lover of Israel, God's ancient people. May the God of Israel guide you and your helpers in the work of deliverance.

The result of World War I was that Palestine fell into the hands of the British government in 1917 from the Turkish rule. General Almeyby was a God-fearing and staunch believer and a lover of Israel, captured the holy city also without firing a shot. Before he actually attacked the city, he humbly requested the believers to go to England and pray continuously for 3 days. While his army was approaching the city of Jerusalem, the Arab defenders simply threw down their weapons and fled for their safety. General Almeyby, in great humility, dismounted and walked into the city while entering. He faithfully declared that he did not want to rule as a conquering hero, the city of Jerusalem, but his savior would one day return to become King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

One day, a group of Galilean farmers went to the British bank in Jerusalem. They wanted to get a loan from the bank for the eradication of malaria-infected areas in their places. The bank people looked into the application, but rejected it. One of the farmers was a Jew, and he knew the

bank president was a Christian who believed in the Bible. So he directed the president to the book of Ezekiel and read a few lines, “For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and swon” (Ezekiel 36:9). Then the Jewish farmer asked the Christian bank president, “What is that his God is referring to?” The banker said that the farmer was referring to the land of Israel, and in that context God is saying, “I am for you.” The farmer quickly answered and said they needed some money to drain the swamp and work on the soil. The president then consulted the other members in the bank, and the loan was granted. And today, that Huleh Valley stands as one of the spectacular agricultural achievements of the modern state of Israel.

In Jerusalem today, Hadaseah Hospital is considered one of the finest in the Middle East, and the medicines were also prepared with advanced science and technology, to say, comparable to the best in the world. But about fifty years ago (before the advent of modern nation), there was very little hospital care in Israel, except some good treatment from the Christian centers. The Christians treated both Jews and Arabs in the name of Jesus Christ. Israel’s army exhibited her quality, courage, and dedication to her nation. But the man who trained Israelites in the gorilla warfare and night fighting was a British officer, and his name was Orde Wingate. He was also a God-fearing man. In one hand, he carried a rifle, and in the other hand, the Holy Bible. He always carried the Bible literally and believed in God. Wingate was convinced that God intended Palestine should be the homeland to the Jews. Even today, the old generation of Jews in Israel remember Wingate with love and affection for his contributions to the nation. They also remembered him for the agricultural school which was named after him. Even today, there are many streets in Israel on his name.

While there were some Jews who vehemently opposed Dr. Herzl for the formation of a new homeland for them, there was another group who boldly stood and supported Herzl for a separate state. One among such persons was Chaim Weizmann. These two, Herzl and Chaim Weizmann, were responsible

for the formation of the new modern state of Israel. Chaim Weizmann particularly worked for the cause of Zionism from his early days. He helped the British government regarding the war weapons also. When the British authorities expressed their gratitude and wished to honor him, he wholeheartedly said, "Nothing for me, but for my people a homeland in Palestine." At last, the constant effort of both Dr. Herzl and Dr. Weizmann became fruitful.

The historic British Balfour declaration of November 2, 1917 was as follows-

His Majesty government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country. As mentioned already, twenty years earlier, the delegates at the first Zionist congress expressed their willingness for establishing a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine. The most powerful nation, Great Britain, also agreed for that. The bones, which had begun to make a noise two decades earlier, were now beginning to "shake and come together." Then, in 1922, five years after the "Balfour declaration," the international body gave a mandate to Great Britain to establish a homeland for the Jews. Now, "sinews and flesh" are beginning to cover those dead bones.

It was the time Dr. Herzl and his followers were seeking for the recognition of Jewish state. Just at that time, thousands of Jews who were being persecuted in Russia, Poland, and other countries returned to their mother land. But they were surprised to see the land completely barren, desolate, deserted, and malaria-infested. That stage was explained by a popular writer, Mark Twain, about one hundred years ago. He said, "There is not a solitary village throughout its whole extent more than thirty miles in either direction.

There are two or three clusters of bedowin tents, but not a single permanent habitation. One may ride for ten miles hereabouts and not see human beings.”

The long issue of providing a homeland to Jewish people was put before the United Nations at last on November 14, 1947. The members reacted and voted for the partition of Palestine and establish a home state for Jews. Finally, on May 8, 1948, David Ben Gurion, the first prime-minister of Israel, confirmed the nation. Then, in his emotional speech, declared Israel as a free and independent nation among the nations of the world. And also, the bones which Ezekiel saw prophetically 2,500 years ago had made a “noise, they shook, the bones came together, and the sinews and flesh came upon them at last, the bones stood upon their feet.” But there is still one genuine doubt lingering in the minds of many; whether the standing bones that represent Jewish people can surprise the political history of Islamic nations.

and attend the church regularly.” He also advised me to teach people how to pray for their eternal life and glorify God. I suddenly woke up from my dream and found myself on the same bed. Then I thought God had extended my life for some more years like King Hezekiah with some purpose. This dream story took place when I was at the age of 70.

This memorable incident is a turning point in my life. God gave me a chance to visit the Holy Land with my wife. Then, after I returned from that tour, I happened to tell one of my friends what I had seen in Jerusalem and around. He immediately suggested me that I must put all in black and white. I was tempted by his suggestion and prayed to God by shedding tears to grant me the gift of writing and God granted me that. Then, I preferred to pen the historical background of some personalities and incidents in the bible. So far, I have written 5 books and the sixth one is getting ready. They are 1.The Legacy of God’s People 2. Quest for the Living God 3.Offsprings from the Tabernacle 4.The Redemption Plan of God and the title for the fifth book is “The Everlasting Kingdom of God” And the Name of the Sixth book is Jewish History.

My prime aim of writing this biblical history is that the matter maybe useful to theological students and young preachers to know more about the history behind the characters and the events in the bible. In addition to all this, I built a church in a village near Vijayawada for a good congregation with my pension money and it’s name is “Jehovah-ji-reh.” Another church is under construction in the village of my Grand Father Near Markapur, Prakasham District. In memory of my eldest son who died three years back in the U.S.A.

Then, two years ago, God prompted me to visit an elementary boarding school that I studied 65 years ago. I was surprised to see the pathetic condition of the students, probably my third generation and provided them with decent clothes and Christmas dinner with some support of UECF from New Jersey, U.S.A. Some interesting believers are reading my books in some countries in their computers through [WWW.UECF.NET](http://WWW.UECF.NET), (United Evangelical Christian Fellowship), a non-denominational church and I am a member of that church.

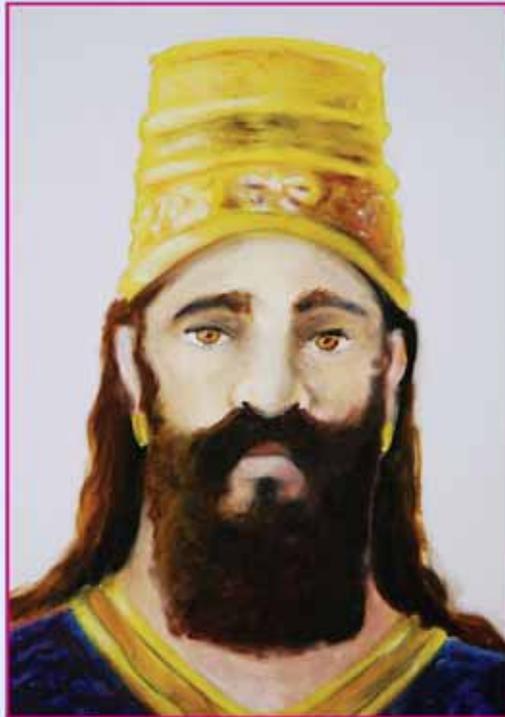
When I began my sixth book with the title “Jewish History” I actually became weak and lost some more eye sight. Then my Grand Son an eleven year old boy Sohan Simon Koduri came to rescue to help me per typing the articles, for telling me correct spellings for certain word when I could not see at all. To speak the truth I could not have published my sixth book without his help. He did the maximum help which is beyond his age. Though he is my Grand child I sincerely extend my thanks to him and pray for his prosperous life. He is really God fearing boy from the age.

Now I am seventy-seven years old, still praying for God me strength and good health, so that I can glorify Him through my books in future to the best of my ability basing on the dictum “Service to Humanity is service to Divinity.” May God bless us all.

Yours in Christ,

SUNDARARAO TSAPPIDI





King Nebuchadnezzar

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City of Jerusalem 2



Martin Luther



Emperor Constantine

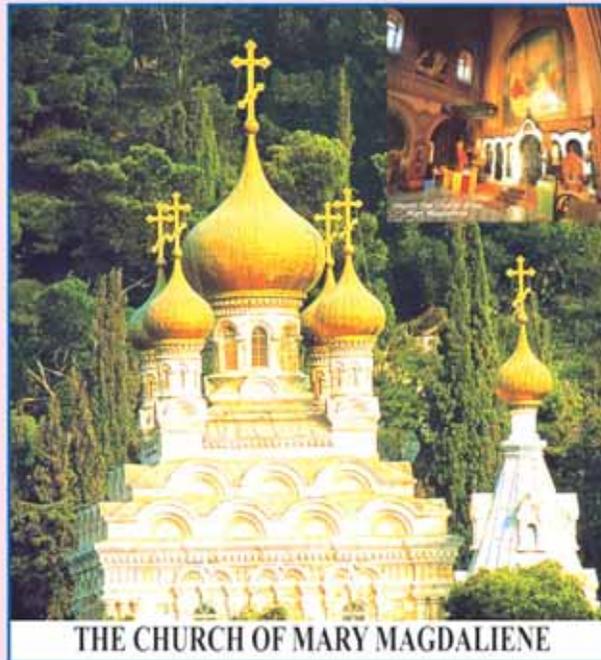


Prophet Ezekiel

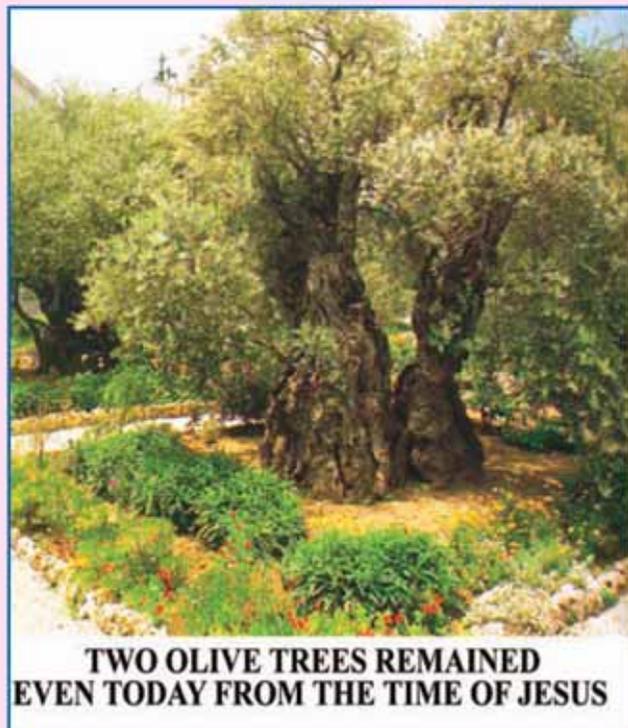


Millennial Kingdom

## Mountain Ranges of Moriah



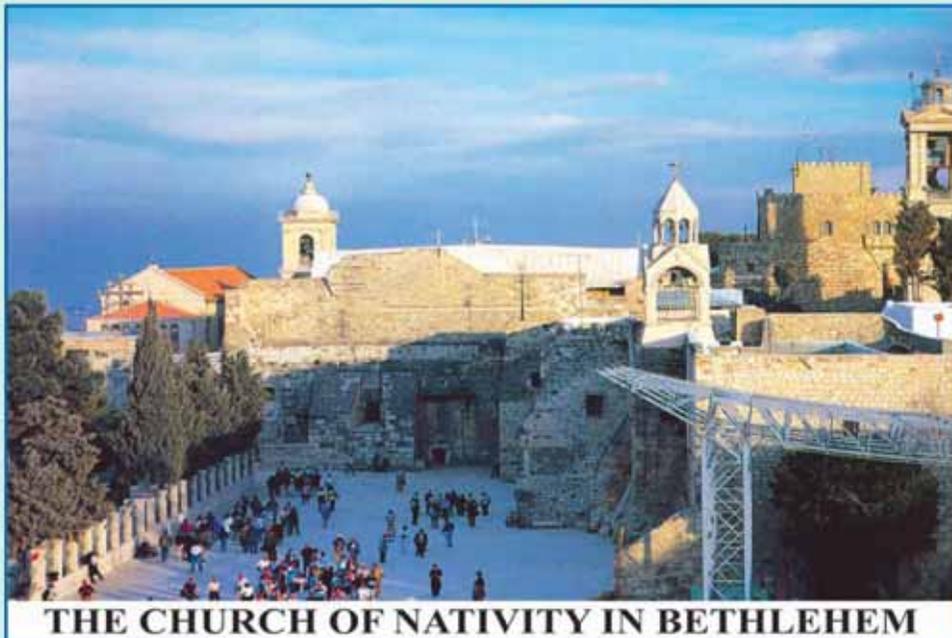
## Gethsemane Garden



## Nazareth



## Bethlehem

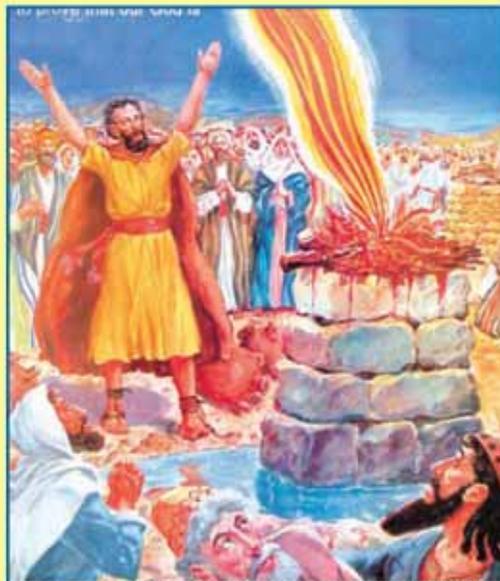


## The Dead Sea or Salt Sea



**THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK FLOATS ON THE WATER OF THE DEAD SEA HOLDING A BOOK**

## Israel in the Past



**THIS IS THE CHALLENGING TEST TO ELIJAH BEFORE 450 HEATHEN PRIESTS TO PROVE THAT OUR GOD IS THE REAL GOD**

# *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 latter 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 has 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 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 are "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 wipe out 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 45<sup>th</sup> 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 51<sup>st</sup> rank among the nations in land mass. Again, Israel ranks 14<sup>th</sup> as far as land weapons are concerned. She has acquired an extraordinary 5<sup>th</sup> rank in total aircrafts and 15<sup>th</sup> 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 evil-doers, 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 skewel faith as- “Brothern, 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 taste 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 spouses when they commit adultery for themselves are 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 10<sup>th</sup> (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 who is sexually open to get rid of the negative connotation of the world. 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 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 7.9 million 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, 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 withholden 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 these 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, having seen 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 besiege 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 unwarred 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 round about and will be the glory in the midst of her.” (Zechariah 2.4-5)

# *Jewish history*

There are ten important events mentioned below which changed the entire Jewish history. They are-

1. Abraham and his family members, left Mesopotamia and traveled to Canaan. They were led by the promise of God that Abraham would become the father of a great nation.
2. Moses led Israelites out of bondage from Egypt and then received the Ten Commandments at the “mount Sinai”. The Israelites after wandering for forty years in the desert reached Canaan the promised land.
3. King David established his capital in Jerusalem after defeating Jebusites and his son Solomon built Gods Temple on the mount Zion, one of the mountain ranges of mount Moriah.
4. God cursed Solomon for his sins and as a result the Israel nation was divided into two, the kingdom of Judah with two tribes and the kingdom of Israel with ten tribes. Then the Israel kingdom was destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 BC. The outcome of that attack was many Israelites happened to be taken as prisoners and in course time they almost disappeared.
5. The kingdom of Judah with the two tribes was also conquered by the Babylonians, and they were taken as captives still they remained stronger for their existence.
6. The Greek culture threatened to destroy Judaism. The Mecabeans staged a revolt and claimed the temple.
7. The Romans vanquished Jerusalem and destroyed the second temple as the Jews were in exile.
8. The Jews in Western Europe were emancipated and given full-fledged citizenship after centuries of persecution.
9. The holocaust claimed the lives of 6 million Jewish people and threatened to destroy their culture in European countries.

10. And finally the creation of the new nation by the British government encouraged all Jews around the world to return to their home land after about two millennial.

The history of Jews was started with the life of Abraham the patriarch about four thousand years ago along with other nomadic Hebrew tribal leaders. They came from Mesopotamia and wandered through the land of canaan. They finally settled in Egypt. There is not much authentic record about their early life. But the only two sources are the bible and archeological findings to know about them to certain degree. No one can say exactly when the Jewish history began on the planet. But it is believed their civilization germinated in the Middle East. It is otherwise known as the Fertile Crescent geographically. This crescent was a fertile agriculture area surrounded by desert. That area was also covered by four great rivers like the Nile in Egypt to the east, and the land was nourished by Tigres Euphrates Rivers.

According to the archeological survey the human beings settled down in the farm land around 5 thousand BC in the region between Tigres and the Euphrates rivers. It was also called Mesopotamia (parts of modern -day Iraq and Turkey). Finally there was a wonderful progress in agriculture that led and paved the way for the formation of new powerful city states. It is said in this region, the early Hebrews were traced. Abraham was born in one of such cities namely “Ur” and also known as “ur kas dem”, (ur of the chaldees) In the southern part of Mesopotamia probably, between 1850 -1800 BC. His father was Terah who gave him the name Abram when he was still young. His father moved from that UR and went to another city called Haran in north Mesopotamia with his family. And in this Haran city Abram grew to manhood.

For archeologists the existence of “ur kas dem” remained as a mystery for centuries but only in nineteenth century the archeologists began to excavate this ancient city. “Ur” which was one of the major cities of ancient Sumer, an empire that became noted in ancient southern Mesopotamia until it fell into the hands of Babylonians. Abram’s father Terah was a semitic merchant of

idols but Abram was no way concerned with idols or idol worship. It so happened one day he went to the shop of his father and smashed all the idols except the biggest one. His father came to know that and demanded an explanation for what he had done. He cleverly made a plan and said that the biggest one destroyed all of them. But the father replied they would never do such things as they were idols and had no life in them to move. Abram seized the opportunity and questioned his father. Why he should worship such lifeless idols when they had no power and could not move? This incident opened the eyes of Abram and an instant change was seen in him.

The Same legendary story made him to think seriously about the heavenly bodies and their functioning. He thought that there must be some power in heaven controlling all these heavenly bodies and other things. He created and finally concluded as that power must be the God. This thinking eventually took him close to God and in his later days God used to talk to him frequently. So Abram finally became a strong believer of God. And the God loved him most. And in his later years he was abruptly blessed by God. Basing on the faith of Abraham there were three religions that became monotheistic in the world today. They were Judaism, Christianity and Islam. And the believers of these three faiths must always be thankful to Abram.

We see in the bible how God asked Abraham to leave his home land and family members and go to canaan where He would make him father of a great nation. God also said He would bless him and his descendants. As mentioned in the book of Genesis God said “go forth from your native land and from your father’s house and I will make of you a great nation and curse him that curses you and all the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you. Abraham simply obeyed God and that is how the covenant between God and Abram (the Jewish people and established their kingdom. Gods promised to Abraham included the land of canaan also. So it was called the promised land to his descendants

God was very clear in keeping boundaries of the land, that stretched from the river of Egypt to the river of Euphrates including the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Canaanites, the Gergashites and the Jebusites. Abram left the city of Haran and went toward West, followed by his wife Sarai, his brother's son Lot, including all cattle and servants. Due to his wanderings Abram was called a nomad and he touched Egypt also on his way to Canaan. He was blessed abundantly as far as property was concerned but no children till that age.

One day three strangers (called angels) visited Abram. He invited them warmly into his tent and gave them good dinner also. They came to him on two purposes. The first one was to inform him about the destruction of two notorious cities, namely Sodom and Gomorah for their wickedness, but they would save his relative Lot and his family for his righteousness. They also said that Abram was going to have a son soon. While Lot was leaving the wicked city Sodom, his wife out of curiosity looked back and became a pillar of salt. Abram tried all means to save those two cities with argument but in vain. As time went on both of them grew older and Abram had a doubt about the promise of God regarding the children. They waited almost 25 years by honouring the promise of God for children. Then Sarai got a clear idea. She wanted to make Hagar the wife of her husband for the purpose of a son, though she was a servant maid. Accordingly it was done and Hagar got a son through Abram. Hagar was the daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt. The king happened to give his daughter to Abram, when he visited Egypt on his way to Canaan. Anyway Abram got a son through Hagar and he gave the name Ishmael to the boy.

And God reminded Abram that Ishmael was not part of his promise. The issue of the birth of Ishmael to a servant maid was not taken seriously because polygamy (having more than one wife) was common in those days. Later Hagar and Ishmael were sent out of Abram's house and finally Ishmael

became the father of Arabnations. The Arabs traced their lineage from Ishmael, a descendant of Abram. As a matter of fact the legendery story of Hagar and Ishmael is quit conspicuous in the sacred book of Quran. As said Muslim legend Hagar and Ishmael took refuge in the desert at a particular site which has become now the holy city of Mecca.

God made a covenant with Abram that he would have a son through his wife Sarai whose name would be Isaac. Then through his descentantes many nations had to be formed and as a result Abram would be called Abraham, the father of many nations. About his wife Sarai means “My princes” and in Hebrew language Sarah means “The princes”. As a sign of covenant which took place between God and Abraham, God proclaimed that in all ages the male child should be circumcised at the age of eight days. The act of circumcison also became a binding over Abraham after Isaac was born. There fore, Abraham too underwent this circumcison at the age of ninety – nine. So, this circumcison became the symbol of covenant between God and Abraham and all his descendants. Finally it became a regular practice among the Jews in all generations even to – day.

Circumcision or “brit milah” is one of the jewish oldest traditions. The ceremony would take place after eight days of the birth of a baby boy. It has become a regular special occasion among the jewish families because from that day on words the boy would be enrolled as a member in that covenant along with all others. At last the promise of God to Abraham and Sarah regarding the son also became fruitful. Sarah was conceived and begot a son. She delivered him at a place called “Beersheba”. The boy was named Isaac or “Yitzchak” (it is a Hebrew word for laughter) because Sarah laughed when she heard through the Angels that she would conceive and beget a son in that old-age, and also the name Isaac reflected the joy of Abraham as he became a father after a long time.

Isaac appeared to be a weak person as we find in the Bible. One of the most astonishing stories in the Bible is the Torah the sacrifice of Isaac. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his only son by taking him to a place that He would show. The fact is God wanted to test the faith and obedience of Abraham. He was actually the father of faithfulness. He took his son without telling anything against the command of God, on to the mount moriah. Then, when he was about to sacrifice Isaac, God again told him to stop and provided a ram for the sacrifice. Isaac reached manhood and Abraham sent his servant to his old place called Haran to find out a wife to his son. The servant brought Rebecca the sister of Laban. Isaac and Rebecca were married and Rebecca became pregnant with twins. It is said that they were fighting in the mothers womb itself and that became more intensified after they were born.

Abraham died at the age of 175 years and was buried in a tomb near to Sarah in a village which is now called the city of Hebron. After his death Isaac automatically became the next patriarch of the jewish people. Though Esau and Jacob were born as twins, there was no much difference in their attitude. Esau the elder son was hairy and a man of action. He liked hunting and he was adopted to that kind of life, whereas Jacob the younger son was a smooth skinned and more spiritual by nature. He would contemplate more before taking any action. There was a serious competition between Esau and Jacob, because Isaac loved the elder son Esau whereas Rebecca loved Jacob the younger son. The elder son had every right for all things including the blessings of his father. But according to some Biblicil commentators Esau was not much interested in such things.

Esau never thought seriously about the importance of birth right. Yet on one occasion he was forced to surrender his birth right to his brother when he was hungry. It was just for a bowl of red stew. He thought that possission of birth right was not at all important when a person was dying of hunger. On the virge of death, Isaac became blind and could not distinguish who was who. In such conditions Jacob received all the blessings from his father by playing a

trick. Then he anticipated some danger from Esau and went to Haran to the house of his mother's brother Laban. Jacob deceived his brother twice so far. He snatched away the birth right of Esau by providing something to eat when he was in hunger and secondly he received all the blessings from his blind father with the garb of his brother.

Jacob spent about 21 years in the house of his uncle Laban. He married his two daughters and also slept with their maid servants. Through those four wives Jacob got twelve sons and one daughter. Finally he decided not to stay with his uncle but wished to go back to his native place and meet his brother. So he started the journey with his four wives and eleven sons, his cattle and other things. He wanted to meet his brother on the way with some gifts and at the same time he was afraid of him because Jacob deceived Esau him 21 years ago. As he wanted to spend that night on the way separately, he sent all ahead and remained at a particular place. During that night, while he was sleeping alone a stranger came and Jacob wrestled with him till dawn and overpowered the stranger. Then Jacob demanded blessings from that stranger who was no other than an angel. He blessed Jacob and bestowed upon him the new name Israel (Yesrael) in (Hebrew which means the one who wrestled with God). Since then the offspring's of Jacob / Israel in Canaan were known as Israelites and even the Jewish people are called the children of Israel. Jacob after his return spent a very short time in Canaan. All his sons were born in Mesopotamia or Syria except Benjamin who was born on the way at Ephrata (Bethlehem) to Rachael. She died at that place after delivery. Jacob visited different places in his travel and finally reached Hebron the place of his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham. Isaac died at the age of 180 years and Esau and Jacob buried him at Mecphelah a place near Hebron which Abraham bought as a burial ground. The followers of Jacob somehow developed intimacy with Canaan and most of them remained there only, but Jacob happened to go to Egypt when there was famine.

## *Who were the real Hebrews?*

So far, we have seen the Biblical coverage of the age of patriarches, but it was written much later than the actual events and history of the people. Even the Bible readers are not sure of the origin of the word “Hebrew”. As a matter of fact, there are many theories on this subject. The first one is that, this term did not appear until the Hebrews dwelt in Egypt because it is derived from the Egyptian word, “Apiru” or foreigner”. Another theory is that Abraheem came form the other side (eber) of Euphrates River and was called Hebrew. The third statement is that the Hebrews believe themselves to be the descendants of “eber”, who was one of the ancestors mentioned in the complex biblical genealogy. This epic continued to the next period of Jewish History, from the story of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. Here, we have to study about the migration of Hebrews to Egypt, then how they remained in this nation for about 430 years as slaves. Their liberation through Moses how they celebrated the holiday of Passover. These are all the technical points to study in Jewish History. The story of Joseph is another wonderful one, that we can took into, Genesis the First book of pentateuch (literally five boos in Greek), then the study of Hebrews is continued in the book of exodus also.

Joseph was sold to Ishmaelite traders by his brothers, and they again sold him to a noble man by name potiphar in Egypt. He used Joseph as his personal assistant. He was quite young and handsome, who was attracted by potiphar’s wife. When she could not succeed in her infatuation, she complained against him that he tried to seduce her. Potiphar immediately put him in the prison. Whatever may be the opinion of others Joseph was pious and God fearing man and God was with him. In the mean time Joseph’s brothers, killed one goat and dipped his gown in the blood. They sent it to their father Jacob and informed him that Joseph was killed by a wild animal. He remained in the prison for a short time, but earned a good name as the good interpreter of dreams. One day he happened to clear the dream of pharaoh and became a great man next to pharaoh in Egypt. He was made in charge of issues connected

to famine. This famine after some time forced his brothers and other family members to come and settle in Goshen a fertile place in Egypt. They were about seventy in number. Then Jacob / Israel died in Egypt and his body was taken to Mechepilah in Hebron for the burial with his ancestors, like Abraham, and Issac. Joseph was 110 years when he died. Before his death he predicted and told his brothers, that God would take them out of the land of Egypt into the promised land. So, he asked them to take away his bones with them to that land canaan in a coffin.

In Jewish History Miriam was considered a prophotes. She predicted the birth of her younger brother Moses and added he would become a liberator of Israelites from the bondage in Egypt. She was a strong woman with faith and belief that her people the Israelites would have better future. When the time had come for the people to leave Egypt, she was the first person. Who made all necessary preparations to go to an unknown Place called canaan.

Moses was raised as a prince of Egypt because of pharoooh's daughter. For forty years he remained as a prince in the royal palace. Then he was forced to do some crime and leave Egypt. He went to Median, married the daughter of a Medianite priest Jethro and remained there as a Shephad for another forty years. One day Moses was tending the sheep and saw a bush. It was burning but not consuming. He was surprised and went near it, out of curiosity. But God talked with Moses through the bush. He asked Moses to liberate his chosen people from the bondage in Egypt. He was reluctant in the beginning but accepted the great responsibility.

“Moses” according to history was an Egyptian name we must believe some how that Moses was an Egyptian prince, who adopted the Hebrews as his people and led them out of bondage. There was another theory, where it was found that there were two men, an Egyptian and a Hebrew and even a Hebrew and Medianite. Both of them were called Moses', whatever might be the historical accuracy of the portrait of Moses, it appeared fairly clean that the wonderful story of this man had cultured the course of history by uniting

people and providing them common law. They had no doubt different way of life in the society. We see in the Bible, how God advised Moses to take the help of his brother Aaron and ask pharaoh to allow his people the Hebrews to go out of his land. On one hand God demanded freedom of His people and on the other hand He made the king pharaoh hard hearted. Then as last resort Moses had to introduce ten plagues.

***They are.***

1. Charging of water into blood
2. Frogs everywhere
3. Lice every where
4. Wild beasts
5. Pestitence
6. Boils over the bodies
7. Rain of hailstones
8. Locusts everywhere
9. Complete darkness
10. Slaying of the first born males.

Pharaoh's heart became soft only after the death of his own son as a result of the tenth plague. The first born son of Israelites were saved with the application of blood of lamb to the lentils of their doors, since then that day was treated as an important festival day, called Passover among the Seven festivals introduced by God for His redemption plan, at the foot of Mount Sinai, the Passover feast was treated as the first festival.

According to Jewish oral tradition, lamb was one of the Egyptian deities. By selecting a lamb for slaughter, Israelites rejected the pagan beliefs and demonstrated their faith and devotion to God. In that particular night, the Hebrews ate the roasted a lamb and unleavened bread. God also used to perform some miracles on that occasion. An angel of death, sweft through the streets of Egypt and killed all the first born of Egyptians but passed over the houses of Israelites, which were smeared with blood to their doors as an indication. It was the blood of sacrificial lamb. The Jewish treated that day as the day of liberation from Egypt and celebrated and considered its as a holiday known as "pesach" in Hebrew means "Passover". It is believed that under the leadership of Moses, about two million Jacob/ Israel descendents came out of Egypt on 14<sup>th</sup> day of the Hebrews first month Nisan.

Again Pharaoh changed his mind and pursued to catch Israelites on the twentieth day of Nisan at the sea of reeds (also known as the Red Sea). Many biblical scholars believed that Ramses II (1279-1213 B.C.E.) who was notorious for the deployment of slaves for the construction of the monuments was Pharaoh who enslaved Israelites. It is also believed that it was Ramses' son Memphite was the Pharaoh at the time of plagues and the Exodus of Israelites from Egypt. During the time of this Passover festival the Jews eat "Matzah" or "Matzah" baked product. What must be the reason, for the Jews to eat Matzah at the time of Passover when the Jewish People left Egypt all of a sudden, they did not have time to prepare leavened bread for their journey. So they carried the flour on their heads. At that time, it was so hot, and due to the heat of the sun, the flour mixed with their sweat and was baked by the desert sun to form Matzah. When the Israelites finished all their food, in the wandering, God provided them Manna". It was like dew that fell down from heaven during night times. Then they were instructed to collect it before the sun rise, or else it would be melted due to the sun's heat.

Rashi a biblical commentator said that the word "Manna" is a Hebrew word which means what is it. The dates of Israelites departure from Egypt was differed from one commentator to another. Some said it was 1446, BCE and spring season. Some other said it was 1250 BCE on 14<sup>th</sup> in the Hebrew month of Nisan. According to Hebrew calendar Nisan is the first month. God taught 13 commandments to Moses on the Mount Sinai, but gave him to his hand only 10 on blue stone in his forty days stay. Those ten commandments were also called, ten words, "Ten statements" "Ten utterances", and the Decalogue. They are only the Elaborate system of laws which can be conveniently divided into three groups.

1. Laws concern to the relationship between God and human beings.
2. Laws which deal with relation among people.
3. Laws that speak about the relationship between parents and children.

These Ten Commandments can be found in the Torah twice in Exodus, 20.2-14; and in Deutironomy 5.2-18.

The Ten Commandments are

- 1) I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods besides Me.
- 2) You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image or any likeness of what is in heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them for the Lord your God, am an impassioned God; visiting the guilt of the fathers, upon the children upon the third and upon the fourth generations of those who reject me, but showing kindness to the thousandeth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.
- 3) You shall not swear falsely by the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not clear one who swears falsely, by His name.
- 4) Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy, six days you shall labour and do all your work, but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord. Your God. You shall not do any work you, your son or daughter. Your male or female slave or your cattle or the stranger who is within your settlements. For in six days Lord made earth and heaven and sea and all that is in them and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.
- 5) Honour your Father and Mother that you long endure on the land which the lord your God is giving you.
- 6) You shall not murder.
- 7) You shall not commit adultery.
- 8) You shall not steal.
- 9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- 10) You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbors wife his male or female slave or his ox or his ass anything that is your neighbors.

So, Moses finally received Torah including the 613 (Mit Zvot) statements. The main purpose of those commandments was that God wanted his chosen people to live perfect and disciplined life. The word 'Torah' has different shades of meanings. In Hebrew tongue it means "law" generally Jewish people use this term only to Hebrew bible. There is another important word used for the first five books of the Bible, which were given to Moses on the mount Sinai was "Pentateuch".

After the Bible the Jewish people had another book which is as good as the Bible and it is "Talmud". In that book, it is said that Moses would not have received Torah in the present form at the Mount Sinai because the events mentioned in the Torah did not happen at that time. The sages clearly explained that Moses must have received the (MitZvot) the 613 statements in nut shell orally and then compiled Torah laws.

### ***How they maintained the sanctity of Shabbath:***

Shabbat or Sabbath Queen as it was called has been observed by Jewish people with reverence since they encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai. They were on their way to the promised land from Egypt. It was about 3,400 years ago they received Mitzvot, the statements from God and became a nation. Therefore it is appropriate to examine the importance of this day. For Jewish people Shabbat is the most precious day of the week. Their tradition consider this as more sacred than any other holiday – even yom kippur (the day of Atonement). This is the only holiday God addressed in the ten statements that the Jews must remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy? This appears to be a covenant between God and the Jewish people, Which is blended with blessing and responsibility.

Shabbat is a unique time and it is compared to the Messianic age. It is said that when God wanted to give 'Torah' to Israelites, he said that he had something extra-ordinary to give them if they would accept the commandment and the Torah. Then the Jews asked God what it would be, He replied that it

was world-to-come". The Israelites asked God what it was like, they wanted to know God answered casually, that it was like Shabbat because the world to come into long Sabbath. The word Shabbat came from the Hebrew tongue shin but take" which means "to rest" or cessation of labour".

It is also called Shabbat Queen the Queen of the week or the Bride because Jewish mystics believed that on Shabbat eve God's presence or Shakinah (often considered to be Gods feminine component) descend to earth. On the seventh day of the week called Shabbat, Jews would take complete rest and turn their minds to pray. Some strong families of believers remain at home to welcome the Shabbat till evening because it is very important in the history of Jewish people. Let us see how traditionally they observe this day. According to their tradition this day does not begin at the middle of the night, or at the sun rise but on Friday evening at sun set. So Shabbat begins exactly eighteen minutes before the sunset on Friday and ends on Saturday night after the appearance of three stars in the sky (that is to say just forty minutes after sunset).

God commanded the Jews to remember and observe Shabbat (Exodus 20.8; and Deuteronomy 5.12) a two fold injunction. "Halakhoh" (Jewish law) and all the Metzvot have to do with Shabbat have designed to fulfill this purpose. One more prominent thing is that Jewish people in different times at different places have observed Shabbat in different ways. In the present days, those who are practicing one of the four branches of Judaism (orthodox, conservative, reform and reconstructionist) followed their own protocol when they celebrate their Shabbat. Jews from other parts of the world also share specific customs and traditions, which may appear foreign to other Jews. Whatever may be differences in their observances they celebrate the Shabbat with high esteem by all branches of Judaism.

Since the work on the Shabbat day was prohibited, preparing for the day include, cleaning of the house, preparing different items for Shabbat dinner all these things are on the shoulders of the house wife. She is supposed

to do these things perfectly well on Friday after noons for thousands of years all over its world, Jews would become busy in preparation to great Sabbath Queen. When the celebration begins the mother will light two candles, traditionally which represent the Mitzvot (statement) to remember and observe. The major role of a woman in the house is to welcome the guests to Shabbath celebration to light two candles and bless the guests. The women feel their responsibility and conduct everything perfectly. In this manner the Jewish traditions have been continued for thousands of years. When women are not available, then it was done by men as well.

At the time of taking wine or communion they have to observe certain principles. They need wine cups, candles and spice box. The wine cup must be filled to the brim, because the cup represents hope till the coming week will be filled with divine blessings. At that time some candles must be lighted. The significance of these lights is the indication of proper guidance through life. The importance of the spice box is that the spices in the box would remind the believers to make efforts to bring some of the sweetness of Shabbat into the coming week.

It is also a regular custom to invite a stranger, a poor person as a guest to dinner. Another custom is to set aside some money as a charitable amount before the Shabbat candles and welcome Shabbat. The Shabbat prayers undoubtedly increase the relationship between God and Jewish people. At the prayer time they would recite the following lines from the bible.

The Israelite people shall keep the Shabbat observing the Shabbat through out the ages, as a covenant for all time, it shall be a sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel for six days the Lord made heaven and earth and on the seventh day. He ceased from the work and was refreshed” (Exodus 31.16 – 17).

## *Yom Kipper*

According to Biblical history, Jewish people have been observing this Yom Kipper for thousands of years. At certain occasions they had to face some problems to fulfill the obligations of this day (the Day of Atonement), the customs of observing Yom Kipper had changed over centuries. When Solomon temple was intact the high priest used to do the sacrifices in order to seek Gods forgiveness for all Jews. One of the customs was to keep the sins of all Israelites on the heads of two goats. Then one of them was to be sacrificed and the other sent to its death in the wilderness (This is said as the origin of the word scape goat).

The first Yom Kipper was celebrated actually at the feet of the Mount Sinai in their (forty years) wilderness. Its so happened that when Moses came down from God with ten statements (commandments) saw Israelites were fully engaged themselves in worshipping the golden calf. In hot temper Moses broke the tablets and scolded them. Then he went again to God to get back the statements. In the mean time, they realized and remained in fasting from morning till evening and prayed to God for forgiveness. Moses returned to them on the tenth day of the month of “Tishri” (according to Hebrew calendar it is the 7<sup>th</sup> month). He declared before all people that God had forgiven them.

So, it is written in Leviticus 29-30 that every year on 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Tishri you much fast and do no work ..... This is because on this day, you shall have your sins atoned..... . It is a Sabbath of Sabbath to you ..... This is a law for all time. Yom Kipper was the only time, the high priest would be allowed to enter the inner Temple, call the Holy of Holies Then in a sacred place which would be occupied by the spirit of God, the high priest had to utter a prayer on behalf of the people of Israel.

In the present days, forgiveness from God, is received through prayers of penitence and by fasting. In addition to that some people are persuing other activities like introspection and then lead a pious and perfect life. Today even the non Jews know that on the day of Yom Kipper Jews are forbidden to eat and drink.

The Jewish families, traditionally light candles, that would be throughout Yom Kipper. As per the custom, candles have to be lit before holiday meal. But on the day of Yom Kipper the Jews eat first and light the candles. This act symbolizes the beginning of Yom Kipper. Then what most be the reason for the Jews to go on fasting during the day of Yom Kipper? As said in Torah God commanded Jews to keep fasting on the day of Yom Kipper Another reason for fasting is that they would be able to know the conditions of the sad and hungry in the society.

As a matter of fact, Yom Kipper is a personal day of repentance, but its customs and practices are observed as a community. During the celebrations all the sins are confessed in prural by using “We’ or “us” because Judaism looks at the individual in terms of a big group, with a belief that each person holds the responsibility for the whole community. Yom Kipper, services would begin in the evening with a special service known as “ColNidre” (means all vows). Before the commencement of the prayer there will be chanting which might shake even the mind of the staunchest stoic.

This colnidre prayer is a legacy prepared and written in Aramaic language. This prayer does not apply to the promises made to people. At the same time, it is considered to be a declaration, that they will not be responsible for the oaths made either in angry mood or in duress. After this Colnidre prayer confessional services will be conducted in synagogues, three times a day among many readers and prayers. The Yom Kipper services are included with a passing from the book of prophet (Isaiah 57.14; 58.14) why this passage particularly suggested to be read on the occasion because, this passage is best

suiting to that Yom Kippur. It hates the people who go in fasting without knowing and understanding of that day. It also reminds the Jews the real meaning of Yom Kippur does not lie in fasting, but in repentance. At that time, there is also a chance for a special memorial prayer called "yezror" for diseased relatives primarily parents.

The proceedings of Yom Kippur has another attraction "Some people wear white garments as a symbol of purity. Some people, like devotees wear "Kiotel" white robes, up to ankle-length, over their regular dress. The rabbi will be in white robe, and the scrolls are covered in white cloth. The table on which Torah is placed and read is also covered with white cloth. The services are concluded with a ceremony that symbolizes the closing of the gates of heaven, and the families go to their houses to break the fast meal. This is how they used to celebrate the important festival of Yom Kippur. God introduced Seven festivals at the foot of Mount Sinai in their wandering for the purpose of redemption and among them, this Yom Kippur is one.

## *Message of Nebuchadnezzar*

From the book of Prophet Daniel, the second chapter is the most fascinating and prophetic message in the entire Bible. This chapter is also amazingly interesting because it deals with the information that concerns to the first dream of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It gives the reader an unmistakable skeleton of history that began six hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, and will continue its way until the second coming of Jesus and the start of His Millennial Kingdom. Prophet Daniel had the God given gift of understanding visions that came to him, and he served God faithfully. The prophetic view of Daniel is not the view of all nations, wars, or people and events of history. It is purely concerned to Israelites and Jesus Christ (who would come from the seed of Abraham) on one side and the nations that rule over (and the Anti-christ who comes from those nations) on the other.

There had been a constant conflict going on, which started in the Garden of Eden and continued since the call of Abraham to this day. The conflict between Israel and the other nations is nothing but the conflict between God and Satan, between Christ and Anti-christ. We can also say that the conflict is between the people who belong to God, the creator of the universe, and the people who belong to Satan, the usurper of that creation. Coming to the main topic, Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon about twenty-six hundred years ago. He was one of the most powerful rulers of the ancient world. Here, the impact of the main topic (Nebuchadnezzar's message), which was sent by him, was addressed to "all people, nations, and languages for good measures, all that dwell in all the earth, peace be multiplied unto you" (Daniel 4:1). He did not say particularly that his message was for those who live in future generations, but it was considered for the present generations also like us. If we meditate upon the message seriously, it seemed God Himself spoke through the prophecy of Daniel clubbed with Nebuchadnezzar's message.

The most surprising thing in this event is how the king could circulate his message throughout his kingdom and beyond. There was no transportation system, airplanes, or email in those days. But he had one efficient mail service. It was with the help of the ship of the desert, called *camel*. These animals must have carried the message to all cities and other important places in his kingdom. The message was also sent through mouth-to-mouth. Anyway, it was spread throughout the land. The city of Babylon is very prominent and impressive even today for its achievements and possessions. The people were not at all modern, as we imagine what modernism meant. But one thing is certain: they were not at all primitive. As a matter of fact, Babylon had many things to its credit and to boast of her achievements. Among such creditable things are:

- 1.) There are fifty great temples to accommodate the pagan gods.
- 2.) The spectacular “Ishtar Gate”, whose beauty became world famous.
- 3.) The massive wall built around the city of Babylon. It was so wide that on its top it is said that two chariots could move freely side by side.
- 4.) The great canal, a tributary of the Euphrates River which was engineered to flow under the great wall running through the city to provide water whenever the city happened to be seized by the enemies.
- 5.) Nebuchadnezzar’s brilliant and magnificent “hanging gardens” were noteworthy. The king built and maintained these gardens literally for his homesick wife, who came from a mountainous region. These hanging gardens finally became world famous and they were called one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

We must study and know more about the history of King Nebuchadnezzar because he played an important role among heathen kings in the Bible. God also gave him extraordinary powers to check the stiff-necked Israelites. He was a brilliant general, a dexterous administrator and an avid builder. But those things made him feel proud of himself when he looked at the beautiful city of Babylon. And sometimes to serve his purpose, he used to be very

adamant and cruel while dealing with certain issues. He ruled his kingdom with unchanged power under all conditions. “And for the majesty that he (God) give him all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him, whom he would he slew and whom he would he kept, alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down” (Daniel 5:19).

As mentioned in the second chapter, he was also “head of gold” of the terrible dream of the image of Prophet Daniel. The readers of his personal history will be no doubt surprised to know how he started his message being a heathen king. He said, “Peace be multiplied unto you” (it is with a greeting). No reader would expect such a warm and congenial expression from such a king who was most powerful in his time. Moreover, among all gods he worshipped his favorite chief god, who was called “Marduck,” the god of wars. A king with such bent of mind speaking of “peace” in this context was really amazing. Then, he seemed to have written his message in ‘Syriac,’ an Aramaic dialect which was a commercial language at that time. Even though the Old Testament was written in Hebrew tongue, some lines of the Book of Daniel from second chapter fourth verse to seventh chapter were written in Aramaic language. The main reason must be probably those chapters are dealt with the four heathen empires of Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome and their impact on Israel nation.

The importance of the message of the king was centered in the fact that it was purely theological in nature. It was all about himself, God, and his subjects. He was not speaking of the gods of his subjects, even though they were religious people. But in this context according to his message, the god was different. He is the God of heaven. Nebuchadnezzar found interest and said something about Him. It was the God of Israelites, and Daniel was the chief of staff and primary advisor. In this position, the king wrote, “I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the High God hath wrought toward me” (Daniel 4:2). The deliberate choice of the king in calling Him the High God is extremely significant in Daniel Chapter 2 through Chapter 4,

the terms “the God of heaven,” “the High God,” and “the most High God” appeared a total of twelve times. The word *High* in each case is paralleled to the Hebrew word *ELYON*, which literally means “Highest.” When this word *ELYON* is linked in Hebrew to God, then it is *EL ELYON*, which means “the most High God,” the possessor of heaven and Earth. This name appeared in the Bible for the first time in Genesis as the most High God.

This meaning is referred to in the Bible in connection with Melchizedec. It is said, “And Melchizedec, king of Salem, brought forth the bread and wine, and he was the priest of most High God. And he blessed him and said, ‘Blessed be Abram of the most High God, possessor of heaven and Earth’” (Genesis 14:18-19). Nebuchadnezzar was an idolatrous gentile king of Babylon. But he was attributing all such amazing qualities to the God of Israelites. The king must have thought it to be good for him to share his subjects, the signs, and wonders, all such things the High God had wrought toward him. This was a brief reference to all he experienced, and he would like to share it in his great message. What all he wanted was that his subjects must understand about the High God as the possessor of heaven and Earth, possessor of eternal kingdom. Above all, He is also eternal and everlasting. His dominion will continue from generation to generation.

The main idea is that there is no change of heavenly king upon the death of the earthly king, military defeat, new elections, or successful internal revolt. There is only one qualified king who can sit on the throne of God. He is from the tribe of Judah and the lineage of David, and his name is Jesus Christ. Nebuchadnezzar tells us here that he was taking rest and progressing peacefully in his royal palace. The probable time between the king’s first dream of the great image, as mentioned in Daniel Chapter 2, and the second dream of the great tree in Daniel Chapter 4 seemed to be about thirty to thirty-five years. When he said he was taking rest at his palace, means that he was referring to his comforts and stability at home. When he talked about stability, means that it must be about political stability. All these things must have prompted

him to say that “there is peace at last”. Then, instead of peace and tranquility, his mind was disturbed. How he became restless as he was mentally disturbed he explained that in the following way. “I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me” (Daniel 4:5). Nebuchadnezzar was declared as the most powerful king of his time. He never accepted defeat or weakness in his life. But now he confessed that he was afraid and troubled.

Such an unrivaled and most powerful king was forced to speak that he was afraid and troubled about the dream that we can take for granted, the dream he dreamed was not an ordinary one but more than a nightmare. The intensity of the dream was terrible and thoughtful, and also with some visions. In order to get the correct information, the king summoned all the advisors, like magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. They all marched towards the palace of the king. The king gave them all the details of his dream. They meditated upon it, but nobody could interpret correctly to the king. He even thought of punishing all of them, but Daniel went to their rescue. Finally, the chief advisor of the king Daniel came on to the scene to interpret. The dream was - Nebuchadnezzar saw a large tree in the midst of the earth. As the king was watching, the tree had grown abnormally and its height almost reached unto heaven. The tree provided food to fowls that moved in the sky, to the animals that moved on the earth and took shelter under the branches and all other flesh. The king went on explaining the dream - “I saw in the vision of my head upon my bed and behold a watcher (an angel) and a holy man (a second angel) came down from heaven” (Daniel 4:13). And then the first angel gave a command - “He cried aloud and said thus Hew down the tree and cut off his branches, shake off his branches, shake off his leaves and scatter his fruit. Let the beasts get away from under it and the fruits from his branches. Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth even with a band of iron and brass in the tender grass of the field, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let

his heart be changed from man's and let a beast heart be given unto him, and let seven times pass over him" (Daniel 4:14-16).

If we study carefully the dream of the king, the first part appears to be passive in its contents, whereas the second part is negative. The conclusion of the dream comes only after the assessment of the surface evaluation. Since the interpretation was not yet done at this stage, we cannot conclude anything correctly. But the accuracy of the dream appeared to be certified solemnly by two watchers. First, the matter is by the declaration of the watchers (two angels). Secondly, the demand of the dream by the word of the holy ones. Then the main purpose of giving the dream is revealed so that the living may know the most high revealed in the kingdom of men and it will be given to whosoever that sits upon it. The king once again said the following words – "This dream I King Nebuchadnezzar have seen, Now thou O, Belteshazzar (Daniel) declare the interpretation, thereof for as much as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me, the interpretation but thou art able for the spirit of the holy god is in thee" (Daniel 4:18).

### ***Daniel Interpreted the Dream***

Nebuchadnezzar wholeheartedly acknowledged the wisdom and perfect interpretation of Daniel regarding his dream, and at the same time the inefficiency of his own advisors. This particular incident made the king praise the answer of Daniel more and abuse his advisors for their incorrect answer. The real answer is very simple, and God says in His word, "As for these four children (Daniel and his three friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Azariah) God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, and Daniel (only Daniel) had understanding in all visions and dreams" (Daniel 1:17). Daniel made use of the gift of God to share four points related to the king's dream.

The first point was that it made him surprised when he was told about the dream. He was amazed for one hour and his thoughts troubled him. He was also disturbed and said that the dream shall be for those who hate the

king and to those who were his enemies. According to Daniel, it was a terrible and most uncommon dream. The second point is that the tree in the dream represented the king himself, and Daniel made it clear. The tree the king saw was very strong and grew so high that it reached unto heaven. The leaves of the tree were very fair, the fruits of the tree were like meat to the animals that moved in the fields and for the fowls that fly over the sky. And also the fowls of heaven had their habitation on the branches of that tree. As the tree was strong, the king was also strong. His name and fame reached unto heaven, and his kingdom would survive until the end of the earth. The tree represented the king, but he was inseparable from the Babylonian empire which he was ruling. The third point according to God's plan was that the king would become insane for seven years. Prophet Daniel, while interpreting the dream, said, "O king and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my Lord, the king, That they shall drive thee, from men and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field and they shall make thee eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, 'till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Daniel 4:24-25). The insane condition of the king would take him into the form of a beast and literally live like that for seven years. Then he would realize and repent that the most High God is the sovereign over all the earth. The fourth point is that the angel gave the command to cut down the tree and destroy it. But the stump of the roots was to be left in the earth, and the band of iron and brass was to remain maybe for the purpose of providing strength to the stump. After seven years, the insanity would go away from the king. But the kingdom would be like a stump and roots.

The glory and name of Babylon was still there waiting anxiously for the coming of its ruler, Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel, the chief advisor of the king, managed the nation politically during his seven-year insanity. In the absence of the king, Daniel not only safeguarded the nation but also made necessary

arrangements for the safe return of the king. The king said, “And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me and I blessed the most High, and praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation” (Daniel 4:34). In this context, we have another debatable point for correct assessment of the mind of the king, whether he came to know the God Almighty through belief, or in a redemption way. But one thing is quite clear, the king acknowledged and accepted the God of heaven as the sovereignty of the most High God of his life. As time passed on, Belshazzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, became the king of Babylon. By that time, the king of Persia, Darius, already seized the walls of the city of Babylon and waiting for the appropriate time to enter into the city. But Belshazzar, without paying any attention for what was going on outside the city walls, engaged himself in a drinking party with his officials. For that party, he used the gold cups that his father brought from the Temple of God in Jerusalem during the captivity.

He completely immersed himself in the party and was enjoying himself. Just at that time on the walls of the royal palace, the fingers of a man had come and wrote something on it. The young king was amazed at that strange writing and immediately called for the astrologers, sooth-sayers, and others for the interpretation of the writing. But nobody could explain the meaning of those unfamiliar words. Then, the mother of the king remembered how, a long time ago, one young man came and correctly interpreted the dream of his father. Belshazzar, at once, sent somebody for that man who was no other than Prophet Daniel.

Then Daniel came, and first he said he did not want any gift. And if he desired, he might give it to anyone. With those few words, he began to interpret the strange writing in the following manner. He told the young king that the most High God of heaven gave to his father Nebuchadnezzar a great kingdom, mighty majesty, glory, and honor. With the God given majesty, the king was

able to control all people, all nations, and all languages. The people also trembled and feared at his very presence. All these God given gifts made him to behave like a dictator before others. If he wanted to kill anyone, he did not hesitate to do so. And if he wanted to save anyone from any problem, he did that also wholeheartedly. That was the temperament of the king Nebuchadnezzar when he ruled the nation. Finally, he became unrivaled among the nations. There was no change in his attitude. He lifted up his eyes, his heart, and mind because he became hard-hearted towards the people due to his pride. "As pride goes before one's fall," he became proud of himself. So, the result of his pride was immediate. He was deposed from his kingdom and his kingship. His enemies took away his glory and kingdom. He was driven out of his kingdom and from his people. His heart was made like the heart of a beast. God changed his dwelling palace as the living place for asses and other animals. He was destined by God to eat grass like that of an ox. His body was made wet with the dew of heaven. He was forced to live this kind of life by the most High 'till he understood Him clearly.

God is the real ruler of the kingdom of men, and whenever any change is necessary, He would appoint whomsoever He likes. So, the venerable Prophet Daniel opened the eyes of the king Belshazzar with mild rebuke, and with brief interpretation about his kingdom. Daniel further said to the wicked Belshazzar, the descendant of Nebuchadnezzar, "And thou his son (son is used in the sense of their successor, descendant) O Belshazzar hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knowest all this" (Daniel 5:22). Prophet Daniel interpreted that abnormal handwriting pretty well, and the translated matter was best suited to the situation. Daniel further said, "God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it" (Daniel 5:26).

According to historical background, Belshazzar fully engaged himself in the drinking party with his near and dear ones. He forgot his condition totally and began to boast of himself and the past glory of his kingdom, achieved by his father. He was under the impression that he was quite safe and secure

inside the great wall, which was surrounding the spectacular city of Babylon. The king was in the fool's paradise. Just at that time, the soldiers of King Darius of Mede, Persia wonderfully succeeded in diverting waters of the Euphrates River, which ran under the great wall. Then the soldiers could enter through the dried-up riverbed. That critical situation was described by Greek historians like Herodotus and Xerophon in the following way. They said when the Mede soldiers gained the entrance into the city, they found that the people were completely in a drunken stage. And the probable date must be October 11 or 12, 539 B.C.

This remarkable incident was mentioned in the Bible in a very casual way. "In that night, the king Belshazzar of Chaldeans was slain." And Darius, the king of Medians, occupied the Babylonian kingdom. Belshazzar had ridiculed the truth of the noble words that his father had painfully learned..... the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will. As interpreted by Prophet Daniel, the stump that remained after the tree was cut down, represented the Persian Empire in the image of Daniel, as mentioned in Chapter 2. The band of iron and brass that were put around the stump represented both Grecian and Roman empires, which followed and which were made of iron and brass. As the four empires Babylonian, Persian, Grece, and Roman were represented in the statue, or image, the same four kingdoms were represented in the big tree also. According to Nebuchadnezzar's dream, a great image in Chapter 2 and the dream of a great tree in Chapter 4 are closely associated with each other.

Daniel described in Chapter 2 that a stone (Christ) would smite the image into pieces (which means all nations). That means all pagan nations would be destroyed by Jesus Christ, and he would establish His Millennial Kingdom where people can have perfect peace and tranquility, and Christ would sit on the throne of David. And in the fourth chapter, at the end of the king's seven years imposed of insanity, he said-

“And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him what dost thou” (Daniel 4:34-35).

This concluding para can be taken as the brief message of Nebuchadnezzar to all humanity. Finally, we find a wonderful change in the king. He abandoned all ego and pride. He accepted the greatness of God. He also said that we are nothing before God, and we cannot say anything against Him because He can do and undo things according to His will and pleasure. So, in conclusion, Nebuchadnezzar said, “I pledge my allegiance without reservation to ‘EL ELYON,’ the most High God, the possessor of heaven and Earth.”

## *How the Millennial Kingdom Would be?*

The word “millennial”, according to the Bible reference, is a period of 1,000 years. There are many pages from the Old Testament that spoke about the promises made by God regarding this Millennial Kingdom to Israel who were His chosen people from the seed of Abraham, the father of righteousness. God expected them that they would live with faith in their Messiah. God reminded them time and again that they would thrive and live in perfect peace and happiness with faith in God. Prophet Isaiah said, “It shall happen the mountain of the Lord, be established at the top of the mountains. Then all nations and many people would say, ‘Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, the house of the Lord, and He will teach us how to walk in His path.’ When the law and the word of God go out from Jerusalem, then the Lord will judge the nations. God will rebuke many people, and they shall use their swords as ploughshares, and the spears as pruning hooks. No nation shall raise the sword against another, and there shall be no more wars.”

The above said passage of Prophet Isaiah and his book on the whole lead people toward the Millennial Kingdom, which is going to be established by Jesus Christ after His second coming, because people have been taught about the dangers and consequences of war, and the advantages of God’s kingdom. The promise of Israel has not yet been fulfilled because it is referred to future Millennial Kingdom. For all the radical changes among Israelites, they need to study theology and attend churches regularly so that they would be in a position to understand how that Millennial Kingdom would be through the preaching in churches. Then, regarding that kingdom, Prophet Isaiah said, “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed their young ones, shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw, like the ox. And the nourishing child play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his

hand on the vipers den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:6-9).

The above quoted passage clearly tells us about the wonderful and peaceful Millennial Kingdom of God, especially regarding how the wild and mild animals live together in that great kingdom. This example clearly gives us the true picture of peace and tranquility in that kingdom. This new kingdom shall be established and ruled by Jesus Christ after His second coming as the lion of the tribe of Judah. As described already, the life in that Millennial Kingdom shall be like that of the life in the Garden of Eden before “sin” entered and polluted the entire atmosphere. Keeping in view the peaceful life in the Garden of Eden, God wants to create a new universe with the same congenial atmosphere.

Apostle Paul also tells us that the whole creation is longing for such a time (Romans 8:22). Many events are mentioned in the book of Isaiah about the Millennial Kingdom, and the would-be king, Jesus Christ, and also how the life is going to be there. Let us see what is said in the New Testament about the Millennial Kingdom. In the gospel of Luke 1:32, the angel Gabriel came to young virgin Mary, who was in utter confusion, and said about the birth of Jesus Christ, “He shall be great and shall be called the son of the Highest, and the Lord God give unto him the throne of his father David.” This brief reference is about Mary, her son Jesus, and His future destiny. The angel Gabriel also promised Mary that Jesus would become the king of Jews, the rightful person as the descendant of David. In Matthew 16:28, Jesus says, “Verily I say unto you. There will be some standing here which shall not taste of death, ‘till they see the son of man coming in His kingdom.” We can remember how Jesus was transfigured before His three disciples, and showed Himself how He would be when He returns to His new kingdom to rule for a thousand years.

We can recollect also what Jesus said to His disciples, Peter, James, and John before whom He was transfigured that thy kingdom was anything but literal. He knew the Jewish people were expecting a literal kingdom, and Jesus speaks very briefly in the following passage. In the gospel of Matthew 19:28, Jesus tells His disciples, “Verily I say unto you, That ye’ which have followed me in the regeneration, when the son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye’ also shall sit upon 12 thrones, judging upon the 12 tribes of Israel.” Here, Jesus was speaking about the real throne of His own, and twelve thrones of His disciples, and twelve tribes of Israel. The thief on the cross asked Jesus to remember him when he comes to His kingdom. If death is inevitable, we shall not give any importance to the words of the thief. He must have spoken about the literary kingdom where one can have the citizenship only through redemption.

Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:24, “Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the father, when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.” These words *rule*, *authority*, and *power* are literal and reflect the reign of Jesus Christ during a 1,000 year Millennial Kingdom of God, His father. Whenever Jesus entered into a discussion of a kingdom, or responding anyone regarding the kingdom, He would have always had the real kingdom in His mind. All of us know, according to the Bible, that Jesus was the true descendant of the real Jewish people, who was returning as the lion of the tribe of Judah to a real world, a real people, living in a real geographical region, to rightfully climb the real throne of Israel and of this world.

### ***History Behind***

According to historical background, man’s quest for peace will take him to the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem because Jerusalem is called the “house of peace”. It is a 36-acre plateau, and that place is called Mount Zion, one of the mountain ranges of Mount Moriah. It is just north of Mount Sinai

desert along the ancient patriarchal highway, and it is between Egypt and Assyria. In future as it is happening in other places, we may speculate a division of both the city of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. They may be divided with a wall as east and west. The Dome of the Rock and the Mosque (ALAQSA) will remain for Muslims as their places of worship. Then on the other side of the wall, a modest temple already designed by the temple authorities. There shall be an altar for animal sacrifices, which was stopped by the Roman rulers about 1,900 years ago.

According to prophecy, we are very close to the end of the age and also we're very close to the introduction of the Anti-Christ. There is no doubt the curtains will go up, and the four horsemen of the apocalypse will gallop on the stage of human history. It is the real life, and God said through Zechariah, "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all people round about when they shall be in the seize both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces though all the people of the earth, be gathered together against it" (Zechariah 12:2-3).

Above all these things and for the present information, Jesus Christ is the central figure to talk about. With faith in Him and obedience to His commands, people can face any kind of difficulties that take place in the Holy City. Some destructive things will occur in the world 'till Jesus Christ comes for the second time with healing spirit as the son of righteousness. Until then, Israelites will be in search of *shalom* (peace). For the fulfillment of prophecy, Israelites will be victorious at the end of times through their Messiah, and some events have to take place in the meantime. A *caliphate* will arise and call all Islamic nations to join together. He will possess religious as well as political powers, and give suggestions to Middle East confrontation. This *caliphate* is also called Anti-Christ who will enter into covenant with the Israelites, and it is called in the Bible, "a covenant with death, and with hell" (Isaiah 28:15; Daniel 9:27).

Why should many Israelites make a covenant with Arabs and Muslims, even though their population is very small compared with Muslims and Arabs? At the same time, Muslims were afraid of minority Israelites for their superiority in military and nuclear capability. The Arab Muslims realized the fact that if they go to war against Israelites, they will be devastated with heavy loss. Along with Muslims, Israelites would also experience too much loss. Apart from that, Israelites happened to indulge in many wars for 65 years and completely exhausted. So, at this stage, they have been longing for permanent peace only, but not wars. It is said in the prophecy that the Anti-Christ will plant Tabernacles of his palace between the seas (the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea), and in the glorious holy mountains in Jerusalem. Then, he will stop the reestablishment of the sacrificial system, and keep the image of his god in the temple and put a mark of his god. This is also referred to in the Bible as the “time of Jacob’s troubles,” or “Israel’s darkest hour,” or God calls it, “Great Tribulation Period”. Then all the nations will join together and persecute Israel. At that critical situation, God will come and fight for His people. Then, naturally, God will win the battle and permit His people to live happily and peacefully in Jerusalem (Israel). So, let us wait for that precious time and pray for everlasting peace in the holy city Jerusalem.

### ***What is Replacement Theology?***

It is mentioned six times in the Book of Revelation about a 1,000 year Millennial Kingdom. Israelites had openly rejected Christ because of God’s plan and purpose. So, the present state of Israel had no room in God’s end times, and the returning of Jewish people from different countries in 1948 was only the working of humanity, but not God. Therefore, none of the biblical promises made to Israelites becomes ineffective, and all these promises are transferred to the Church. The Church, quoted here, has a long history. It is not the biblical church in broadest sense, nor the church of Bible-believing Christians, nor the church where Jewish persecution has been taking place. Some notable personalities have different opinions about Jews during the 2<sup>nd</sup>

century and beyond. Many great fathers of the Church referred Jews as rejected people who were doomed to the life of unimportance and misery. They were treated as despised people in the society, or public. This image of Jewish people, how and why they were hated, has been continued in Christian preaching and popular teachings also for centuries. Some other Christian leaders who vomited venom against Jewish people, like Saint Jerome, who commented that the Jews grew like worms in repopulating certain areas from which they were expelled and later, they returned to their homeland. A famous bishop by name Saint Ambrose of Milan happened to rebuke the emperor Theodorus because he warned him to rebuild the burned synagogue in Callinicum in Babylonia. Another famous man, Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, expelled the Jews from the ancient community. So, the Jews who were scattered into many countries in the world happened to be humiliated and persecuted for centuries, because of God's curse on them.

During the Middle Ages, among the European countries, the people formed a different opinion about the Jews. According to their understanding, the Jews were accused because they were responsible for killing Jesus Christ on the cross brutally. This was the main reason why the Jews were hated and more ill-treated by the Europeans. The church people scolded the Jews for having a blood-sucking attitude. It was also believed that the Jews used to kill the innocent heathen children and use their blood for religious rituals. These were all the main reasons for the church authorities to persecute the Jews during the Middle Ages. In addition to that, some Jews were expelled from their countries. Some were forced to convert themselves into Christian religion, and many were massacred. Some more Jews in Western as well as Eastern Europe were murdered in Christian programs? Why were the Jews facing that kind of punishment for centuries? The only blunder they committed was they were born in Jewish community. With this adverse historical background in the past, the Church considered herself a suitable replacement for Israel and the Jewish people.

This replacement theology wants to find out something in the character of God Himself. It deals with one of the most dangerous and unimaginable teachings confronting the true church in the present days. It is undoubtedly painful to say that most of the people who embarrassed this teaching are believers. And also it is believed that some denominations and the world council of churches are behind this replacement theology. Their approach clearly shows that they are Pro-Palestinians and Anti-Israelites. According to their plan, they want to pursue all the Bible believers to stop their moral support to Israelites.

- 1.) This replacement theology openly rejects the terms of God's, and regarding the plans of Almighty God for in His plan of the redemption of the earth.
- 2.) This replacement theology attacks the very character of God, His faithfulness towards His word, His omniscience to know all things, and His omnipotence to fulfill His covenants and promises.
- 3.) Through the teachings, the Church replaces Israel because of her "sin". This teaching and replacing Israel totally ignores the real fact of history that has been revealing her secrets for centuries. They also say *Christendom* as sinful as Israel herself. Then, these teachers feel proud of themselves and go forward for the blessings of God, and that He gave to Israel and the same blessing for them also. At last, they allow the curses remain with Israel.
- 4.) Then the old Anti-semitism remains in the new attire. It was unbiblical in the past, unbiblical in the present, and unbiblical in the future also. But the word of God does not change, and it is quite clear on this subject.

Jesus will return finally at the earliest as the lion of the tribe of Judah and heir to Davidic throne. He will try to replace Israel with *Christendom*, which is planning to put herself into the hands of Anti-Christ. Jerusalem shall one day be called the city of peace, and it will be ruled by the king of righteousness. Due to that reason, Jerusalem shall be at the center of history's final conflict

and the “great tribulation”. As true believers in Christ, we are to participate in a war and call by our commander-in-chief as the soldiers of cross. God will not save us if we simply remain as spectators of war, but our responsibility and privilege is to put on the whole the armor of God and fight tooth and nail the wonderful battle of faith. Our sovereign king will be triumphant, and He will be glorified through this victory. Then, as true believers, we will also become victorious in Him.

### ***How Israelites Inhabited Their Land***

The passage mentioned below can throw more light on the promises made by God to His chosen people, Israelites, and show those promises were transferred to the churches. But there is not even an iota of truth or evidence supporting this statement. As a matter of fact, what is said in these lines has not yet been fulfilled. God chose Israelites as His own loved ones, in spite of their ungrateful attitude. So, it is said, “For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all that are upon the face of the earth” (Deuteronomy 7:6). God promised eternal salvation for Israelites. They shall be saved in Lord with an everlasting salvation. He said, “Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end, o, I being near my righteousness. It shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry, and I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory” (Isaiah 46:13).

God wants to bless Israelites abundantly. He addressed Jacob as His servant and Israelites as His chosen people. He called them and said He formed them in the womb itself. He would pour waters upon him (Jacob) if he is thirsty and flood upon the dry ground. He also said that He would pour holy spirit upon his seed and bless his descendants. After many blessings, God wants to try to implement His redemption plan. “For the Lord hath thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused saith thy God, for a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for a

moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer” (Isaiah 54:6-8).

### ***Israelites’ Future Salvation***

Jesus Christ was very much grieved at the stiff-necked attitude of Israelites. If we go deep into the history of the rulers of Davidic dynasty and the miserable condition of God’s temple during their reign, there are no words to give the real picture. Being Jewish kings and descendants of David, how they ill-treated God’s temple is really heartbreaking and beyond comprehension. So, Christ said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest prophets, stonest them that are sent unto thee, when they were scattered in desolation and depression, God gathered them together as hen gathers her blood (her chicks) under her wings. God finally said they would not see His face anymore until they repent and say blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” (Quote)

According to some biblical scholars and historians, the Book of Romans, written by Apostle Paul, was considered to be the greatest of all books he wrote. This book is, as a matter of fact, an extraordinary assessment of Israelites and the Church. In Romans Chapter 11, Paul penned a statement: “I say then Hath God cast away His people?” “God forbid,” for I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away His people which he foreknew” (Romans 11:1-2). Here, Apostle Paul was asking whether God has really cast away His people.

The immediate answer from replacement theology is “yes”. But Paul’s answer was negative, and he said, “*God forbid*”, which means absolutely not. What Paul wanted to say here is that God would never cast away His people. But God abandoned them just by transferring their promises to the Church. To be more clear, Paul felt that Israelites were kept aside like a vehicle through which salvation comes to the world. The vehicle here is compared to the Church. The setting aside of Israelites is a blessing to the world. So, the original means of salvation is Israelites themselves. In such case, they returned to favor means blessing after blessing. Finally, God’s promises to Israelites

would lead to bless the whole world. Paul firmly believed that Israelites being kept aside was purely temporary, and they would be restored at any time. The ultimate manifestation of the glory of God shall be the reconciliation of the Jewish people. At this moment, God wants to fulfill His promises to Israelites. The opinion of Apostle Paul about Israelites is crystal-clear. He said, "Casting away or setting away of Jewish people is not a permanent decision of God, but He will allow them one day for restoration. God is still walking with them and molding them into common people. He will one day redeem them as how things are going on nowadays is the proof". Paul's 13 letters, called Epistles, are a great contribution to the New Testament.

Some biblical scholars commented that without the thirteen books of Apostle Paul, there is no New Testament. His pre-mature death made the contemporary writers spell-bound. It is very surprising that replacement proponents are doing something which is against the saying of Paul. He calls the first fruit Israel holy, and her holiness is spread to the Church, not the other way around. In addition to that, the Church has been grafted in God's redemption plan for humanity and can partake of some of Israelites' promises. Anyway, Paul's wish is that the Church should not be with high-mindedness and feel proud of Israel. But whatever is done by the replacement adherents, they are in their ego, proclaim themselves that they are the Church, they are the promised ones, but God has cut off Israelites.

In such case, we may be exalted because it is no more. So, the position of Israelites may prompt to request replacement proponents to think about the wonderful statement of Apostle Paul. His impression is that if God does not heed to the natural branches, we can take it for granted, He will not spare.

## ***Conclusion***

The Church appears to be more deceitful and bored to seek and usurp the promises of God to Israelites, because Israelites are Israelites and the Church is the Church. While defending Israelites claim for God's promises, we have

to consider their mistakes also. On the other hand, we have to keep in mind that Israelites were God's chosen people with some purpose. So, it is said, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself above all, people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you because ye' were more in number than any people for ye' were the fewest of all people. As the Lord loved you, he would keep the oath, which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen from the hand of pharaoh, king of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 7:6-8).

It appears there is no indication in any scripture about the promises transferred to the Church. Yet the replacement theology says, "If His promises have not been fulfilled, then they have surely been transferred to us and the Church". We have to remember one thing in this regard. That is, there are specific promises made by God to Israelites, and the Church has nothing to do with such promises. To take it for granted, the Church has many promises of its own for the members to rejoice. Let us see what Prophet Jeremiah says as a concluding passage in this topic.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord that I will raise unto David (Israel), a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called *THE LORD IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS* (The Lord is our righteousness). Amen.

## *Should Christians follow Mosaic Law*

Once a well-established congregation members fell into a legalistic error over an issue concerning “Mosaic law.” The burning problem of some believers of a particular church was whether they should accept the annual sacrifices, as mentioned as the law in the first five books of Moses in the Bible called (Pentateuch). As a matter of fact, that particular group of the evangelical churches have been trying to convince the other members by saying that they had to become more Jewish by observing some Old Testament doctrines, such as eating “Kosher” (ritually clean) foods only, then observing Jewish “Shabbat” (Sabbath that is attending church on Friday night or Saturday daytime before sunset or both), and also undergoing circumcision. Those believers who would accept these three major practices might insist on not calling Jesus as Jesus in English but in Hebrew tongue as “Yeshua.” In the same way, they might wish to call Mary and Joseph as “Miriam and Yosef.” They had to observe also the most important holy Jewish holidays of “Rosh Hashanah” (the New year) and “Yom Kippur” (the Day of Atonement).

This method of teaching and preaching in the Christian churches is really most fascinating and legally praise-worthy because this is not only for the Jewish people who happen to be the followers of Jesus Christ, but this system is also propagated by the Gentile believers. This method of preaching can be seen clearly in the one Christian denomination, the Seventh Day Adventists. They follow the seventh day as Sabbath and then the Ten Commandments. At the same time, there are some non-Adventist churches who want to live like Jewish people. Such congregation members think too much of themselves and their faith and finally become direct opposition to the clear teaching of even the New Testament scriptures.

Let us think for a while about the law of Moses and how far it is necessary for us to observe. There is no doubt that it is a complicated issue. For our clear understanding, let us look into some of the pages in the New

Testament with the hope and belief that those pages would certainly give us (Romans 3:21). Here, the witness is referring to what was just taught immediately prior to Paul's teaching on the Mosaic law and how it was insufficient to bring men and women into a right standing with God.

Therefore, people were taught about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, ushered in the new age of humanity's relationship with God. In such circumstances, people need not offer animal sacrifices and strictly observe the contents of Mosaic law to find acceptance with God. Christ made a permanent sacrifice of His life and with that humanity could achieve the acceptance of God, and finally eternal life. People believed in Him completely and freely for His unfathomable and magnanimous sacrifice. As a result of His wonderful sacrifice, today He became the fulfillment of Mosaic law. So, what must have happened in the Church of Galatia? It called a significant wound in the mind of Apostle Paul. Therefore, he started his teaching against the foul teaching, and it was quite clear. He referred to the false teaching of the Judaizers as another or different gospel and condemned it vehemently.

He pointed out something which was foreign to the truth on which the Church of Christ was built. Paul boldly attacked the Judaizers and said that they foolishly perverted the Gospel of Christ. Paul was incensed at the false teachers, and at the same time he was dumbfounded by the congregation that was feasting on the theologically motivated preachings of Judaizers. Paul somehow wanted to set right the little-minded believers in the Galatian church and keep them on the right track. But he could not comprehend how they had to be out of that slough of despond and foolish teaching. In this connection, he desperately wrote to the believers, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truths, before whose eyes, Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you" (Galatians 3:1).

So far we have seen the painful remorse of Paul against Judaizers teaching in sympathy with the congregation of Galatia. Does it appear rude on the part

of Paul to speak in that tone? No, not at all because he was completely in utter desperation and frustrated at the innocent believers when they were led into the wrong track. He thought about them like a loving father whose son has gone woefully astray. He was not looking down upon them. His remarks about them were reasonable. He grabbed at the Galatian children and shook them strongly. He tried to awaken them from their deep slumber and put them on the theological ground. “Snap out of it, you foolish Galatians,” he passionately implored, “Get your head back in the game, you know about this business, about the Mosaic law, is nonsense, what has happened to your reason and logic?”

Paul followed this step strongly because there is no room for any argument. Then he wrote, “This only would I learn of you, received ye the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?” (Galatians 3:2). Actually, the Galatians should have known the answer to this question. As they were very slow in receiving, Paul even tickled their minds for stimulation. He again questioned them, “Are you so foolish, having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Galatians 3:3). They should have understood this at least correctly. As he said, we are saved by faith through the spirit. When he used the word *foolish* on them, that does not mean he wanted to demean or insult them; but correct their way of life. Actually, Paul had due respect for the Church of Galatians, and he loved them. The main reason was that he was thoroughly bewildered at their wrong thinking and was disappointed at their lack of correct judgment. He was very much concerned about the welfare of the congregation. So, he said, “You are saved by the grace of God, a work of the Holy Spirit- how then can you turn around and live out your salvation by physical works, specifically by preaching the Mosaic law? Is circumcision going to save you? Is eating *Kosher* going to save you? Of course, not my beloved- but foolish Galatian children- now, stop all this at once and return to the basic teachings. I have imparted to you and do it now.”

This issue is, as a matter of fact, very complicated, and Paul was under the impression that they would correct themselves by their actions. But regarding the observation of Mosaic law, in order to achieve salvation by grace alone—was deadly. According to him, many works under the law are cursed. As it is written, cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of law to do them. He also said that no man is justified by law in the sight of God, it is evident for “the just shall live by faith.” He finally concluded by saying that salvation is through faith in Christ, but not by following the Mosaic law. The issue of Christians and the Mosaic law takes a prolonged discussion in the Epistle to the Galatians.

### ***Christ and the Mosaic Law***

Jesus Christ, in His early ministry, travelled through towns and villages in the region of Galilee in Israel. While going from place to place, He, at last, came to a mountainside probably near Capernaum, ascended a mountain to a certain height and sat down. It must have been the location of “Sermon of the Mount.” It was customary for Jewish rabbis at that time to sit at an elevated place while teaching their students. So, Jesus also followed the Jewish tradition and he too sat at an elevated place. His disciples stood at a distance as if they were His bodyguards. In the meantime, many Galileans gathered to hear the teaching of Jesus Christ. Whenever Jesus started His preaching, there used to be pin-drop silence, great attention, and wonderful attendance. The people that gathered there at that time were humbled Jewish fishermen, silversmiths, farmers, bakers, shopkeepers, brickmakers, carpenters, housewives, etc. And without doubt, there used to be some Roman soldiers also to maintain peace.

When all the crowd settled properly and concentrated their attention on Jesus, He would start His teaching. He told the assembled Galileans that those “poor in spirit were blessed, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). He addressed those mourned people and assured them comfort. He promised the meek that they would “inherit the earth.” He gave assurance to

those people who were seeking righteousness that they would certainly find it. He told the merciful that they would receive mercy in return. He finally told those who followed Him in faith should suffer because the earth would be hostile toward such people. But in heaven, they would be awaited with open arms to receive such faithful ones.

The Galatian multitude simply became spellbound at the comfortable words of Jesus. His words clubbed with heavenly wisdom, consoled and penetrated into the hearts of Galatian men and women. Then in extreme wonder, they questioned among themselves who that man must have been with His extraordinary wisdom. Jesus could guess what they were thinking about Him. So, He simply answered, "Think not that; I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17). The above said words might not give a full explanation to the people of northern Israel that He was Israel's Messiah, the son of God, and even God Himself. But at last, He told them He would fulfill Mosaic law, and that was the purpose of His teaching. He openly claimed that He was for the fulfillment of Mosaic law, but not to destroy it, nor He was going to establish a rival system of law. He was not even planning to contradict, alter, or change the law of Moses.

Jesus had come not to eradicate the moral content of the heart of the Mosaic law. Jesus explained this briefly in His Sermon on the Mount. As He explained, the heart of the Mosaic law was to produce in the hearts of the Israelites, humanity, comfort, meekness, righteousness, mercy, purity, peace, and love. This was the heart of the Mosaic law. Jesus Christ wholeheartedly wished for the success of these things in humanity. We have to remember one important point in the Mosaic law. It is concerned more in morality and gave more stress on the sacrificial system, why because God required the blood of slaughtered animals to cover temporarily the sins of humankind. According to God, His people always commit sin and thus sacrificial system must continue until a permanent solution is found. And Jesus Christ became that permanent

solution, since humankind could not provide any other alternative. God provided His son as a permanent alternative, since He lived a flawless and sinless life in this world. Jesus Christ met all the criteria needed for the humanity's permanent sacrifice for sin. So, we must accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour because our sins were pardoned, and we were given the assurance of eternal life.

After Jesus Christ was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead, the sacrificial system was also immediately considered null-and-void. But one thing we have to remember in this context. God did not declare that blood sacrifices were no longer needed. They were always wanted from the time of the sin committed in the Garden of Eden, until this movement. Therefore, shedding of blood for the atonement of humanity's sin is inevitable. Before the advent of Christ and His crucifixion, blood came through slaughtered animals' sacrifices. Here, the readers are reminded to pay more attention to understand this technical point. The atonement of sin with the slaughtered animals is purely temporary. But the atonement of sin with human blood became permanent, and that is the blood of Jesus Christ. So, the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross, His shedding of blood, His burial, and resurrection became sufficient to meet the requirements after all men and women who wholeheartedly accepted Him as their Saviour and Lord. Basing on the above said naked truth, can the believers of Christ show due regard to the Mosaic law? First of all, let us look into it favorably for its moral intent. It was designed to accomplish in us and was beautifully articulated by Jesus Christ.

So, we should take it into our hearts, cherish it, and live by its principles. However, we are not going to practice that Mosaic law in the present days as it was necessary for ancient Israelites. In nutshell, what Jesus has fulfilled and caused to start is the practice of Mosaic law. Why did Jesus Christ discourage the believers to practice Mosaic law? Because it involved the sacrificial system, dietary laws, the observing of Jewish holidays, and male circumcision. At the same time, if we try to observe those four fundamental principles, and if we

don't know our love towards God, our simple observance of them is a colossal waste since we don't achieve salvation. After our thorough understanding of Mosaic law, it appears like a "schoolmaster," which led the Jewish people to Christ. So, they might be justified by faith. Jesus Himself fulfilled all the requirements of Mosaic law and all the humanity from its practice. Now, we are not at all bound to continue its physical requirements, but the moral principles would continue. To say in some other way, what for the animal sacrifices, the dietary system, the observing of holidays, and male circumcision were in practice have been totally accomplished in the life sacrifice and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Then the only thing required is that all of us must accept Christ as our Saviour and Lord, and His final sacrifice for our sins. So, with one man's sacrifice, the whole humanity is saved from sin and from the Mosaic law.

Apostle Paul also made this point crystal clear. He wrote, "For Christ is the end of the law, for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Romans 10:4). According to him, Mosaic law was never the means by which we are declared righteous in God's eyes. It is through Christ, and Christ alone, that we are declared righteous. Paul also said that Mosaic law was abolished for both Jews and Gentiles. There were no commandments or ordinances to observe and declare us righteous as all those things were fulfilled by Jesus Himself.

### ***Importance of Shabbat (Sabbath)***

In spite of the clear and simple teaching of the previous passages, there were yet a large number of Christian believers who felt it necessary to observe Jewish Shabbat on Friday nights and Saturday before sunset. We have to understand them properly how far they were correct in their opinion, apart from their faith in the New Testament. One day, Jesus went with His disciples through green fields in the later part of His ministry. It was the day of Sabbath. The disciples began to pick up some grains and started to eat them. Some Pharisees happened to be there at the time and got angry with Jesus. They accused Him and His disciples for breaking the Mosaic law. They said, "Behold,

thy disciples doing that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day.” They further said that Jesus had broken the law of God, in any way, then, He too would have committed sin and thereby, He was not leading a perfect life and would not be qualified Himself to be the perfect sacrifice for the sin.

Here, let us try to assess the mental setup of the Pharisees for their hasty accusation of Jesus over a petty issue. How were the minds of the Pharisees in that era? The Pharisaic tradition involved into an array of petty rules. They used to make a mountain out of a mole for every minute thing. Their main focus was on works almost without morality. But these types of traditions were ignored by the common citizens of Israel. These Pharisees paid more concentration on the Sabbath day observations and requirements. According to some written collection of the Jewish oral traditions and laws appeared to be curious and obscured. For instance, the Pharisees said that Jews should not carry a “burden” on a Sabbath day. Then what must be that burden in their saying? Their burden in their point of view was carrying a piece of paper, horses’ hairs, wax, a piece of broken earthenware, animal food, a dried fig, etc. So, if the people in those days carried any-one of such things, they were considered carrying some burden with them on the Sabbath. Then they were treated as committing sin against the God of Israel.

In addition to that, Israelites would eat well-prepared food on that Sabbath day. If a hen laid an egg on that day, they would not eat it. However, if the hen had been kept for fattening but not laying eggs, they would eat it. Such formalities are really strange and surprising though they have been made legalistic. Healing on the Sabbath day was limited to the life and death situations. And there were some exceptions for emergency incidents, like removing a splinter from the eye. We also know how Jesus was attacked while He was trying to heal a sick person on the Sabbath day. Now they could find a chance to attack Him in the grain fields and questioned Him why He violated the Sabbath rules. Jesus reminded the Pharisees how, about 1,000 years ago, David, while running from King Saul to save himself, ate the Tabernacle’s

shew bread, which was supposed to be eaten by priests only. He gave another example of the priests in the temple, how they used to profane the Sabbath day by their activities like doing sacrifices, lighting the incense, and so on. But they were called blameless and perfect. So, Jesus told them, “But it ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltiness” (Matthew 12:7). The Pharisees were no doubt blind to the merciful and compassionate aspect of the Mosaic law. And so in their blindness, they condemned such a great man like Jesus Christ, as guilty who was even greater than the temple.

Jesus Christ, while offering His lordship and the fulfillment of the Mosaic law, assured “the son of man is Lord even on the Sabbath day”. But what does it mean? In Hebrews 10:1, it is said that the Mosaic law was a “shadow” of good things to come and not very image of things. A shadow is nothing but an image created by an object. In the same way, Mosaic law was only a shadow of Jesus Christ. Just as a shadow is real but not a permanent one, the condition of the Mosaic law was also the same. Just as a shadow is the indicator of a real object, the Mosaic law was also an indicator of the coming Saviour. Once Jesus comes to the earth, we can take it for granted that he would replace the shadow as it were and become the fulfillment of it. Therefore, we as true believers should offer our lives to Jesus Christ, for the purpose of the fulfillment and the requirement of Sabbath. To say in a simple way, “To trust in Christ is to observe the Sabbath.”

In this situation, the readers might get a genuine doubt how people have been observing Sabbath simply by trusting God (Christ). For ancient Israelites, the seventh day was declared as Sabbath, the day of rest. As God rested from His six days of creation, Israelites were also following the same by resting on that day. They would not do any important work. Men and women would take rest on that day, but engage themselves in doing the service of their loving and most gracious God, whether the work was concerned to physical

service of God or meditation upon Him. And that service must be for the goodwill between the creator and His creation.

One Hebrew writer said in this connection, "There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath seized from his own work, as God did his." What must be the real meaning of the word "rest" here, according to the writer? He is speaking of the rest theologically needed for a searching soul to find out the acceptance before God. When once a man or woman comes to that and is accepted naturally, the problem is solved. So, Jesus confirms this by saying "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for, I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:29-30). In other words, we should not struggle much to come to Christ. It is not difficult to secure God's salvation. So, it is said that "If thou shalt confess with thine mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Roman 10:9).

As the body would get some physical rest on the Sabbath day, the soul also must find its spiritual Sabbath rest in Christ. So, the outcome of the above said message is that Christ is our Sabbath, Christ is our rest. Since Christ is now satisfying all the requirements of the Sabbath on our behalf, the believers need not worry and bind over to observe the laws of Sabbath. And Apostle Paul had his own saying regarding the Sabbath, "Let no man therefore, judge you, in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holiday or of the new moon or of the Sabbath days." What must have prompted Paul to speak like that? Because the Judaizers were telling in the Church of Colosie that they should observe certain Mosaic laws. Among many, they suggested dietary requirements, holidays celebrations, and Sabbath rules. But Paul's answer was "No to all." Paul said with authority that Jesus, by dying on the cross and raising from the dead, blotted out the handwriting of the ordinances (Mosaic law), that was against Christians and contrary to them. He took that law and nailed it to His cross. To say briefly, the laws of Judaism and traditions as a source of salvation

were dead and buried. What required now is faith in Christ. So, if the believers do not observe the Sabbath rules, they need not be afraid of judgment. Christ did everything for us. In Christ, Sabbath is eternal and everyday observance.

### ***Eating Kosher***

Most of the Christians in the churches insist on the dietary system of ancient Israelites, even today. But they have no authentic information regarding that, nor mentioned anywhere in the New Testament. The Pharisees attacked Jesus again when they saw His disciples did not wash their hands before eating bread. How is this referred to the old traditions? This ceremonial washing of hands was created by the rabbis. Actually, this ritual washing involved cups, pitchers, and kettles also. The Jewish leaders framed out a plan to circumvent God's law. But Jesus took the Pharisees and the other leaders of law to task. He once again contrasted the physical observance of the law or tradition with the far more significant moral and compassionate requirements of the law. In the meantime, a good number of people gathered around the differing parties and enjoyed the confrontation.

Whenever Jesus came across a gathering, He took it as an opportunity to teach them something. So, He immediately drew the attention of the crowd and said, "Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, thus differeth a man." In the following lines He said "Purging all meals", in other words "Purging all foods." Again in the modern version of the Bible, Jesus declared, "All foods clean". It is really very difficult to come to an understanding and satisfactory conclusion regarding the food topic. But Jesus seized the opportunity and declared that there is no "unclean."

Hence observed the Mosaic dietary system. What Jesus wanted to say is food cannot possibly defile the human soul. If we go on studying about the Pharisees and Sadducees, they appear to have only negative thinking and

nothing else. So it seems impossible for the Jewish people of Jesus's time to grasp correctly the complicated interpretation of Mosaic law. Added to that, majority of Israelites had little understanding about Jesus's true identity as Messiah and Son of God, even they did not understand the word of God. They bluntly refused to accept these identifications in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ happened to declare about food as "all foods clean," or some other occasion. In the Book of Acts Chapter 10, we know the story of Saint Peter's vision and how he fell into a trance. He saw in his vision, heaven opened, and a big vessel descended to the earth, with four-footed beasts, wild beasts, fowls that fly in the air, and creeping things. Then Peter heard a voice saying, raise Peter, kill and eat. Since he was a close observer of ordinances, he replied that he would not eat anything that is common or unclean. But the Lord was firm. He said, "What God hath cleaned that call not thou common." We can see here how Peter's vision served two purposes. The first one was confirmed that the dietary laws were no more to observe. The Jewish people are now eating anything and everything freely. The second point is that they stopped ill-treating of Gentiles as mean or inferior to them as they did previously.

They considered all as one, equal in Christ. Peter also made this point crystal clear when he met a group of Gentile believers. He said, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation, but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Then in the book of Romans, Apostle Paul confirmed and declared as "all foods clean for eating by God's people." Most of the believers wholeheartedly accepted the teachings of Jesus Christ, Peter and Paul and perfectly understood them. They felt free to eat anything they like. And for them, the Mosaic law was no more in existence. But there are some Jews who might be called orthodox or fanatic, still wanted to stick on to the Mosaic law and refused to eat "unkosher" food. Others, who joined such Jews were Gentile believers, who could not understand that the meat sacrificed to the idols had nothing to do with the principles because they were lifeless. But

Paul expressed his opinion by saying that eating of “unkosher” food is only the good understanding of strong believers. And if the weak believers oppose eating of unkosher, it is left with their destiny. So, some of the present Christian believers may insist on more to honor the Mosaic dietary law for the purpose of being righteous before God. But there is no biblical support to such mean teaching and true Christians should not be disturbed by false teaching of some selfish people.

### ***Male Circumcision***

A group of young Christians happened to meet a Jewish believer and asked him whether they should circumcise their newborn sons basing on the Mosaic law. The Jewish believers again questioned him whether they were still practicing the Mosaic law. Of all the New Testament writers, it was only Apostle Paul who vehemently opposed the system of Mosaic law. When a follower of Jesus Christ asked Him whether he should circumcise his son on the eight day of his birth, His immediate answer was “No, no, not at all.” Certainly, this statement was strong, direct and indisputable. So, in the Book of Romans 2:28, Paul clearly said that it is faith and obedience to God that identifies God’s people, but not the observance of Mosaic law. While this hot discussion was going on about circumcision as an act of spiritual perfection, he said, “For he is not a Jew which is an outwardly neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh.”

What Paul exactly wanted to say here is that a Jew might be physically circumcised, but it would not make him a true believer in God by birth and righteousness. The circumcision that a man should undergo when he was eight days old in his flesh no doubt fulfilled the Mosaic law and made him to identify as a Jew, but it would not do anything with regard to salvation. There, Paul repeated and wanted a different type of circumcision, what we call spiritual circumcision. To be more clear, the true circumcision must be concerned to heart but not to the flesh. Again, true circumcision is not bodily, but for the soul in faith, love and obedience to God. Paul repeated this time and again for

correct understanding. So, he said that physical circumcision is not a requisite qualification for salvation. This issue was discussed many a time thoroughly without conclusion, and Paul gave his ultimate judgment on physical circumcision. He said, "Circumcision was nothing and uncircumcision was nothing, but only keeping the Commandments of God" (1 Corinthians 7:19).

Let us study some more examples regarding this burning topic, as quoted by Paul in Galatians 5:6. It is said, "For in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." And in the New International Version of the Bible, it is mentioned "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value." And another example, "To be circumcised after salvation in Christ is to cut off God's grace and to be entangled in the Mosaic law." Yet, this Mosaic law has no power to save the souls. So to say, circumcision is a return to the law, where Christ is of no value. Paul continued this topic, even in the Church of Colosse. He reminded the believers in Christ whether they were Jews or Gentiles, they were living together with the mercy of God. In other words, they have everything in Christ, which they needed for salvation and holy living. Paul finally gave his wonderful promise. He said, "In whom (Christ) also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (Colossians 2:11). So, this circumcision of the heart was something that was shared by every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. This circumcision of the heart was a symbolic of our new spiritual rebirth, the cleansing of souls from sin, and entering into our eternal life with Christ. This circumcision of Christ and by Christ is the only confirmation of our conversion, and it is the circumcision that would save our mortal souls.

### ***Conclusion***

Apostle Paul asked the Galatians in his letter, "Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain, He therefore that ministereth to you the spirit and worketh miracles among you doth he if by the works of the law

or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness” (Galatians 3:4-6). What Paul wanted to ask the Galatians was whether they achieved salvation by following the rules from the Mosaic law or through the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. It is a naked truth that all of us were saved by faith but not by works. The Mosaic law is nothing here, and it has no impact on the present Christianity. Actually, God established this Mosaic law on Mount Sinai with some purpose. God also introduced seven festivals at the foot of Mount Sinai for the redemption plan of His people from their sins. So, the Mosaic law was useful only to show the way toward God, but not to provide salvation. The main reason was that men and women would not follow the rules and regulations perfectly.

Paul wrote again to the Galatians, “But before faith came, we were kept, under the law shut up unto the faith, which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore, the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we must be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster” (Galatians 3:23-25). In this passage, two phrases are used with some emphasis, “kept under” and “shut up.” Here, these two phrases are used to describe the condition of the life of believers under the Mosaic law. The Mosaic law here served as a schoolmaster to show us the way toward God. And now that God has provided us all requirements to redemption. So at present, we don’t require that schoolmaster (Mosaic law) anymore.

Concerning the circumcision of course, there might be some physical benefits from the health point of view, like eating of healthy foods which are mentioned as popular biblical diets, and taking complete rest on the Sabbath day, which reflects upon the believers of God. But, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believers were never willingly inflicted upon themselves or others, the stringent and spiritually suffocating practices of the Mosaic law. The New Testament certainly would not allow such methods of living out one’s faith. All people might accept wholeheartedly this Mosaic law and its perfect place in the Old Testament (or Old Covenant). But in the New

Testament, that law faithfully and more effectively achieved the purpose, and it was replaced by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. And for the confirmation of this truth, it is better if we can look into the Book of Romans.

There is another striking point to which we have to adhere to the law of Moses. That is, once Jesus Christ was engaged in a debate with the Pharisees and Sadducees. At that time, a lawyer who was well versed in that subject came to Jesus and asked Him, “Master, what is the Great Commandment in the law?” (Matthew 22:36). Actually, what the lawyer wanted to know from Christ was, “What is the greatest of the Mosaic law?” And Jesus without further discussion, replied, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. That is the first and great commandment. And the second unto it, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.’ On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40). This is the heart and soul of the Mosaic law, and all humanity is supposed to adhere to that. But Apostle Paul quoted similar type of law. “Bear ye one another’s burden and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). The fundamental principle of our walking with Christ is about faith or concerning faith, love, and humble submission to Him. By totally submitting ourselves to Jesus, we become adherence to the Mosaic law in the true sense of the word. In Romans 8:3-4, Paul wrote, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin, in the flesh. That the righteousness of law might be fulfilled in us, who work not after the flesh, but after the spirit.”

So, by following Christ with our faith, and walk with Him with His cross on our shoulders, we can achieve everything necessary for our salvation and eternal life. Because He is omnipresent, He was present in the Old Testament and He is all in all in the New Testament. Therefore, it is beautifully said, that the New Testament was concealed in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament through Christ.

## *Who Is The Next Enemy to Israel ?*

Since the modern Israel celebrated her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, we are reminded of the pagan empires that reigned with the master plan of total destruction, but they failed miserably. Then, who will be the next enemy to Israel? As we have studied, Israel was controlled by Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Mede-Persia, Greece, Rome, the Ottoman Turks, the Nazis, etc. Even though these empires and their governments controlled Israel, they totally hated the Jews for no fault of theirs. This continuous hating of Jews by the pagans has been blind and not justified. And those who love the goodness and justice naturally oppose such blind hatred. It is like a bad dream, and such mental setup can never be cured. In fact, people talked about it more increasingly and liked it 3,500 years ago. As mentioned in the Bible, the pharaoh of Egypt ill-treated Israelites as slaves. At that time, God said to His servant Moses, "I have surely seen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt..... and I am come down to deliver them" (Exodus 3.7-8).

Unfortunately, history has repeated again and again about how pharaohs have arisen and persecuted Jewish people and made God to come down, to deliver them from such calamities. This non-stop persecution has been continued with the Assyrians, Babylonians, Mede-East Persians, and Greeks. All these empires implemented their own methods to persecute, imprison, murder, and plunder the Jewish people who were no other than the descendants of Abraham through Jacob. Then, on this side of Calvary, or otherwise known as the common era, the period of Jesus Christ, Israel was controlled by Romans, Christian crusaders, the Spanish inquisitions, the Russian programs, and the Holocaust are all the representatives of the continuous and relentless persecution of Jewish people. They celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, or anniversary, on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The importance of this celebration is that the majority of Jews came back to their homeland from different places after more than 19 centuries of wandering. Even after they got independence in 1948, Israel had to defend herself many a time from attacks, and 6 of them led her into wars.

First of all, many nations of the world became sympathetic towards Israel because of the atrocities done to her during World War II. History tells us that about 6,000,000 Jewish people were killed mercilessly in that war by Germany's dictator, Adolf Hitler of Nazis. So, the sympathy of other nations was extended to her as she has been boldly fighting for her survival in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, and 2006. However, Israel was following the 1973 conflict which was called "Yom Kippur" (which means the Day of Atonement) war. But during this time, the public sympathy and opinion began to decrease gradually, and the attention of the public was diverted towards the Middle East.

The main reason for that sudden change was due to the scarcity of oil and the soaring prices of petroleum products. With this, people and automobile owners became unhappy, and the oil owners almost stopped their supply of oil to Israel. Then, many nations in the world turned their deaf ear towards Israel's position, but America alone continued her moral support. The Semitism again began to show its ugly face. Though it has been there always, the oil crisis made it more conspicuous. The sudden appearance of anti-Semitism forced the historians and scientists to explain clearly. Many people blamed Israel for her unique religion and others for the strange nature of some Jewish people.

It is absolutely wrong on the part of people to possess such hatred towards Jews. We can take it for granted that it is the action of Satan to frustrate and defeat the plan and program of God, who has been planning for the redemption of the world. The declaration made by Jesus can never be treated as null and void. He said, "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). God in His sovereignty chose Israel as an instrument for universal blessings. As we read, it was through Jewish people only the Messiah- redeemer was to come into this world. His first appearance as a lamb of God was for the noble purpose of sacrificing Himself for the sins of the world. His second appearance or coming as the lion of the tribe of Judah, with some goals like the recapturing

of man's last destiny of ruling the Earth which was snatched away by Satan. So, for the fulfillment of His plans, the existence of Jewish people is necessary. This is the reason why the long and continuous war was going on between the people of God and Satan.

Let us look into the title of this topic, "Who is next?" As far as possible let us try to answer this sensitive question. All the nations that turned against the tiny country of Israel experienced the wrath of God. The fact is that, for 65 years, the United States has been supporting Israel, partly because of the Jewish population and the influence that the Jewish people were setting in this country. It is said that the Jewish population in this country (USA) is about 6 million, but the same Jewish population in Israel is only 3 million. Added to that, its foreign policy and Israel's welfare are coincided. In spite of all that, things are rapidly changing in America. At present, the USA is unable to continue her moral support because of the increase of the Anti-Israel movement among people through the news media, and also the constant enmity between Israel and Palestine, causing disinterest in the minds of Americans. Above all, America's financial and moral conditions are getting worse day by day.

So, the position of America towards Israel remains the same. If the prices of gas will increase from time to time, or if the Americans experience another terrorist attack of 9/11, or if the unemployment rate becomes worse in the nation, or if lawlessness remains unchecked, or if shortages in food becomes a reality, then the American government may think of some changes in her foreign policy. If the events mentioned above become reality then America will have to look for a scapegoat. And in this case, the scapegoat throughout the world will be, none other than, the Jewish people. We have studied, that Israel has celebrated her 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a reborn nation. Then it is really good if we say, "Happy Anniversary," to the nation beloved by God and that He may bless her with many more happy anniversaries. If America turns her back to Israel, like other nations, and stop her moral support, then every nation before her will feel the angry wrath of God in the judgment, and in the end. Israel

will start looking down into the graves of those who indiscriminately persecuted them through centuries. In that way, will America also look down among such countries? Jesus Christ told many things to His disciples what they should do after He goes to His Father. But, with His death the hopes, dreams, aspirations, and longings remained standstill. They actually followed Him for 3 and a half years, walked with Him, slept with Him, ate with Him, taught by Him, and so on. They were under the impression that Jesus would lead them even to revolt against the despised Roman Rule. The Romans were aggressive and oppressive. They simply ridiculed the Jewish religion. They taxed the Jewish people heavily. In a nutshell, the Jews also hated Romans totally.

### ***“Who is the real King of Israel?”***

Jesus Christ, the Son of David, and the Son of Abraham, was the born King of Jews. He has the legal right to rule Israel because he was spotless and born to a virgin. The Jewish scripture also spoke about the “Deliverer”, “who would come to break the Gentile oppression.”(Ezekiel 34:27). This saying about Jesus is not without reason. The disciples looked at Him as their future King. The Apostle Peter inquired, “Behold we have forsaken all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore when you enter your kingdom?”(Matthew 19:27). And the mother of James and John requested Jesus for her sons to “Grant that these two sons may sit the one on the right hand, and the other on the left in thy kingdom.” (Matthew 20:21). Just at that time, two blind beggars heard about Jesus who was leaving Jericho, cried out, “Have mercy on us O Lord, thou Son of David.”

As kingdom fever was mounting in the minds of disciples, they made their way to the top of the Mount of Olives. It was springtime and approaching the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the Hebrew month, called Nissan and the “Passover.” Some historians gave the information about one nation that Jewish people had returned to Jerusalem from all over the world to observe this sacred holiday. Jesus and the disciples from the top of the Mount of Olives looked across the Kidron Valley to the glittering city of Jerusalem and then the temple mount.

They saw the massive wall around the city which was designed to protect Jerusalem from the intruders. They also saw the sun rays were reflecting on the beautiful stones and precious metals which adorned the holy temple. The latest rains had ended, and the pleasant weather captivated the rolling hills with green grass and multicolored flowers. The Priests were seen preparing for the big Israel feast with their Passover grandeur. The beautiful sights around the sounds of the trumpets and scented smells of various flowers magnified the situation. And in the midst of such wonderful atmosphere, Jesus turned to His disciples and said, “Go and get the donkey.” The disciples were Jews and they knew their Scripture. They were familiar with the prophetic words of Zachariah, “Behold, thy king cometh unto thee – lowly and riding upon an ass and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” (Zachariah 9:9). If you happen to be there at that time, you would have seen the disciples fully excited and at the same time confused. They were amazed at the prospects that their king cometh unto thee. They were confused, why because their master came on a donkey rather than on a beautiful white horse. The people put Jesus upon the donkey and moved downward the Mount of Olives. Then He went through Kidron Valley, which was narrow, and then climbed the mount Moriah and finally entered the most magnificent city, Jerusalem, through the “Golden Gate.” And there stood the temple with all its splendor and glory, before Him.

As the procession was moving the multitude that followed cut down the palm leaves and put them before Him and shouted loudly, “Hosanna to the Son of David.” (Matthew 21:9). They said these words directly from Psalms 118:25. They were not asking Jesus to save them from the curse of sin because at that time they were not aware and had no idea of His death, burial, and Resurrection. They asked Him to save them from the oppression of the hated Romans. If we look into the genealogy of Jesus Christ, He was the direct descendant of King David and had every right, legally, to sit on the throne. But in a very short time things became unfavorable to Jesus. There were some fickle-minded people in the crowd that shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”

who are going to shout against Him like, “Crucify Him!” on that particular day. So, there was a sudden change in the affairs and Jesus was forced to hang between Heaven and Earth on the Roman cross, and that horrible scene was beyond comprehension. This man, whom the disciples thought to be their future King, died like a common man, miserably on the Roman cross. He died like a criminal in the hands of the enemies. The death of Christ made the disciples plunge into the depth of defeat and despair. All the people were finally confident of Jesus that He would lead them against the Roman rulers. But they became despondent when they could not achieve their goal of liberation from the Roman rule.

The dead body of Jesus was laid in the grave and the disciples thought that was the end of their hope. Their dreams were unfulfilled and their aspirations unsatisfied. But on the third day He rose from His grave. He conquered death, and appeared before His followers. He was resurrected, never to die again. The Lord ministered to His disciples for 40 days. Then before going to Heaven, to His Father, He commanded those who belonged to Him – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witness unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and in Samaria and to the uttermost part of the Earth.” (Acts 1:8). God promised to Abraham 2 thousand years before the birth of Jesus Christ, that in his seed all the nations would be blessed. Even among the wisest sages no one would have never thought His own people from the chosen ones and the chosen nations would reject their Messiah. And the consequences of Israelites’ rejection of their Messiah was horrible. Within less than 40 years, the temple on the mount of Moriah was destroyed and the Jewish people began their long, lonely, torturous walk to different countries for centuries.

### ***“Rebirth of a Nation”***

We see today the rebirth of a nation (Israel) through the faithful hand of God. According to the resolution of United Nations (UN) of November 1947, Israel became a “paper nation” and Palestine was legally partitioned. The nations

of the world had given back to Israel a piece of Land that God promised to Abraham and his posterity. When God said, “Walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it for I will give it unto thee.”(Genesis 13:17). Actually the United Nations gave a very small area of the land. It was less than one fourth of the land the British proposed in the mandate of 1917, smaller than the size of the state of New Jersey in America. But it was something, a land, a home, a place to which the wandering Jewish people could return. They would be welcomed into that land and lay their weary heads for rest.

According to statistics, the Jewish population in Israel in 1948 was only 6 lakhs and 40,000, whereas the surrounding Arab nations have a combined population of over 80 million and they have been threatening the Jews that they would be driven out into the Mediterranean Sea. In such critical conditions Israel had only six months to prepare for an attack which became inevitable. There was already about 1 lakh of the British army to maintain peace in the case of emergency.

Many leaders of the world were of the opinion that if Israel declared war by herself, then the Arabs, who were far superior in everything, would certainly attack her. In the meantime, America’s secretary of State consulted the leaders of Israel for congenial, political atmosphere for the formation of Nationhood to Israel. Anyway, on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1948 Ben Gurion the would be Israel’s first prime minister stood up in a hastily arranged press conference in a movie theater in Tel Aviv (Capital of Israel) (because Israel did not possess Jerusalem at that time) and declared Israel a nation among the nations of the world. On May 15<sup>th</sup>, the remaining British army left the arena in Israel and, surprisingly on the same day, 6 Arab nations attacked Israel. They were Egypt, Syria, Jordan (Transjordan), Lebanon, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. These 6 nations joined together and hatched a master plan to attack Israel from all corners, and she (Israel) had to face heavy casualties because she had no good weapons. In the meantime the U.N.O. tried its best for truce between the two parties, but it could be successful only for a month. And in that gap, Israel could plan

better for the next attack. Just at that time, “Golda Meir”, an amazing and bold lady, came into lime light, who would be the prospective prime minister of Israel. She was sent to America with some assignment and she could raise 5 million dollars to purchase sophisticated weapons.

Golda Meir was born in Russia, but brought up since her childhood in America. She lived and was educated in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was totally Americanized. As a young woman and a Zionist she immigrated to Israel. She again went to America and raised money (about 15 million dollars) for weapons. When the battle resumed, the Arabs discovered a drastic turn of events, Israelites exhibited their talents individually and collectively. Two young men destroyed entire warships with the help of homemade bombs. Moshe Dayan, a military general, a one-eyed most powerful man commanded a Jeep mounted with a machine gun group designated (Samson Foxes) in a battle in the Sinai Desert. Within 10 days the Egyptian assault was shattered, and their casualties were too much, along with their equipment in the hands of efficient Jews.

Then in another major attack, Iraq, Syria, and Jordan’s armies joined together to capture the northern part of Israel, and the important city of Haifa. It was in the Jewish colony near the mount Megiddo. No doubt, it was the battle of serious consequences. At this moment, the Jews found themselves lacking in men, and in weapons (guns), and so, they were surrounded by the enemies. Added to that, they were very short of arms. They lost all hopes of deliverance. All of a sudden the Jewish army found a gap in the Arab lines, and even today nobody gives any clue about that mysterious gap. It remained as an unanswerable question. The Jewish defense forces seized the opportunity and entered the colony at once to reinforce themselves. The Arabs, stunned at this, reversal and withdrew their forces.

This was a turning point for Israel at that place called Jezreel Valley, otherwise known as the future battlefield called Armageddon. By 1949, January 7<sup>th</sup>, the war ended and complete independence was declared to Israel. The result of the war was Israel captured some areas in the north, south, and central

which were out of their land for about 19 hundred years. In the final eight months of war, Israel lost more than 4,000 soldiers, and 2,000 civilians. The financial position of the young nation was most alarming. The deficit went up to 500 million, yet the Jewish people began to come to their homeland from all over the world. They used to say, "It is time to go home."

In the year 1956, Israel had to indulge in the second war. A colonel in the Egyptian army, general Gamal Abdel Nasser, was miserably defeated in the Battle of 1948 at the same place where David had defeated Goliath about 3000 years ago. After that, Nasser seized the power in Egypt like Adolf Hitler in Germany, and tried for the unity of Arab nations. Like Arabs, he too hated Jews and showed his lip sympathy to Muslim refugees that left Israel at the time of the war of Independence. So, he used to say, "You have been driven from your houses by the Jews?" In order to take revenge, he gave training to a group of terrorists and murderers to slip into Israel, unnoticed, with a job to kill as many people as possible with the help of weapons supplied to them by the Soviet Union, which has been trying to have a foothold in the Middle East. In the meantime, Nasser seized the British owned Suez Canal. This action made David Ben Gurion to react immediately and send General Moshi Dayan. The result of the attack was that Dayan's troops had destroyed all the terrorist bases and captured a large quantity of Soviet Arms. In ten day war, the Egyptians resistance was broken and Moshi Dayan penetrated into the Suez Canal capturing the Red Sea part of "Sharm El Shieph." But, due to the pressure of the United Nations, the water ways were made open to all.

The third war Israel had to fight was called the Sixth day war in 1967. In this war the airplanes worked well, and within hours the planes of six Arab Nations were smashed. During this Sixth day war, Israel captured the strategic Golan Heights in the northwest, from Syria the entire Sinai, in the south, from Egyptians the most important city of Peace "Old Jerusalem", Biblical Judaea, Samaria, the West Bank, and Gaza from Jordan. Some battles in the history of mankind appear to be most interesting and thought provoking. In

this stage one observer explained that in a more beautiful way. “By a heat of arms unparalleled in modern times, Israel surrounded the enemies who were far superior in quantity and quality of equipment, absolute superiority in number had fought war on three fronts. They not only survived, but won a resounding victory.

To be clearer, Israel won an amazing battle in 1948 for national survival against six invading armies. In the war of 1956, the terrorists tried to smash the Jews at various sensitive points, but they were utterly defeated, and Israel emerged victorious. And in the war of 1967 Israel expected a dangerous attack by three nations. This time, Syria tried to divert the sustaining waters of the Jordan River, which stunned the whole world at this cruel act. But for the people with spiritual bent of mind, it was the God of Israel who remained behind all those battles as an unseen captain and brought amazing victories. Then the war of 1973 was called the war of “Yom Kippur” for six days. In this war Israel committed a blunder. They did not glorify God for their wonderful victories in their previous wars.

They felt proud of themselves for their achievements in the past. They never realized and repented that the God of their forefathers was responsible for their success. They posed as if they were self-sufficient and invincible. So, on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1973, Israel had to face a massive attack by Egypt and Syria which was called the War of Yom Kippur, which means “The day of atonement.” Egypt attacked across the Suez Canal whereas, Syria over the Golan Heights. But Israel’s intelligence gathering capability was the best in the world. As a matter of fact, hundreds of warnings were received from secret agents who confidently told about impending attack.

American intelligence also confirmed the attack 48 hours earlier. Yet, Israelites paid a deaf ear to all those warnings. They decided not to launch anymore strike. They also thought about those warnings as false. They didn’t want to disturb the religious holidays and offend the religious Jews. Anyway,

the Syrian Army, with 18 hundred tanks, started over Golan Heights to attack the unprepared Israel. Apart from that Egypt also marched with a massive show of strength. She crossed the Suez Canal to meet the less than 500 Israel soldiers because most of the other soldiers were on leave on the Eve of an important festival. With all the ups and downs, the Yom Kippur War was a reality and victory.

About 3,500 years ago, the Prophet Moses saw a bush that was burning but not consuming. Then, he said, “I will now, turn aside and see this great sight why the bush is not burnt?” (Exodus 3:3). Here Israel represented the bush which Moses saw in the wilderness. Though the bush was engulfed in the fire, it did not burn. In the same way, though Israel has felt the heat of chastisement and persecution, she will never be annihilated. The reference here is from that bush. Jehovah will speak from the midst of that bush to the people of the world, and that day is not too far. Israel’s brilliant general, and tank commander, Ariel Sharam, was able to break through the Egyptian advance in the Sinai and cross the Suez Canal. He found out that his troops completely destroyed the SAM 7 missile sites.

### ***Peace before Storm***

Israel has been craving for peace and made a covenant with a world leader who could give a guarantee for that. But, this will be her prelude to near destruction. So, we may call it “Peace before Storm.” We have a good example for this in the Bible. Samson defeated the enemies of Israel (the Philistines) and in doing so, he lost his own life. But unlike Samson, Israelites would triumph over their enemies by the grace of God, and the remaining would survive in the end to experience the glorious peace of God. In a White House Ceremony (in America), on September 13, 1993, the President and the Secretary hosted the Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who represented Israel, and PLO Chairman Yaser Arafat, who represented Palestine, signed a declaration which contained some principles on the Palestinians’ interim self-government in the west bank and Gaza strip.

Though some world leaders looked at it in surprise, they called it a great triumph. They felt it as a breakthrough after many years of conflict and the stepping stone for peace. It is noteworthy here that just a month earlier Yaser Arafat and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) members were not even recognized by the United States. And if Israel had the opportunity, her “Mossad”, which is equivalent to the CIA, would have assassinated him or at least tried him as a war criminal guilty of most heinous crimes. Yet he was established as a great leader, national hero, and a peace maker. Then Arafath happened to win the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize. He shared that prize with Israel’s prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Israel’s foreign minister Shimon Peres. In this regard, prophet Isaiah wrote, “Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil that put darkness for light and light for darkness that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20).

Let us try to know under what circumstances the Palestinian Liberation Organization (P.L.O.) came to existence or what type of conditions forced Israel to acknowledge P.L.O.’s existence even though they were the enemies to Israel or what events allowed their administration to agree to the negotiation with terrorist group though it was responsible for the countless number of deaths and how far all these events contributed for everlasting peace. During a few months preceding Israel’s independence on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1948, and the declaration of nationhood to her, many Palestinian Arabs wished to leave their houses in Israel and settle in other Arab countries. They would have got citizenship immediately if they had stayed there. So, they were advised to settle in either West Bank or Gaza Strip.

The Arab armies and Palestinians planned that they would invade Israel on the same day they declared their nation. Having understood the political situation, the Arabs openly said they would drive out all Israel into the Mediterranean Sea. The people who choose to leave and place themselves in opposition to the newly born state of Israel soon found in a situation they never anticipated. The war did not end in a week or two, and the result was

that Israel became victorious. The Arabs who wished to remain in Israel at the time of the war were quite safe and secure. They enjoyed all privileges, citizenship, and even a better standard of living. There were two refugee camps as a result of the war of independence in 1948-1949. One was Jewish and the other Palestinian. About 8 lakhs Jews who lived in Arab nations for centuries could be absorbed in Israel somehow. But, the same number of Arabs (8 lakhs) who fled from Israel to the West Bank or Gaza Strip; their condition became different.

They were neither welcomed nor allowed to enter their nation. Instead of that, they were kept in the refugee camp only, most of the time in mud huts in poverty. The Palestinians were also used as political pawns by the Arabs. Then on humanitarian grounds, the United Nations provided relief in the refugee camps through all those years and 90% of the expenditure was borne by the United States.

### ***Birth of P.L.O.***

Under the strange conditions, the Palestinian Liberation Organization came into existence. The founder of the P.L.O. was Yasser Arafath, who took oath to destroy Jewish state through terrorism and war. Those P.L.O. members started their atrocities first with school children and defenseless people. Then in 1967 during the 6-day war, Israel captured the West Bank in a counter attack by the forces of King Hussain of Jordan. After this war, Israelites entered Jordan secretly to destroy terrorist camps.

On land, the P.L.O. continued her attacks against Israel and became stronger day by day. King Hussain realized that P.L.O. was becoming a threat to his kingdom, and to his sovereign rule. So, in 1970, the King sent his well-trained army against P.L.O. bases in his own land. This powerful army killed more than 20,000 Palestinians and the remaining were driven out of Jordan. This attack was actually Muslim against Muslim, Arab against Arab, and brother against brother. Luckily, Israel did not interfere in this massacre. Therefore, people called it “Black September.”

The terrorists lived secretly at the borders of Israel for some time, then fled to the West Bank in 1948, and then crossed into Jordan. They massacred many people and made their way into Lebanon. In 1970 Lebanon was a very small country composed of various ethnic groups. But the majority of them were Muslims. There were also some Christians (in minority), but they were wealthy and more influenced. The P.L.O. sent her troops through Lebanon to attack Israel, as she became very powerful in the sight of other Arab nations and consequently established her own nation within the nation of Lebanon.

Then this P.L.O. felt invincible and unaccountable. With that, she killed as many leaders as possible in Lebanon. She raped many young women, and also kidnapped those who did not cooperate to her policy. The Lebanese government could not do anything for her (P.L.O.) atrocities and stood as impotent before the terrorist. So in Lebanon, terrorism, anarchy, and confusion reigned and finally, in 1975-76, all their crimes led to a civil war between Lebanon and the P.L.O. leaders.

In that war, about 80,000 Lebanese people were killed and Christians happened to take shelter in Israel. Political leaders of the world wondered at the condition, but none came forward to settle the issue amicably. Anyway, the crimes of P.L.O.'s became intolerable to Israel. So in March 1978, the government of Israel launched an operation called "Litane", a major military expedition into Lebanon.

The prime aim of Israel was to wipe out P.L.O. bases and to establish security. It happened so that four times Israel increased her troops and four times withdrew due to political interference and the world's opinion for peace. Even then on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1981 and on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1982 the P.L.O. launched 290 attacks against Israel. The attitude of the P.L.O. became unbearable to Israel, so they attacked her with both land and sea forces. This attack was called "Peace for Galilee."

Israel knew the power of the P.L.O., yet she advanced her forces towards Beirut which was 60 miles away. The Christians in Beirut welcomed Israel's troops as if they had gone to liberate them. Israel won the battle and confiscated the war ammunition that P.L.O. owned and it took more than a month to transfer all the weapons. What must be the main reason for the conflict between Islam and Jews? It was purely spiritual.

A Jewish state was in existence in the land which originally belonged to Islam from the 7<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. She remained like a bone in the throat, which could not be extricated. The collective forces could not defeat Israel in the battlefield. Still the West bank Gaza strip was given to the Palestinians and Golan Heights to the Syrians in order to maintain peace. Israel called Jerusalem as their eternal capital. But here also, Palestinians were claiming east Jerusalem, which is at present part of West Bank, would be the capital of the emerging Palestinian nation.

Since 1993 Palestinian flags were flying over east Jerusalem. Still many people were under the impression that Israel would never allow for the division. For Muslims, the temple mount is their third holy place after Mecca and Medina. There is the Dome of the Rock on that mountain from which their prophet Muhammad ascended into heaven. Near that Dome, there is a mosque called "ALAQSA" a Muslim holy place of worship.

The Jews will show due respect to the temple Mount because it was the place to which Abraham came to offer Isaac. It was the same place where King David defeated the wicked Jebusites and built his capital city Jerusalem, "The city of Peace." And in the same place his son, King Solomon built the house of God. It was also the same place where the Levite priests honestly performed their duties based on the Law of Moses. It was the same place where sinners found acceptance of God, the place where the Jews worshipped the Lord for about 15 hundred years, long before the birth of Islam in the deserts of Arabia in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

## *Importance of Jerusalem*

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

He 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 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 Kedrone 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 Heliona 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 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 IIIrd 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 (II Samuel 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 latter 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 on in a procession

on every Friday singing songs in praise of Christ. Some tourists also join the Franciscan church members and go on 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 10000 population at that time.

### Its importance

1. Jesus asked peter to pay the tribute money from the mouth of a fish. (Matthew 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*" discourse 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 in to 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 (I Samuel 16:4)
6. David killed a lion and a bear here (I Samuel 17:34)
7. David tamed his father's sheep here (I Samuel 17:15)
8. David poured out a drink offering here (II 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 (Mathew 2:7-11)
12. King Herod slew about 200 innocent baby boys here (Mathew 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 Arabian ancient times. (Joshua 14:15, Joshua 20:7)
2. In Arabic language it is called El Khalil which means friend (Isaiah 41:4)
3. Abraham came here to dwell after he was separated from lot (Genesis 13:18)
4. Hebron was built in 1700 B.C, (Numbers 13:20)

5. God appeared to Abraham concerning Isaac's birth (Genesis 18:1-15)
6. Abraham made an appeal to God to save Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction. (Genesis 18:16-33)
7. Sarah died at Hebron but she was buried in the cave of Mechpelah. (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
8. Isaac also lived here for some time (Genesis 25:27)
9. Jacob lived here after the death of Rachel (Genesis 35:14)
10. The spies took a branch of grapes and bananas from Kadesh and went back to their place (Numbers 13:22-23)
11. Joshua captured Hebron when he took the land (Joshua 10:1-15)
12. Caleb received Hebron as an inheritance (Joshua 14:10-15)
13. Hebron was called one of the 6 cities of refuges. (Joshua 20:7)
14. David was crowned as the king of Judah here (II Samuel 2:1-4)
15. David reigned here for seven and half years before he became the king of Jerusalem (II Samuel 2:11)
16. Absalom head quarters was here after he rebelled against his father David (II Samuel 15:7-12)
17. 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 Lake 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 foot steps 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, died & 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 dependent of Roman state.

During Herod the Great's reign (4 BC to 37 A.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 seven-minute 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 for King David's regime. More persecutions were done so many returned to this place.

In modern town like Tel Aviv about the population it is estimated 1,53,800. The reason for their return to their place is that God had a specific plan of 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. With in 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 450 years in Egypt and became 3 million.

Moses comes next to be remembered for his meekness and for the leadership of Israelites.

In 1451 BC Joshua was the leader next to Moses to lead the people to Canaan. He too faced so much opposition. During 450 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 remain 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 I and it is service center for north and entire country.

According to the Bible history it is a famous place (1<sup>st</sup> Kings 18:17-40. And two villages are famous also Dilyat - el Carmel and Isliya Sletha.)

Peak of the Carmel Muhraqua 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 dogged 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. Jermiah 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. 1 King 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 there 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 mountains shall reach unto Azal: Yea, Ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah the 10<sup>th</sup> king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee".

## *Daniels Seventy Weeks*

It was God's Decree Seventy Weeks are determined upon God's people the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem" It is really most wonderful how much could be sequenced into a small passage of the word of God. But Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" did that just. It could cover so much in a small body of that. Actually this monumental portion of the word of God consists only 190 words in English still anybody can explain without much difficulty and also a major part of the Revelation without a basic foundation and Daniel's prophetic verses—Jesus Christ also drew upon the profound portion of God's word.

Jesus taught his disciples about the end of the age that was found in the Olivet discourse and the sovereignty of God and this for knowledge became quite evident as He revealed His programme to Daniel's people the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God purposefully, side tracked the Hebrew people.

He removed them from the main tracks temporarily and kept them in a parallel line. Yet God did not stop walking with Israelites . . . We can understand the position of Israel that it is really undergoing a hard disciplined period in order to fashion and mould herself into a special unique nation of God. The most important thing in this connection is the prophetic word about the second coming of the Messiah. ‘

But one thing we should not forget' the teachings' preaching's and other implications that are recorded in the Bible about Christ's first appearance. All these events provided us enormous insight and understanding about the New Testament, which should not be overlooked under any circumstances. Let us look into the later part of the divine message carefully which was delivered by the arch-angel Gabriel to Daniel.. This divine message was in response to Daniel's passionate prayer he did in favour of his people (the Jews) and their Holy city Jerusalem.

It is made clear in the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Daniel that he recognized the time for God's concluding "a seventy year" disciplinary action in, Babylon involving His chosen people. It was Daniel's humble request to the God Almighty to set his people free and allow them to return to their homeland. Daniel must have felt very hard to watch his people engaged in sin, inequity and transgression. It was clearly seen that the rebellious attitude of the Jewish people towards God had been going on in spite of the hardships they were experiencing in Babylonian captivity for seventy years. But the Jewish people showed no sign of repentance in their behaviour or activities. This stone hearted nature of his people prompted Daniel to cry unto God on their behalf to liberate them from the captivity and this was God's answer to the cry of Daniel, his beloved prophet. God established His time table in the following manner.

Seventy weeks were determined upon the people and upon the Holy city to finish the transgression to make an end of sins to make reconciliation for inequity to bring in everlasting righteousness to seal up to vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. Through this wonderful statement we must try to understand that God is in charge of everything in this world God has sovereign authority over everyone and everything. God is never wrong in His statements or in His prophecies because His predictions were nothing more than Himself revealing His intentions. One day Israel prophets would inherit all the promises, writings and. The old Testament prophet Isaiah gave one of his boldest and cleverest statements involving his great truth. He pointed out that God would give His son to become part of humanity who would be born to a Hebrew woman by name Miriam (Mary). He would be their physical and spirited deliverer. He would establish His kingdom and bear the weight of it on his shoulders. His kingdom is the embodiment of peace, justice and judgement.

It was also foretold by the weeping prophet Jeremiah that a time would come as a heir for king David's throne. He would be called the king of Israel

and reign that land as the most successful king by establishing righteousness Justice and peace for his people. Then he would be called “Jehoveh Tsedhenu” which means the Lord is our righteousness .

“Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to find Jerusalem unto the Messiah. There shall be seven weeks and three score two weeks the street shall be built again and the wall even in troublous time (Daniel 9.25)

The first and foremost point we should remember as readers is the link between the future kingdom and entrance of Mussiah. We should not ignore the fact that He is to be present prior to establishing the earthly Utopia (kingdom) at the end of the seventy weeks and that is prophetically stated in the Bible whether they were examined prophecies of the old Testament (Tanakh) as studied previously or whether they are exposed by the spirit moved and inspired by the pen -men of the New Testament (Berit Hadashah) It is the same the king comes first then brings the kingdom.

In the “Book of Acts” chapter 1 Luke explained the heart and passion of the Jewish disciples. They appeared to be making a place to Jesus, “Lord thou Lord that at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”. This question clearly indicated their knowledge of the Hebrew scripture and the first hand teaching they received from Jesus. If we look into the book of revelation chapters 19 and 20, we can find apostle John recorded all the future events of Jesus Christ and his victorious return to earth. It is only in this reference one can see the positive outcome of all the centuries of earth’s moaning for restoration from the cause of sin and the final pay back to the arch enemies of God.

Therefore let us not miss the establishment of the glorious Millinnial kingdom, the 1000 year reign of the Messiah. Some readers may still express their doubts when these things are going to happen. When will the anointed one (Messiah) make his appearance? and finally when will the age of the kingdom begin ? But the divine discloser to Daniel is clearly built around a

time table and that can be seen in the following manner with a wonderful statement “Seventy Weeks are determined and after three score and two weeks from the going forth unto the Messiah the prince shall be seven weeks three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off and after three score and two weeks and he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (Daniel 9:24-27)

What is necessary at this stage seemed to be a clear explanation of the term “weeks” once this is explained and understood and everybody will be enlightened and come from darkness unto light. The Hebrew word for week is “Shabua”. It is for a period of seven. It is used scripturally in several different ways in the Bible. So, the English word week is translated from Hebrew word, shabua which simply means an interval of time in multitude of seven and it can be used to refer to anything to do with time as mentioned below. First of all we must know the exact meaning of weeks. Let us see shabua is the Hebrew word for week or “heptad a period of sevens simply put it means an interval of time in multitudes of seven.

According to Mathematics four hundred years are involved....70 (weeks of years) x 7 (each week is 7 years) = 490 years at the end of which time the Messiah would be present to establish the kingdom age. The requisite formula for this meaning has to do with the point of origin that is when does the 490 years begin?

The good news is that God will not leave us in darkness. And he will not reveal to us the major part of prophecy without the means of interpreting it. The starting point is provided in verse 25 from (a time word) the declaration of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jeresalem until (a time word) the Massiah, the prince, shall be a total of sixty nine of the seventy weeks. To be clear 483 years (69weeks of 7years each). In this context we have to realise the most important thing that three specific historical events would occur during this time.

The first one was the announcement of the decree or commandment to permit the restoration of Jerusalem city walls, streets etc. which were still in bad condition even after the captured Jews returned from Babylon's captivity. Then in 445 B.C. the king of Persia provided to Nehemiah, his cup bearer a document permitting and authorising him to return to his home city Jerusalem to begin the work of repair in a specific time. The second historical event to be fulfilled was the task by the end of first seven of the seventy weeks or 49 years of 490 years prophetic outlook. Then the third historical event appeared to be more important but more complicated. It would take us all the way to sixty ninth or 483 of the 490 years. And then the Messiah should be present in reality to the end of bargain. As a result the establishment of His kingdom would follow. However, as already noted earlier, Israel shall also fulfill the end of its bargain the true proof of its repentance.

Now, we could understand clearly the, prophecies, of Daniel which fulfilled exactly during the first century A.D. itself. Accordingly the Gospel of Mathew was kept as the first book into the New Testament. Mathews as a "Levite" wasted no time in announcing the birth of Jesus, as the son of David, the son of Abraham. In his Gospel Mathew presented Jesus as the Messiah of Isrieland king and also this Messiah possessed all the requirements including the aspect of "Diety". He lived as God among people. In all His preachings Jesus stressed more for the repentance of Israel to become the citizens of heaven, the holy kingdom of God.

There are about 300 prophecies of Messiah and almost all of them were explained convencingly that Jesus is the only one that can fulfill all the prophecies. "Yeshu" is the real Messiah and after the score ,and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off but not for himself and people of the prince that come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary and the end there of shall be with a blood and unto the end of war, desolations are determined" ( Daniel 9.26) Without any prior hint of his coming a major gap in time develops. As mentioned in the above quotation, the first point is to put Messiah to death.

This must happen for the betterment of humanity and this is the correct phrase, “Messiah shall be cut off but not for Himself, The crucifixion of Jesus Christ which took place in the week immediately following the official presentation of Himself as Israel’s Messiah and king on palm Sunday in early 30’s A.D. undoubtedly fulfills that prophecy.

The second memorable event that came to lime light was another shocking news about the city of Jerusalem. As described the kingdom of Judah was attacked three times by the king of Babylon and people were taken as captives for 70years, Then in 70A.D. the Romans attacked Judah and Jerusalem and caused so much loss to the city and the temple. Many Jews were deported to different places at that time. It was a remarkable war between the Jews and Romans and at the end the Jews witnessed world wide reputation. Since that time the Jews lived without their God’s Temple. So, far we learned something about the Jews and their historical background. A popular Bible Commentator Augustine said that “The Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament and the New Testament was concealed in the Old Testament”. And he was correct in his assessment. If the readers want to appreciate the inspiring words of God in the New Testament, without recognizing the fact that it is built upon the foundations of the Old Testament, then they are missing something wonderful.

Prophet Daniel also correctly assessed the ill-treatment experienced by the Jews under the king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. He is at least the practical fulfillment of the promises of “blessings and curses that revealed either from their faithfulness and obedience to God or from their faithlessness and disobedience to Him. The Israelites continued their disobedience and rebellious attitude towards Jehovah the Almighty God, though He wanted to change them for repentance which resulted more transgression, sin and iniquity. So, the Jews were finally forced to encounter unbearable hardships in their life inspite of their stiff-necked attitude, God showed unconditional mercy towards them.

God's love, kindness, and goodness never failed towards his people. Prophet Moses also declared on behalf of God that Israelites at one point were converts and undergo circumcision of the heart or experience new birth and added oneday the house of Israel would embrace Messiah and saviour, then enter the long awaited earthly kingdom which is going to be established by Messiah, Jesus Christ Himself.

The Jews were given to violence and abuse for centuries. Still God wanted to mould them to discipline and correct behavior. He would like to prepare them for their ultimate good. God used different methods to set them right but invain. So, He decided to reject them after knowing their hard heartedness: In this topic, let us try to enlighten ourselves on the importance of final week, called the seventieth week. Wherein the seven years countdown begins leading to the establishment of the Biblical Theory. It occurs at the end of the period of time which gradually referred to seventy weeks of Daniel. Then the Holy Spirit the Third person of the Tri-unity called "Trinity" inspired the human pen men to keep the prophetic passages there for our good understanding and guidance thereby all of us will be benifited.

What picture can we see in the seventy weeks of Daniel?, Is not the seven year worst time in the history for Israel ? or is it the central point of the , seventieth week which makes reference to tje abomination of desolation? It is the sovereignty's faithfulness, holiness, justice and righteousness of our Almighty God who was the central point of this passage. "To miss what God is doing with Israel past, present and future and how it reflected upon Himself is to completely over look the forest in order to pick up a few pretty looking leaves that will soon crumble and decay"

It is believed that the quick scanning of the present day events reveal us and give the impression that we are about to enter the millennial kingdom. The description of Jesus time preceeding His return and the accounts of both apostles John and Paul of the same period provide us with ample scope to

believe that we are at present living in shadow that is cast by the seven year count down, which is still lying ahead. Daniel said a covenant is necessary to establish the signals that indicate the beginning of seventieth week. Then only one can say there are eye witnesses to the events that take place during the final seven years leading up to the lords touch down on the earth. If we look into the basic rules of interpretation for studying the Bible, two important concepts are contextual and grammatical” interpretations, For example, the verse 24 clearly connected to the people of Israel and their holy city, and then the seventy weeks refer to the Jews and to their capital city Jerusalem.

It is a miracle beyond doubt only with the mercy of God. The Jewish state of Israel is still in existence, even though most of the Jews were driven out and scattered into many places by the Roman rulers at the time of war between the Jews and Romans in 66-73 A.D. The result of the war was that many army men (the Jews) were killed and most of the remaining were deported to many countries by force. Since that time, Israel’s land was separated from her people for about 19 hundred years, till their independence was declared on May 8<sup>th</sup> 1948.

During the long period different dynasties ruled Israel. They looted, and destroyed both city and the Temple. They killed many people and many more were taken as captives Because of that the sacrificial system introduced by Moses was almost forgotten. The Temple was totally destroyed and only a wall called western wall or wailing wall is there. And there was no more priesthood also. Even the Hebrew language was forgotten by them.

Inspite of all these calamities Almighty God was merciful enough and guarded the nation. He means what He says and says what He means. Israel underwent many hurdles for centuries. Yet remained in tact. It remained as it was at the time of its forefathers and the people allowed by God to live peaceful life. Now they are in a position to speak their own language and continue to celebrate their festivals introduced by Moses during the wilderness wanderings about 3,500 years ago. Now they are living peacefully.

They were forced to take part in many battles for about fifty eight years. Yet they were not disturbed because God's blessings were with them. As a result of the blessings there was a rapid growth in every aspect. So, Israel is able to stand equally with other Middle East countries. God informed Daniel through the angel that time would put Israel in a condition of apprehension and turmoil and it appeared to be in that position as it entered the nationhood. A thorough study of the seventieth week would determine upon Israel in both the Testaments which reveal unequal terms of the past, present and future. But God declared through prophet Jeremaiah. For this says the Lord, we have heard a voice of trembling of fear and not of peace. Ask ye know and see whether a man is ever labour with child? So, why do I see every man with his hands on his lions as a woman in labour and all faces turned pale? Alas! for that day is great so that none is like that, it is the time of Jacobs troubles, but he shall be saved out of it." (Jeremaiah 30:5-7)

If we observe the present day events we can understand them as shadows cast by the seven year period which indicate the return of Christ. In addition to that this period can be imagined as the time of peril to Israel with our knowledge with the sense of logic and national thinking, we can conclude that it appears impossible to Israel to remain calm and peaceful in the midst of the affairs of the Middle East.

In recent times there has been a continuous flow of some sophisticated weapons into the hands of terrorists. In addition to that the unrest caused in Israel was in connection with the freezing of money from the U.S.A. and European- / ' countries or Union (E.U) above all we should remember palestenian terrorists awaiting the chance to attack Israel. The terrorists were active with more sophisticated weapons, rockets and missiles to send them into the most sensitive land of Israel. Those latest arms were made by Russians and supplied to the terrorists by Syria and Iron." On the other hand Israel was tired of wars and anxiously looking for peace and good relationship with the surrounding nations. Israel is whole heartedly willing to invite a third nuetral

country to come forward and negotiate permanent solution for peace and tranquility between Israel and all other Arab Countries.

“And people of the prince that come shall destroy the city and sanctuary” (Daniel 9.27). If we want a covenant or agreement, there must be at least two parties on the negotiating table. If it is possible for one party to enter directly into a covenant with the other party then it is called unconditional covenant. God entered into many covenants with Hebrews as we find in the Bible and most of them were unconditional. God made His promises to his chosen people. He obligated Himself to do with the exception of one, the Mosaic covenant. That means He made constructional promises to His people.

The God Almighty wants to carry on what He promised to His people. The Mosaic covenant carried the parties like “If you do this I will do this”, and soon God laid down the law and the Jewish people agreed to abide by it. But in the 9<sup>th</sup> text of Daniel we find the covenant begins with the worst time in the history of Israel nation. It is a two party agreement that ‘he’ the representative on one side of the party or table and many on the other side of the table.

As far as we have understood, Israel was treated as one party. The other party to this covenant is the present day twenty seven member (E.U.) European union. The main character called the prince is identified with the people who was really responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. The main point in connection with the covenant of making the prince is directly involved in creating confusion among Jews in 70 A.D. There is no doubt, the devastation brought upon Jerusalem was the major work done by the Roman authorities. There is also historical evidence for this havoc. Every Bible reader knows how the Roman army caused total destruction of Jerusalem city and the Temple. They took away all the costly items from the Temple including the seven lamps stand called Menorah.

If we probe into the affair it may provide, enough clue on the subject. Let us refer to the previous chapter of Daniel and find out the necessary support for the identification “Daniel” in the second chapter of his book conveyed and correctly interpreted about the king Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. In the real sense of God’s message embedded in his dream really lays the foundation for seventy weeks of Daniel’s 9<sup>th</sup> chapter. The colossal picture and major point in this dream was that God with his sovereign authority put Israel nation into the hands of four Gentile super powers and kingdoms during the final period in order to make them realize and repent for their adamant behavior. God had chosen these people and helped them at every stage, since He brought them out of Egypt from bondage of king pharaoh to His promised land.

He loved them so much and told them they will be His people, and He will be their God”. But these people became ungrateful to the God of their forefathers and began to worship the heathen gods. This behaviour of His people prompted God to punish them by handing them over to heathen powers with the hope they would respent. The four powerful pagan rulers were 1) Babyloneon king Nebuchadnezzar 2) Persians 3) Greeks and 4) Romans Under these pagan rulers control and ill - treatment, God must have felt and said at some stage, “Enough is enough” Then after some period of time God would close down the era of Gentiles supremacy and replace that with His kingdom which would come to the earth. As described in the dream the Gentile empires were depicted by an impressive statue of a man which was designed in four parts. According to historical facts the Gentile rule began in 605 BC with Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon as the head of the statue that represented.

Then he was followed by the Mead’s, the Persians, After them the Greeks, with Alexander the Great in 333 B.C. This Greek emperor introduced his language and culture in all the countries he conquered. Then in 163 BC, there arose the strongest and fiercest and inhuman pagan rulers called Romans came into power. It seemed their main aim was to suppress the sons and daughters of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These Romans were represented by

the two legs and feet along with their toes. The dream finally ended with the destruction of the statue that represented the time of the four Gentile rulers.

“Then he shall confirm the covenant with many or one week in the middle of the week and in the middle of the week. He shall cause sacrifice and obtain to curse for our spreading of abominations he shall make it desolate even until the consummation and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Daniel 9.27)

The third part, is not another nation but another individual person who must have reached the top most position of (E.U) and he must be a representative of the unified body of the nations with power and authority. He must be a reputed one and to be agreed by Israel. Then only he would be accepted as prince, who will come to people that are mentioned in chapter2. He is the person who will treat the covenant the seven year agreement with Israel in the midst of seventieth week. Seventy seven years are set out by God for Israel to set aside their relations, attitude and humbly repent, then embrace God on His terms to enter the kingdom age. “For, I say unto you ye shall not seem hence forth till shall say Blessed is He that commeth in the name of the Lord.”o people that are mentioned in chapter2. He is the person who will treat the covenant the seven year agreement with Israel in the midst of seventieth week. Seventy seven years are set out by God for Israel to set aside their relations, attitude and humbly repent, then embrace God on His terms to enter the kingdom age. “For, I say unto you ye shall not see hence forth till shall say Blessed is He that commeth in the name of the Lord.”

## *Rapid Changes In Christian Faith*

Our Christian faith is a splintered movement in Jerusalem. The founders and leaders of this faith were Jews themselves. When it was spread in the Roman world outside Palestine, first nobody accepted this religion. They dismissed it with contempt especially by sophisticated people as a new superstitious religion. They thought about it as a religion of slaves or women and irrational people. With that impression, they worshipped a Jewish leader who was executed as a rebel against Rome, who claimed to be a duplicate holy man and who had the life again. He went to heaven and would come back again at any time. He would be moving on the celestial clouds of glory to find out a heavenly kingdom on earth.

The oldest picture of the crucifixion was found on the scroll hanging to the wall in a house in Rome showing a 'Christian' worshipping a donkey. The faith that was once despised by the people has a wonderful follow up as a religion with a close examination. It is estimated that from 1,000 million Christians, it is said about fifty eight percent are Roman Catholics and thirty five percent protestants. The remaining Christians are of different denominations. One of the reasons for the success of Christians is the goodness and strength of the New Testament with the picture of Jesus Christ. His living on the earth as a human being, His death on the cross and His resurrection are all strange things to other religions. Being God and savior of the world, His human life ends in rejection torture and execution.

The broken body of Christ on the cross was an extraordinary and mysterious symbol of God head salvation and that is deeply preserved in the precious hearts of millions. According to Biblical history, Christianity has taken its name from Christ. This word "Christ" is the Greek translation of Hebrew word "Messiah" and the title Christianity was given by them that Christ was the founder of this religion, who was believed to be both God and man. He was the son of God who lived, taught and died on the earth, as Jesus

of Nazareth. He did everything for us because of his compassion and love towards human kind. He lived the life of a humble human being. By that memorable act he bridged the gulf between God and man.

Christianity is also inherited the principle of monotheism from Judaism. The concepts of God as divine father who loves, protects and disciplines human children. Christianity accepted the Old Testament and also some books added to the New Testament like the four Gospels, "The book of Acts" the thirteen Epistles of apostle Paul, and the book of Revelation "which was the vision of the future life of man as apostle John saw and the end of the world. Nobody can deny to accept Jesus as a moral teacher. Some learned people tried to write the biography of Jesus but they could not get the full and detailed information about Him. He taught people only by a word of mouth, which was not recorded. So the authentic information about Him was only the four Gospels.

Jesus is the Greek form of common Hebrew "yeshua" or "Joshua" which means "Yahweh helps". He was brought up in a Jewish family of Nazareth in Northern Palestine with a good number of brothers and some sisters. His mother was Miriam (Mary) and father Joseph, a carpenter, But later some Jewish opponents of Christianity said that Jesus was the bastard son of a Roman soldier. As his father was a carpenter. Jesus continued His father's business for some time. Then at the age of thirty, He took baptism and emerged from obscurity in Nazareth into lime light as a teacher and healer of all kinds of diseases.

Jesus spent most of his time around Galilee and sometime in country side by preaching in synagogues and outside. He gathered some disciples who always walked with him. Many people were attracted by his extraordinary intelligence and mysterious personality. Added to that, whatever he spoke, He spoke with authority as if it came from heaven. He went to Jerusalem for the "Passover" feast and happened to assault some Jews who were transacting,

some business in the temple of God. This kind of frequent attacks made Jews to develop a kind of prejudice against Jesus, and they had been planning to get him arrested and killed. According to their plan on the “Passover” night, He was caught somehow and handed over to the Roman authorities for punishment. Then with false allegations, He was proved guilty and finally crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem.

The next memorable incident in the story is resurrection which was the real foundation for Christian faith. The truth behind is that if there was no resurrection, there was no Christianity today. He suffered agony on the cross, died and buried. He rose on the third day from his grave. Then he met the people and his disciples in his forty days time and finally went to his father.

So, rising from the dead was the main difference between our God and other heathen gods. The disciples also identified him as the true messiah before he was crucified and confirmed that when he arose from the dead. His sayings were wonderful and mysterious. His disciples and others found him most fascinating and puzzling. His sayings were pregnant with wisdom like, “I and the father are one” and “I am the truth, the way and life”. These marvelous sayings might not be properly understood by the people. Jesus, as the Messiah, was the son of man, but the feeling of Jews was that the Messiah must be a divine origin.

The message Jesus proclaimed again and again was that the kingdom of God was near at hand and the people must prepare themselves to become the citizens of that kingdom by repentance and with devotion to God. Jesus before he went to his father instructed the disciples to remain in Jerusalem under any circumstances. Accordingly they remained and used to meet in a private home for eating together. This was the origin of the early Christians “Agape” or “love feast” or meal that commemorated the last supper which Christ had eaten with his disciples, before He was arrested by the Roman soldiers. He told them to break the bread and drink wine in His memory.

Apostle Paul came to Jerusalem to meet the disciples who were hiding and living secretly. This Paul was a remarkable figure after Jesus Christ in the history of Christianity and the architect of the religion as we see today. He was a man of volcanic energy and with hot blooded enthusiasm. He was a man brought up in a prosperous Jewish family outside Palestine in a Greek city of "Tarsus" in Asia minor but spoke Greek and fully equipped intellectually. He used to think that he was a messenger or apostle of Jesus as he revealed to him as the divine saviour of the whole world. Since then he decided to teach the special message of Jesus to the Gentiles and non Jews. Paul did not care any untoward happenings in his mission of preaching the word of God. He travelled into many places like Syria, Cyprus, Asia Minor and Greece with a message. He preached in Gentile Christian communities also in cities.

Paul seemed to be the first person to formulate in his preachings a special doctrine of Christianity for proclaiming that Jesus was not the Messiah of Jews but as God who came to this world as a son to die for the salvation of the whole world. This kind of preaching of Paul was not at all acceptable to Jews, who remained in Jerusalem. The point, Jesus, the Messiah and second God hurt them more which was against their monotheistic doctrine. They condemned Paul bitterly for his sayings and that was still lingering in their minds. Christians are now the true Israel and Jewishness is no more required. Christ in his death and resurrection is an astonishing act of divine savior and grace reseed, His people from evil and death. So, Christians became victorious over evil and death as Christ Himself has done what was required. So the main reason for the rapid growth of Christianity was naturally the convection of Supreme love and self sacrifice of God and the offer of immortality to every one, whether he is rich or poor, educated or uneducated, male or female, master or slave. He lived among the human beings and died two thousand years ago.

Identification with Christ means faith in Him and personal commitment to Him which Paul had considered more important than "good works". Good moral behaviour is the most requisite qualification for a true Christian and

Christ also felt the same as part and parcel of Christian life. Paul was of the opinion that Jesus would come this time to earth not in a home like Nazareth but in glory on celestial clouds. Then he will destroy every power and authority. The second coming of the Lord is unJewish concept but we can expect it at any time.

The most important Christian ritual is exactly the "Lord's Supper". It has been observed by Christians with bread and wine since the death of Jesus. Later it became part of love feast or common meal. But it became disagreement to some Christians and yet part of their remembrance in the devotion. And with in a short time there was a radical change. It was decided by the devotees that only baptized Christians are eligible for taking the communion (with good standing) or Lord's Supper. This time heathens came to practice and began to accuse Christians by saying that they were doing cannibalism by feasting on the body and blood of some body.

In such a critical situation apostle Paul came and clarified the position by saying that he considered the Lord's Supper ceremony as an identification with the Lord in His death and resurrection a communion with the body and blood of Christ. Then in about 58 AD, Paul returned to Jerusalem but he was arrested by the Roman authorities on the pretext that he was a trouble maker. He was originally a Roman citizen, so he appealed to Caesar for justice and on that cause he was sent to Rome and remained there for two years in house arrest. It is said apostle Peter was also there at that time and both of them were martyred during fierce persecution initiated by the Roman crudest Emperor, "Nero".

He was called by the biblical historians as the most inhuman and barbarious among all Roman kings. It is said in his rule some Christians were torn to pieces by dogs, some were crucified and some were tied to the cross and burned like living torches to illuminate an entertainment in Nero's garden. That kind of brutal treatment Christians experienced during the reign of the Roman kings. It is believed Peter was burned to death and buried beneath the

high altar of St.Peter's in Rome and Paul at the site of St.paul outside the walls of Jerusalem.

Christian leaders and community of Jerusalem retained great prestige and influence at that time but suddenly seized and sacked by the Roman authorities. So, the Jewish Christianity in the city lost its headquarters and source of power. Eventually it was Paul's Christianity that survived. It was believed by many educated people that it was only through Paul Christianity became popular and spread into the world apart from the four Gospels. It was finally concluded that with out Paul and his thirteen epistles there is no New Testament; and without Paul we could have scarcely heard of Jesus Christ. So we conclude by saying, of all the apostles and disciples, it was apostle Paul totally responsible for the spreading of Christianity.

After the death of Paul, his contemporaries did not give any importance for the progress of Christian religion. Yet the trend of people had changed". In 200AD there were Christians in every province in the Roman Empire and faith spread out side also .As a result during 300 AD there were more Christians than Jews. And 325AD, the Eastern part of Roman Empire called Byzantine empire for which Constantine became the king. He was quite opposite to Emperor Nero. Constantine and his mother Helena embraced Christianity and did a lot for the spreading of faith. She was guided to find out the true cross on which Christ died. Constantine seemed to have blended the Christian faith with pagan belief in a way which was probably common at that time He insisted more on official tolerance of the religion and built Churches in his new Eastern capital constantnople which is now called modern Turkey.

In addition to this , he built a church in Nazareth called "the Church of Annunciation" in Bethlehem "the Church of Nativity" in the Christian! quarters of Jerusalem city."The church of Holy sepulcher" and on the mount of Olives" The Church of Helena, in memory of his mother. Above all it was he who changed Saturday Subbath day to Sunday. It was he who abolished cross punishment and many more for the progress of Christian religion. Earlier than

all these things, he happened to call the Council of Bishops to know who the christ was. They told him He was the son of God and the son of man. He again called for a meeting of the Bishops in (Necaea) in Asia Minor in order to solve the Arian Controversy regarding the faith of Christians that they approved to have three Gods in Oneness; the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; as they considered themselves monotheistic in worshipping the three persons in One God. The Eastern part of the empire became great particularly in politics and religion and Constantine ruled that part.

The church in that Eastern part also became popular, and so the church authorities wished to honour that place. As the emperor showed more interest in the church matters, he became the effective head of Eastern churches and the senior Bishop became the patriarch of Constantinople. Then the monasteries played important role for the spreading of faith and principles among people. First they followed and then they preached to the people. They cared for the sick, they helped the sick and poor. They taught the children and provided lodgings to the travellers. They showed the people all kinds of goodness to all people and remained as an example to others. So in the reign of emperor Constantine both Jews and Christians enjoyed the most comfortable life.

The early centers in Rome in Eastern Mediterranean area, at Alexandria, Antioch in Asia Minor and at Carthege in Africa were considered full fledged places for Christian faith and Christianity became the religion of cities. But this wonderful progress was short lived. Some Roman powers came forward and introduced the Emperor as a Devine force and so he must be worshipped like god. As a result some Christians obeyed the order and those who did not honour the proclamation, were persecuted and killed. In course of time Christianity became a disputable religion in the hands of some opposition members who later called them selves Gnostic Christians.

This Gnostic Christianity gradually developed into “Gnosticism” which came from the Greek word “Gnosis”. Its meaning is “knowledge”. Their

blind belief was that human body and world are evil and the prison of immortal soul. These Gnostic Christians denounced the God of Old Testament and treated him as the creator of prison. They did not believe also Christ as the son of God lived with human body and His suffering on the cross was only illusory. The belief of these Gnostics eclipsed the main doctrine that the Father sent His son to redeem the humanity by becoming a human being.

The true believers rebelled against them for their heathen way of thinking. The early dispute implanted in the Christian movement is a living conviction of the dangers of unstrained individuals. In addition to that the expected coming Jesus Christ is not yet materialized and Christians might have to wait for some more years, or even some more generations. Regarding His second coming Christians were being harassed by the outsiders. The authentic ideas and institutions of Christianity took shape in response to the need for order must be the church. The word 'church' came from the Greek term "kyriapom" which means belonging to God or "to the Lord". This word church used for buildings that (Christians maintain for the purpose of gathering themselves on Sundays to worship God.

It can be also used the by the community of orthodox Christians forming the body of Christ on earth. Then regarding the term Catholic Church means both universal and orthodox even during the second century, and if any body who remained outside the church was in danger of spirited and physical separation. But for the Gnostics, the statement of fundamental belief worked out which was commonly called "Apostlecreed". Many books have been written and circulated among people. They must have been composed either by an apostle or any body, but there are mixed with 'agnosticism'. A canon of 'orthodox Scripture' and in about 250 A.D, the new treatment in the present form was widely accepted. And to this holy book, Christians, Jews and Muslims showed reference and shared the belief. They also accepted that those who wrote the scripture were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

At the same time in response to the need for authority began to develop a hierarchical structure which is unparalleled in other religions. The Bishop (in Greek it is called “episcops” which means superintendent) is a leader and a spiritual ruler of a group of local congregation. This system was approved and improved gradually. The apostles appointed bishops as their successors. They were succeeded by the appointment of others like a chain of apostolic authority. The bishops used to meet frequently in the Synods or councils to regulate the affairs of the church. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Rome became the capital of Roman Empire and Christians also made Rome as their main center for all church activities. The Bishop of Rome claim himself as the head of all bishops and of the church of St. Peter.

The Sabbath day was not Saturday like Jews, but Sunday was made Sabbath day at the time of Emperor Constantine. And Christians have only two important festivals- Christmas in memory of Christ’s birth and “Easter” in memory of his death and resurrection. But for Jews, there are seven festivals nominated by God Himself and the most important one was “Passover”. They have also another prominent festival called “Purim” which established during the time of Queen Esther. The Northern European people the “Norse” and the English were converted to Christianity by the Roman church. The Eastern Orthodox Church carried its faith to the people of “Byzantium” and “Russia” where a large number of people were converted.

One of the most significant conversions was the “Prince Vladimir” of Kiev and his moving with a Byzantine Princess. Just at that time the Eastern Front was taken over by the Turks who also acquired Palestine and Syria. These conditions made the pilgrims impossible to visit the holy places in Jerusalem. This unpleasant situation prompted the emperor of Byzantine to appeal to “Pope Urban”, and in response to the appeal, the Pope declared holy war in 1094AD against Islam. So against Muslims, a great campaign continued under the emblem of “white cross” to recover the holy land from the infidels.

The appeal of the Pope found an emotional enthusiastic response from European fighting squad. They wanted to exhibit their talents for the service of God. There was a promise in the church that whoever was killed in the church service would have direct passport to heaven. Muslims were also encouraged by the same promise. So the first crusade was fought in 1099 to storm Jerusalem across Syria and Palestine. A number of crusades had to take place and in the fourth crusade of 1204, the Muslims could not find the way of attack the holy land, but they attacked Constantinople and plundered the city heavily. Again the Muslims recaptured Jerusalem, and the Greeks on the other hand recovered their empire.

In course of time the papacy planned for the reunion of the western and eastern churches, but their suspicious and misunderstanding went very deep. And they could not find any scope for their unity. They remained separated on various points of doctrine. In addition to the question of supremacy over the leadership in Rome. The Eastern Church, for example did not believe in Purgatory and also rejected that the priests need not be baptized through complete immersion in water, but simply pouring of water is enough.

The fact is that the west wanted to give more emphasis on man's sinfulness, where as the East on man's potential goodness. The west saw Jesus as tortured victim sacrificed Himself for man's sin and crucifixion was the final symbol. But the Eastern churches saw Jesus, as triumphantly victorious over evil and death. The west saw man's redemption (motive) through Christ. The West orthodox motive was the correct worship. In the western churches the papacy reached the summit of its temporal power of pope innocent IIIrd who styled himself Vicar of Christ (God's deputy on earth); and all bishops were kept under control.

The church was bound up with the establishment of order, on the society and according to them that order was imposed by the Almighty God under these conditions a new kind of monotheistic order came into existence called

“Friars” who followed the patron of communal monastic life, with the ideals of poverty, chastity and service .to God. They used to go out for preaching to all kinds of people primarily in the cites. They lived by begging and they were called missionaries to normal Christians in western Europe. The two orders of ‘Friars’ were founded by St.Franas of “Assisi” and St.Dominie.

St.Francis gentleness and delight made him an attractive figure and finally prompted him to become a missionary by hearing the voice of Christ. He felt he was commissioned by Jesus Christ to do His service as Christ Himself commanded. His disciples were first to go and preach about repentance and the kingdom of God which is at hand. The Friars of St. Franciscan and St.Domenican became famous for their learning and skill in argument. As clearly explained in Judaism the philosophers set out, to demonstrate that the religion was right not only as a matter of faith, but also as a matter of reason. The greatest of such philosophers was “Thomas Aquinos” whose systematic Christian philosophy was made basis for Roman Catholic theology.

The full majority of Christians were seeking salvation through church but not through a solitary communion of mystics. The medieval Christians had three main departments which were called in theology spirited conditions but popularly known as Christians of exceptional goodness would go to heaven. Unbelievers and Christians of exceptional wickedness would go to hell. And great majority of sinful but redeemable Christians would go to purgatory and in that place their sins had to be cleansed and puritied only after the purification of their sinfulness then they would be fit to enter heaven and prayers have to be conducted on earth by the faithful people because these prayers would help the dead though the punishment in purgatory. Then at the end of time Christ would pome as judge and savoir. The dead would be resurrected and from them some had to be sent to heaven and the rest to hell, depending upon judgment.

Many pictures of the last judgment and the position of hell were exhibited in some churches as warnings and reminders of life in hell. Christianity inherited Satan from Judaism but this Satan did not play any role in Jewish faith as he did in Christianity. The Christians believed not only in God the Father but also God the son. Who saved mankind from evil Satan is not equal to God but only one of the seven arch-angels. He rebelled against God and became arch enemy of man. He was the embodiment of evil and wrong. Christians used to keep the sign of the cross on themselves on their children houses, cattle, and crop to ward off any diseases.

Holy water blessed by the priest would be taken home, from the church, and sprinkled on beds so as to avoid the presence of devils or evil spirits. Generally Christians lived in districts called parishes and each parish would have its own church, and priest. Services were always regular, children were baptized, youngsters married in the churches and when the members of congregation died, they buried ceremoniously. The most important service in the church was the "Lord's supper" or Mass. It was conducted in "Latin" mostly by Catholic churches, which could not be correctly understood by the congregation, sometimes even by the priests, and the congregation was conducted in Latin language.

The church authorities used to keep pictures of Jesus, Virgin Mary, and of some saints and some times carried in procession at the time of festivals to the districts to bless congregation. Devotees would go on pilgrimage to the holy places, to the shrines of St. James at Compostela in Spain or Thomas Becket at Canterbury, or to Rome to see the scenes of Jesus life and death or to the holy land Jerusalem, so that they would be touched by holiness and supernatural power.

As a matter of fact, Christianity in the medieval period had to its credit more civilized force. It nourished Arts and learning, along with good education. It comforted the suffering and the miserable in this harsh society. This

Christianity struggled for spiritual security in this life and save hope of life after death. In fact the church was part of the established order of society, but this order had broken and the church splintered. The old feudalism was crumbled and capitalism on the march. The wealth of church and its financial condition was vehemently criticized. The hierarchy was accused of corruption and nepotism. The monasteries, of luxury, immorality of the clergy and spiritual inadequacy were seriously looked into. With the above said things we can understand that they gave scope for the growth of, scepticism about the authority and teaching of the Bible in the church. It was already pointed out by John Wycliff of England and JohnHuss of Bohemia or the modern Czechoslovakia that anybody would be able to understand the Bible by reading one's ownself and they need not go to church for the guidance of some one, but one can understand anything with the help of the Holy Spirit. John wycliffe died peacefully, but JohnHuss was tried by church council at Constantine in Switzerland and burnt alive for his heretic and his followers were excommunicated.

Just at that time the invension of printing press in the fourteenth century brought the Bible in the vernacular languages and many Christians took more interest to read the Bible by themselves. And at that time the army of Ottoman in the East, and the Turks were on the march. In 1455 they surrounded Constantinople with their enormous army under the leadership of Sultan Muhammad II, and in spite of strong resistance, the historic city Constantnople was taken away by the enemy. The last Byzantine emperor Constantine XI "Paliologus" died while fighting. The great church of the Holy wisdom "SantoSophia" Vas changed into a mosque. In such a situation the leadership of the Eastern Church went into the hands of Russia.

In Europe Martin Luther inaugurated a rebellion against Rome and nailed ninety five thesis to the door of the castle church at Wettenberg in Saxony in 1517 and at that time Luther was in his thirties. He was a Monk and teacher in the University of Wettenburg. He went through severe spiritual

crisis like Augustine, before him. He was tormented with a sense of his own worthlessness. He was convinced of the ingrained sinfulness of human nature and the littleness of man before God. Like Augustine Luther also became hopeless of any remedy of human guilt in human effort. But he found solace in the merciful God acting in Jesus Christ.

Luther's belief was different from Augustine. According to his faith God's grace does not come directly to the believer. If we stick on to the saying of Luther that church was not the final authority for the doctrine of salvation, but it would be granted through the church. Luther was condemned for his statement but he was saved by "Elector of Saxony".

Luther distributed tracts with the matter that he denounced papacy and the attitude of the priesthood in the Catholic churches. The outcome of his attack was that Germany became two sets of religions, Protestants and Catholics. And finally the Northern states became protestants and Southern states remained as Catholics. The Protestants considered themselves, reformers but not innovators. They took over Catholic Churches and followed most of the rituals, but the services were conducted in German language only. The priests were also replaced with ministries. They were appointed and paid by the state itself. The monasteries were miserably closed and the priests allowed to marry.

People some how liked this set of faith and in a very short time this Lutheran movement spread into many Countries like wild fire. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Ireland and then as a result, Protestantism became an official religion in those countries especially after Henry VIII.

Like Luther, Augustine and John Calvin also believed that man must be saved by the mercy of God. Among people, there are sheep and goats. Those who are chosen by Almighty God proclaimed to be saved and the remaining to be damned eternally. So, there is nothing wrong in the saying of John Calvin. He said all human beings are corrupted by original sin so they

deserve God's wrath and eternal damnation. But God will choose some in order to save through his son. Calvinism has always considered prosperity which can be gained through self discipline and hard work. They are the marks of honest profit and a true evidence of one's righteousness.

John Calvin was more a thinker than Martin Luther. Like Protestantism Calvinism also spread into some countries like Geneva, France, Germany, Poland, Holland, Scotland, England and so on. It was also made official religion like Protestantism. Again there appeared groupism in Protestants. They bluntly rejected the authority of Roman church, but accepted the authority of the scripture. They had high respect for the Old Testament God and its prophecies. They did not accept the monastic way of life and celibacy. They strongly believed in the Devil, hell and the last judgement. They rejected the purgatory and the worship of Virgin Mary and the saints.

In general the Calvinists were more serious in observing the principles than Lutherans and of the Church of England. Then the Roman Catholic reaction to the protestant threat was a mixture of internal reform and vigorous counter attack and the Protestants called it Counter Reformation in the church. In this connection a council met at "Trent" and corrected many abuses. The council also declared that only the church had the right to say anything about the scripture. Many new orders came out to reform themselves and to battle against heresy. At that time another set of believers came into existence. "Ignatius Loyola", a Spanish knight became the founder of the society of Jesus". He was in military service, but it was cut short as he received serious injuries to his leg in the battle. He was hospitalized for that and at that time his mind was turned to spiritual matters. He got a vision of Virgin Mary and Christ. Then he went to live in a cave in "Catalonia" and there he prayed to God and fasted. With his past experiences he planned a course of meditations which were later published as "Spiritual Exercises" which were read in the University of Paris. He gathered a small group of spiritual minded people along with another Spanish Frances Xavier. They took Oath to lead the life of poverty, chastity and

missionary work. Pope Paul III also accepted this new order in 1450. It was well organized and Loyola was made first General who was answerable only to Pope. The number in this “Society ,of Jesus” has increased abnormally and within hundred years it has gone to 13000 in the ranks.

In Europe the Northern countries embraced Protestant faith where as the Southern countries accepted Catholicism Some countries like Germany, France, the Netherlands and Iceland happened to split in their faith. And from seventeenth century England became very strong in protestant faith .The next serious problem for them was to run the church with democratic principles, whether it should be on Episcopalian system by bishops as in ‘ England, or presbetarian system or the system of coucil of ministers and elders in Calvinism or Congregationalist system where only congregation would maintain. All these systems were put before the new world. Then in 1607 the first Anglican church was established in James town in Virginia in North America by the first English settlements. Again in 1789 the American Anglican settlers declared the independence of their Church of England. It was called the Protestant Episcopal Church and they followed congregational system.

Apart from this another popular set of religion came into lime light. It was called “Society of Friends” otherwise known as “Quakers” because they used to tremble and shake with the power of God’s spirit. The powerful men who loved this system was “George Fox”. He went into the Midland countries of England and called every person to repent. Fox strongly believed that each human being can find truth with in himself through the inner light which is the part of God’s light. He hated church service, ministries and creeds. There was no fixed program for the gathering of Quakers. They gave equal importance to women in the organizations. There is also a colony of Quakers in pennsylvrnia which was founded in 1682 by William Perm. The friends, insisted more on honesty and simplicity of behavior.

Inspite of different sets of faith came into force, we find some ups and downs in their progress at different centuries. Let us think for a while the

position of Christianity in the modern world. The seriousness of religious conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could not prove that a particular religion's faith was stronger than the others. This has generated a reaction of fanaticism and a policy of 'live and let live.' In such circumstances new ideas from great men like Copernicus, Galileo and Isaac Newton created a new picture in the minds of people, who caused the progress of any religion.

According to their Writings, the Almighty God became impersonal, remote and powerless in our daily practical life. Basing on their information people began to think whether there is the existence of God at all. The outcome of their thinking led to scepticism. The progress of science in agriculture and medicine gave scope to new methods preferably to prayer as a means of securing a good crop for curing a disease etc. The public demanded freedom in both churches and priesthood and equality. Simultaneously there was an opposition which sought refuge from nationalism and scepticism in a religion that was emotionally convincing. This unexpected movement in Germany and Scandinavian Luthernism gave chance to disputes among Christians about the doctrine and focused on an ardent devotion to Christ with a sense of personal closeness to the saviour.

This movement influenced John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. He was an Anglican clergyman. He was a student of Oxford University. His close friends were called with a nick name "Methodists" because they studied the Bible in a methodical way and attended the church regularly. When he was in his thirties, he happened to listen to the reading about Martin Luther. He felt something strange in his mind. He said with trust in Christ that he had received salvation by taking away his sins.

Wesley in his fifty three years of life, travelled more than 2,00,000 miles, and preached more than 40,000 sermons, about fifteen a week, mostly in the open air. Some times stones and rotten eggs were thrown at him, yet he was a good speaker. He made the audience spell bound at certain occasions. He

tried to create the impression assuring salvation and liberation from sin. He stressed more that their sinfulness and wickedness would lead them to their doom. He assured them if they repent and turn to Christ, the savior, He would certainly redeem them with His loving kindness.

Some people who heard his sermons shed tears and cried out and others fell to the ground and felt happy. As a result there were more converts and more pastors were appointed and it was progressing with all the activities. But the bishops of the Church of England found this emotional and excitement of Methodism as repulsive and more dangerous. Finally Wesley and his friends were not allowed to preach in the Church of England. Then he organized his own ministers and his younger brother Charles composed about a thousand Hymns for the Methodist church service and some new churches were built. This revival movement had entered the United States also and Methodism came to this Country in 1760 which attracted more people.

During 1830's there was a high level church revival. The Oxford academics challenged nationalism and scepticism by proclaiming the spiritual authority of church, descended from the apostles as against the individual judgment. They tried their best to bring back the Church of England into normal Catholic heritage and captured the congregation as far as possible. This movement was activated by brilliant members among the Catholics like John Henry Newman who became Catholic cardinal. The main purpose of this continuous effort was to create a strong Anglo Catholic Party in the church of England. The outcome of this was that the worship of Virgin Mary, using of incense in the church including candles, and appointment of Priests in the place of ministers were continued. This non-stop effort of the work became part of the political and cultural imperialism at that time. And finally the missionaries succeeded in bringing technology, education and humanitarianism to heathens. They found this easier than bringing the converts into their fold. In course of time a massive flow of immigrants from Europe came to the U.S.A who were about five million between 1830 and 1860; then about twenty

million between 1860-1914. All these people were of different denominations. Among them there were more Irish and Italian Catholics, “then German Scandevanean Lutherans. If we put on denominations (called Protestants) together excluding Catholics, they were the largest member but individually Catholics were the largest number in the U.S.A, as single biggest organization. The strength had been increasing in all churches gradually in spite of scientific discoveries which deny the existence of God.

The single book of Charles Darwin “Origin of species” shook the very foundation of faith in God. People accepted that book for the “Theory of Evolution”. This knowledge of science gave birth to a new school of Biblical scholarship called “Higher criticism “. It was organized in Germany and they clearly pointed out that the Bible was compiled many centuries ago and has nothing to do with later developments in science. They also suggested, St .Paul was the real founder of Christianity but not Jesus christ.As a matter of fact, real belief, in God, belief in, the Bible and belief in Christ were totally disturbed by the “Theory of Evolution”.

Most of the Protestants denounced and fiercely attacked those who showed interest in the Theory of Evolution. The Catholic Church also reacted to that. Any way in Russia and afterwards in Eastern Europe Christianity was allowed to exist only with suffering. But after the communism came into existence the Eastern Orthodox Church was severely damaged.

The changed conditions in the minds of people forced them even the service system in the Mass. Among many changes in Catholic service system, the first was change of Latin language in Mass, and then introduced the service system of Protestants in their churches. Then Christians of nineteenth century learnt a lesson of tolerance towards one another and towards every religion. Some practical Christians came out to serve the poor and helpless. Questions regarding religious doctrine became less important in their life. It was also thought to be dangerous to unite all denominations into one church.

The modern ecumenical movement began among protestant missionaries, but they were disappointed by the rivalry among different denominations. Then the "International Missionary Council" was formed by various protestant bodies soon after the First World War. And after the Second World War The world council of churches formally constituted in Amsterdam with a program to bring the man out of communism and Capitalism. The Roman Catholic Church became more Ecumenical in its approach; primarily under Pope John xxIII. The main problem to unite the Christendom became more complicated, because the differences between the major denominations are not founded by petty minded people. All the denominations have been formed on deep rooted divisions, attitudes, temperaments and traditions.

## *Prophetic Views Of Resurrection*

These are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning me “(Luke 24:44)

It is a fact that majority of the believers are quite familiar with the Old Testament prophesies concurring the subsequent death of Messiah; But they are not quite familiar and in touch with accompanying prophesies of Jesus Christ’s resurrection. So in this context let us try to examine the testimony of some of the prophetic scriptures actually. Some of these are verbal announcement proclaimed by the spirit of the lord hundreds of years ago before this event took place .Some other people expressed in vague at first glance yet upon careful examination they are proved unmistakable to the true believers. For our careful study some of them are mentioned here for our careful meditation. And these examples can also provide a forceful witness to the believers whose hearts the Almighty God may open.

“JEHOVA JIREY(means)GOD WILL PROVIDE “.SACRIFICE (Genesis 22:1-14).This incident took place in about 2000 B.C. This is mentioned in the book of Hebrews also.(11:17-19)Abram after walking in faith for twenty five years for a child to be born to Sarah, according to the covenant God made with Abram that only his seed would make a great nation. Any way Isaac was born at last. And while he was still a boy God commanded Abraham to take the innocent boy of his old age and sacrifice him on the Mount Moriah. This incident was nothing but God’s testing of Abraham’s faith. Abraham was given the gift of a child in his old age and again God ordered Abraham to give back that child. As a matter fact , child sacrifice was common in those days among canaanites only and it was never in God’s plan also. Still God commanded Abraham to do so just for.....

Abraham whole heartedly trusted in God .Though God asked him to sacrifice his only son, he believed that God would raise Isaac again from the

dead. "By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promise offered up his only begotten son of whom it was said that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. According to that God was able to raise him up even from the dead from where also he received him in a figure (Hebrews 11:17-19). I would like to draw the attention of the readers to the fact that Genesis 22:2, particularly mentions the name Moriah as the Mountain hill where the sacrifice has to take place and Genesis 22:4, tells us that it was three day journey and the distance was about 50 miles.

King Solomon happened to build the house of God about 1000 years later on the Mountain ranges of Moriah. And God sent Abraham to this mountain to sacrifice Isaac. Where the future temple of God would be built. To that place Abraham and his innocent son walked together for three days. Abraham must have looked at his son's cheering young voice. To Abraham's troubled mind, Isaac was already dead. The whole scene of sacrifices course free figures the lord Jesus Christ because He was sacrificed for our sins by His heavenly father and then raised Him on the third day from the grave. It was really a remarkable and heart touching prophecy in the bible.

But the God did not allow Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac and Jehovah Jireh (Jehovah provides); and God sent an angel to stop the hand of Abraham and provided a ram caught in the thicket for the sacrifice. In the case of Messiah the father gave his son and the son Jesus submitted Himself to the will of His father; whereas Isaac surrendered himself to his father Abraham. Here we must understand the emotions of the father (God) giving His son to die for the sake of our sins. After three day march to mount Moriah, Isaac seemed destined to die but surprisingly we see the happy return of both Abraham and Isaac.

This was just the same as Jesus our lord came out of the grave in triumphal resurrection to live and reign forever. In the company of His father and of those who love Him. And Abraham called the name of that place

Jehovah Jireh as it is said to this day. In the mount of the lord it shall be seen (Genesis22:14).Jehovah Jireh is a Hebrew word which means the lord shall provide.

### ***David's Prophecy Of Messiah's Resurrection***

ST. Peter in his bold and inspiring preachings on the day of Pentecost quotes from psalm 16 which is psalm of David the prophecies of Christ's resurrection.

For David speaketh concerning him, I fore saw the Lord always before my face for he is on my right hand that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice.....and my tongue was glad. Thus Jesus hath God raised up where of we all are witnesses.(Acts 2:25-32).In the bible psalm 22 is otherwise known as the crucifixion psalm; and remarkably prophecies of the Messiah's suffering and dying for our sins. Jesus was referred to this when he said -"These are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you that all things must be fulfilled ..... And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem".(Luke 24:44-47)

After we finish he said reading of the first twenty one verses ,our sorrowful tears would be changed into happy relief as the crucifixion psalm changed his method beginning in verses 22.Before that it portrays in vivid and remarkable details , the future suffering of the Messiah and our Lord quotes His words as He suffers upon the cross. When He cries out "My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me"(Psalm 22:1).Then all of a sudden in verses 22 psalm changes its tone and begins a victory hymn of triumph ..... the Christ will rise from the dead. With his resurrection the meek shall eat and be satisfied .Then they shall praise the lord that seek him that your heart shall forever. In addition to that at the end of the world will remember and turn unto the lord and all the kindred of the nations shall worship Him.

The verses (psalm 22:22-31) clearly prophecies the resurrection of the Messiah is confirmed. If at all such conformation is required from the risen lord's words to his disciples when he declared that.....

“All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me. Then upon their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them. Thus it is written and thus thy beloved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem.(Luke 24:44-47).

### ***Prophecy of prophet Isaiah -(52.13:53.12) 700B.C***

The first two thirds of the prophecy in Isaiah chapter 53 is like that of psalm 22.Which gives the full picture of God's suffering servant. “He is despised and rejected of men. And although he hath borne our grief and carried our sorrows ,We esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted “(Isaiah 53:4).This passage clearly portrays the vicarious atonement .He suffered not for His own sins but for ours. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was brushed for our inequities. Our peace was upon Him and we are healed with His strips(Isaiah 53:5).But this does not refer to king David because he died about 300 years earlier . And he was not sinless and much of his earthly suffering due to his own sins(2 Samuel 12:10-14). This passage must have been written with the inspiration of the holy spirit and the prophecies of the Messiah to come..... Jesus and The cross.

The lord was pleased to wound Jesus and caused Him more suffering. He made his perfect soul an offering for the sins of an entire humanity and spared His soul unto death. So, it was God's plan that the Messiah's death is the final offering for sin.”He shall prolong His days “(Isaiah 53:10).How is it possible to prolong the days of suffering of anybody?.The prophecy made it clear that the Messiah dies here and then how can His suffering be prolonged?

.....for he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence neither was any deceit in his mouth? (Isaiah 53:8-9)

So, when he had died how is it possible that he can see the suffering of his soul? and then he shall be satisfied? Let us steady these lines carefully. The answer is crystalclear. These verses of Isaiah 53:10-12 are just like the final third of psalm22 which prophetically announce the resurrection of the Messiah. Jesus told us clearly in(Luke 24:44-46).When Jesus explained the writing in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms”. Told both about the coming of His death and about His rising from the dead. This point is emphasised clearly-”in the law of Moses”(Genesis 22 chapter)in the prophets(Isaiah 52:13,53:12)in the psalms psalm 16 and psalm 22 .

For our understanding these examples are only some of the Messianic fulfillment. We can find many more in the Bible. For example in(Matthew 12:39-40),our lord declares to the hardhearted scribes and pharisees . He vehemently attacked them and said the following words.

“An Evil and Adulterous generation seeketh after a sign and there shall no sign be given to it, But the sign of the prophet Jonah’s. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly. So that the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth?. “Jesus said the above words to the hardhearted and shift necked fault finders like scribes and Pharisees .

As a matter of fact these scribes and pharises heard so many times the golden words of Jesus Christ and saw, with their own eyes some miraculous happenings on certain occasions. They also saw some wonderful healings of diseases of different people yet they were hard nuts to crack and so they used to ask Him time and again some signs. So, to all these nonsensical doubts He mentioned the story of Jonah, how he came to life after remaining in the belly of a whale three days and three nights one sign. In the same way Jesus said that

His death and resurrection are also a sign. His rising from the dead and appearing again to His disciples and to the public on the third day like (Jonah) was the final proof that he was undoubtedly the Messiah sent by God for the sake of suffering believers. From the New Testament. (Luke 2:41-51)

The main purpose of this article is only to give a suggestion regarding the death and resurrection of our Lord. Luke openly said, He never heard from anyone speaking about the death of Jesus and His resurrection, nor read from any book. He suggested this item for all the Bible readers to meditate upon for consideration, because it is more concerned about our Lord's blessed resurrection.

### ***The Account of Mary***

This information came directly from the mouth of Mary mother of Jesus to Luke when both happened to meet and spend some time in Ephesus. The Christian historians Eusebius of Caesarea 263-339 A.D. Irenaeus of second century and other writers tell us that Apostle John along with Mary remained in Ephesus to spread the Gospel and to live freely far away from the raising troubles between the revolting Zealots and the ruling Romans in Israel. The book of Revelation chapter 19 confirms John's exile to the Island called Patmos which is about 50 miles away off the coast since John was entrusted the responsibility of Mary by Jesus Himself from the cross. It is even strongly presumed that she was with St. John and also the early writers like Eusebius confirmed it through the writings.

If Mary really went with apostle John to live in Ephesus then it is best evidence we can find and understand how Luke who followed Paul to Ephesus could have met her there for more information about Jesus as he was writing the Gospel with full details of the Law. He could have somehow managed to meet and speak with her and gather as much information as possible. Then Luke confidently declared in his Gospel (1.1-4) that he obtained full details and the testimony of the first witness from the beginning for his Gospel. As a

Gospel writer Luke could give the entire data of Jesus Christ through His Mother Mary. Actually he gave us more information than any other Gospel writer about the family of Jesus Christ. In Addition to that he gave Mary's genealogy as well as some other details that would know originally.

The Gospel of John was written some years later than all other Gospel's. His book supplements the symbolic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke the greatness of John's Gospel was that we don't find any repetition from three early Gospel's. Now we can come to an understanding that Luke has recorded the very inner thoughts of Mary. In Luck(1.29) and when she saw him she was troubled at his saying and cast in her mind what is the meaning of salutation should be(Luck:219). But Mary patiently kept all those things in her bosom like the shepherds come to her at the manger telling of the angelic announcement which they heard and pondered them in her heart. And Jesus kept those incidents that occurred during the Passover time in Jerusalem. When He was 12 years old . We can conclude by saying that Luke heard everything about Jesus only from His mother.

Joseph and Mary used to visit Jerusalem every year on the eve of the Passover feast. So, as usual when Jesus was just 12 years old His parents went to Jerusalem to take part in the feast. After the function Joseph and Mary were returning home and they left Jesus behind them unknowingly. They thought that Jesus must be among other people that were following them and with that confidence they continued one day journey. And finally when they searched for Him, He was not found anywhere. Then in utter confusion they returned to Jerusalem in search of Jesus and after three day search they at last found Him in the Temple sitting in the midst of doctors. On one hand He was sharing with them whatever they said, on the other hand, He was questioning them that made the whole gathering Spell bound.

All the people that heard Him questioning and answering became astonished at His abnormal knowledge. In the mean time His mother came

and expressed her sorrow for finding Him after three days. But His answer to mother was another riddle to the people that were there. He replied He was in His father's work. His saying was not understood by anybody and finally Jesus reached home with His parents His mother sincerely kept all those strange incidents in her mind. As readers we have to remember one important thing by the time Jesus parents realized that He was not there with the group members that were going to their native place and by the time they returned to Jerusalem again in search of Him and finally found Him, it was already three days.

It was Passover time in Jerusalem and it was mobbed by pilgrims and visitors His parents were full of confusion and more worried about their son Jesus who was 12 years old. His answer to his mother that He was in His father's work totally confused her more. In such conditions she said then to Jesus: "Thy father and I have sought the sorrowing;" (Luke242). For His mother's statement Jesus reply was something like why were you searching for me all the days? Don't you know that I must be in the temple area on my father's business. This kind of expressions at the age of 12 certainly show His Messianic consciousness what He was we can notice how painful He was a pre-figure to Mary that what kind of pain she would experience in future primarily when Jesus her son the Lord would be brutally ill-treated and crucified .

1. These incidents took place in Jerusalem
2. It was the festival time of Passover
3. He was dealing with the doctors of law with the pharisees , scribes and sadducees without any companion.
4. The testimony of Jesus before them was remarkable and no doubt forth right and righteous
5. He missed for three days.
6. They were not sure where He was. So, they were deeply troubled alarmed and saddened
7. Jesus reappeared to His parents only after three days.
8. All this unexpected thing happened only when He said-I was on my

father's business

9. The parents relieved of their anxiety and know doubt overjoyed at His reappearance .
10. He departed from Jerusalem and went to His place.

As we have studied so far his mother kept although those sayings in her heart. she could not forget the happenings of those three days when He missed .Simeon also prophesied to mary when he saw Jesus as a child in the temple. He was brought for circumcision, yea a sword shall pierce through thy son (Luck235) It was spoken about the severe pain that Mary had to experience at the time of the circumcision to Jesus who was holy and innocent devine son So far we have studied and examined some of the remarkable prophesies that speak about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We have the testimony of disciples in the Gospels. We have the witness of the holy spirit in our heart and also we have God's written prophesies in the Bible and all these openly declared the reality of the resurrection and the assurance of atonement and of our own resurrection to everlasting life if we trust Him."we have also a more sure word of prophesies where unto ye do well that ye take heed has unto ye light that smitten in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star a raise in your heart"(2Peter1:19).

## *How often No 40 is Used*

1. In the days of Noah, people became wicked and sinned against God. So God wanted to destroy people with rains and it rained for 40 days and 40 nights. (Genesis 7:17).
2. After 40 days and 40 nights of rain Noah waited for another 40 days and sent out Raven to see the conditions of water on earth.(Genesis 5:6)
3. Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebecca (Genesis. 25:20)
4. Esau was 40 years old, when he married Judith. (Genesis. 26:34)
5. Jacob selected certain animals to give as a gift to his brother Esau and among them there were 40 Cows also. (Genesis 32 :13)
6. When Jacob died, he was embalmed with spices for 40 days. (Genesis 50:3)
7. When Moses was 40 years old, it came to his mind (heart) to visit his brethren, the children of Israel, and accidentally killed an Egyptian, who was the Governor of Goshan. (Exodus 7:23)
8. The Children of Israel ate Manna for 40 years in the wilderness. (Exodus 16:35)
9. Moses went to the top of the mount Horeb (Sinai) for the first time, to receive laws and the 10 commandments and stayed there for 40 days. (Exodus 24:18)
10. The workers who were building the Tabernacle made 40 silver basis to keep them under that house of meeting. (Exodus 36:24)
11. Moses went to the mountain Horeb for the second time and stayed with God for 40 days and 40 nights without bread and water to get the 10 commandments. (Exodus 34:28)
12. God asked Moses to keep 40 sockets of Silver under the lengthy board of the Tabernacle. (Exodus 26:19&36:26)

13. Moses sent 12 members from 12 tribes to find out the position of Canaan and they returned after 40 days. (Num.14:34)
14. The children of Israel wandered in wilderness for 40 years till they reached the borders of Canaan. (Number 14:33)
15. Moses explained to Israel about family relations, when they were judged they must be given 40 strips as a punishment. (Deu.25:3)
16. Aaron was 40 years old when he left Egypt.
17. Joshua went to war with 40 thousand Israel and crossed the River Jordan. (Joshua 4:13)
18. Caleb was 40 years old when he went to see Canaan with other members of the team. (Joshua 14:7)
19. The Israel lived in peace for 40 years under the leadership of Othniel brother and son-in-law of Caleb. (Judges 3:11)
20. The Israelites chose new gods, when there was war in the gates. They had no shield or spear among forty thousand Israelites ? (Judges 5:8)
21. When Deborah was Judging Israelites war took place. At that time they were worshipping heathen gods and so Israelite young men of 40,000 did not have any weapon to fight the war.
22. After the death of the King of Canaan, Israelites lived in peace for 40 years. (Judges 5:31)
23. God got angry over Israelites and handed them over to Philistines for 40 years as a punishment. (Judges 13:1)
24. Eli the priest judged Israel for 40 years. (1 Samuel 4:18)
25. Goliath a Philistine giant of 9'6" feet height, challenged the Israel in the war both morning and evening for 40 days. (1 Samuel 17:16)
26. Prophet Samuel anointed Saul, a Benjaminite as the King of Israel, who ruled the nation for 40 years. (Acts 13:21)

27. Abner Captain of Saul's army; made Saul's son Ishbo Seth, King of Israel and he was 40 years old at that time. (2 Samuel 2:10)
28. King David ruled Israel for 40 years. (2 Samuel 5: 4) (1 Chronicles 29:27)
29. In the war with Syrians King David killed 40 thousand footmen (2 Samuel 10:18)
30. King David in his battle with Arameans killed 40,000 foot soldiers (1 Chronicles 19:18)
31. In the 40<sup>th</sup> Year of David's reign search was made in the records and some capable Hebronites were found (1 Chronicles 26 : 31)
32. Absalom, son of King David said that he wanted to pay his vow to God after 40 years in Hebron. (2 Samuel 15:7)
33. King Solomon had 40 thousand stalls of horses for his chariots (1 Kings 4:26)
34. King Solomon ruled Israel for 40 years (1 Kings 11:42)
35. Prophet Jeremiah continued his 40 years Ministry under the last 5 kings of Davidic Dynasty
36. God asked prophet Ezekiah son of man to lie down on his right side and bear the sin of the house of Judah. God has assigned him 40 days, a day for each year (Ezekiah 4:46)
37. Prophet Elijah got bread from heaven by an angel twice, and with that strength he lived for 40 days and 40 nights and walked to mount Horeb the Mount of God. (1 Kings 19:8)
38. The King of Syria fell ill and sent his man Hazarel to prophet Elisha with 40 camels load of gifts to him (11 Kings 8:9)
39. Joash or Jehoash was made king at the age of 7 years and ruled Israel for 40 years (11 Kings 12:1)
40. King David said that 40 years long was God grieved for that generation of Israel (Psalms 95.10)

41. Ezekiel, the watch man of Israel, happened to bear the iniquities of Judah for 40 years. (Ezekiel 4.6)
42. Prophet Jeremiah continued his ministry for 40 years during the reign of last five kings of Davidic Dynasty
43. No foot of men or beasts shall pass through nor inhabiting Egypt for 40 years(Ezekiel 29:11)
44. I will make the Land of Egypt desolate among the cities for 40 years. (Ezekiel 29.12; 28)
45. After 25 years of Captivity. Ezekiel got a vision in which he saw one of the walls of the second temple was about 40 cubits. (Ezk. 41:2)
46. God said I brought you up from the land of Egypt and led you 40 years through its wilder ness to possess the land of the Amorites (Amos 2:10)
47. Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness for 40 years? O house of Israel? (Amos 5:25)
48. Prophet Jonah told the people of Nineveh city that if they did not repent for their sins within 40 days God would destroy them completely (Jonah 3:4)

## NEW TESTAMENT

49. When Jesus was 40 days old he was taken to the Jerusalem temple.
50. Christ after taking Baptism from John the Baptist wandered in the wilderness of Jordan River for 40 days and hungered. (Mark1.13 & Luke 4.2)
51. After resurrection. Christ spent 40 days with his disciples and ascended unto heaven (Acts 1:3)
52. Simon Peter also healed a man near the temple gate who was above 40 years. (Acts 4.22)
53. More than 40 Jews joined together and took oath that they would not eat or drink untill they kill Paul. (Acts 23 13)

54. Paul said “Of the Jews five times received 40 strips save one. (2 Cor.11 24)
55. But with whom was he grieved 40 years? Was it not with them that sinned? (Hebrews 3 17)
56. Some Christians observe 40 days as Lenten days and remain in fasting before the crucifixion of Christ. (Good Friday)
57. In 2001 the Israel surrounded “ the Church of Nativity” in Bethlehem, because the Philistines with 160 hostages remained inside the church They slept at the corners of the church for a symbolic 40 days They survived with the juice of lemon leaves mixed with oil from the lamps A priest served them juice once in three days.
58. According to historical information Christ was born in 5th B C and died in 30 A.D He wept and foretold the future destruction of Jerusalem and the temple On 70 A.D-King Titus destroyed them just 40 years after the death of Christ.



To write a book especially in English one needs inspiration and invisible guidance. In the same way to deal with some incidents in the Bible, we need the divine inspiration and the Holy Spirit. Without God's guidance, and rather permission, we cannot write even a single word about Him. It is said about 40 inspired people wrote "The Holy Bible" in a period of 1600 years starting with Moses and ending with St. John and the last book being "The Book of revelation" that John wrote in 95 A.D. This book is very important because, it dealt with the life History of Jesus Christ. Some scholars called it "The Book of Seven and also fifth Gospel".

All the Biblical writers like Moses David Peter, John and Paul wrote their respective books only with divine inspiration. I somehow managed to complete the fourth book with countless blessings of God. As I dealt with the topics connected to the Bible History, some people may find interest to look into these topics and may God bless them and enlighten them.

In the sixth book we can find the complete history of Jewish People how they suffered for centuries at different places. We can also see their humiliation and mass killing of them. Then the biblical history of reformers in Christianity is noteworthy I pray for the readers who wish to go through this book in order to know some new information about the historical background of Jewish People.

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