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Hope of Israel Ministries (Church of YEHOVAH)

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The Big Flash!

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***Hope of Israel Ministries--
Preparing the Way for the
Return of YEHOVAH God
and His Messiah!***

The Islamic Bomb

Ever since Moamar Qaddafi of Libya tried and failed to buy a nuclear bomb from China to destroy Israel, the Arab and Muslim countries have tried to obtain such weapons. As one route of obtaining the "Islamic Bomb," the Arab nations funded Pakistan to be the development center for nuclear weapons. Pakistan was chosen because it had a good scientific research base and was far enough out of the Middle east to make it difficult for Israel to attack preemptively. The U.S. threatened reprisals but Pakistan forged ahead and realized the Islamic dream. Then came September 11, 2001.

After the Islamic government of Afghanistan was destroyed by the U.S., evidence that Osama bin Laden had obtained materials for a nuclear arsenal was found in the Al-Qaida tunnel complex outside Kandahar. The cache included low-grade Uranium-238 and cyanide. Earlier, hundreds of jars, drums and metal cases in an underground labyrinth at the desert compound were found when Arab and Pakistani fighters abandoned Kandahar.

To make a nuclear bomb one needs superior technological facilities to turn Uranium-238 into a fissile device like the Hiroshima bomb. Osama bin Laden lacked the specialised equipment for building such a weapon. However, a small so-called "dirty bomb" can be made out of this Uranium if wrapped around a conventional explosive. This small device is capable of spreading radiation over a large area and can be easily transported to carry out terrorist activities.

It is now clear that the Nuclear formula might have fallen into the hands of the Islamic terrorists. The world needs to realize the danger of this because fundamental Islam will stop at nothing to realize its goal of world domination. Dedicated to a *jihad*, suicide bombers would be only too pleased to fulfill their sacred mission to turn Israel and the hated United States into a "fiery hell" that would make September 11 look like child's play. Let's pray that YEHOVAH God will spare us in spite of our iniquities!

-- John D. Keyser

WHY DID YESHUA *CURSE* THE FIGTREE?

Yeshua's enigmatic cursing of the fig tree on the road from Bethany has baffled students of the Bible for centuries! WHY did the tree have leaves when it was "out of season" and not yet time for new growth? And why did the Messiah curse the fig tree when He FULLY REALIZED-- before He even approached it -- that it would have NO fruit? Read about the ORIGIN of the fig tree and the HIGH ESTEEM in which it was (and still is) held by some of the oldest civilizations on earth! Discover the mind boggling SYMBOLISM that surrounds this tree, and WHY the fig tree is also representative of the Church of God today! The WITHERING of the fig tree was an IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHT in the stream of events being fulfilled during our Savior's last days on planet earth before being crucified, and stoned, on the Mount of Olives -- probably within a very few yards of the fig tree itself!

John D. Keyser

In the 21st chapter of Matthew, we read of a very unusual event in the last days of our Savior's life here on this earth:

Early in the morning, as he was on his way back to the city [Jerusalem], he was hungry. Seeing a FIG TREE by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "May you NEVER bear fruit again!" Immediately the tree withered. When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked. Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain [Olivet], 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." -- Matthew 21:18-22.

Was this highly unusual occurrence just a lesson in faith, or was there more to it than that? And why did the Messiah pick a FIG TREE for this lesson? Before answering these questions, let's look at Mark's account of the event:

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because IT WAS NOT THE SEASON FOR FIGS. Then he said to the tree, "May no one EVER eat fruit from you again." AND HIS DISCIPLES HEARD HIM SAY IT...In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree WITHERED from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus,

"Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!" "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."-- Mark 11:12-14, 20-24.

In verse 14 Mark makes a POINT of explaining that the Messiah's disciples actually heard Him curse the fig tree, the implication being that Yeshua did not necessarily intend for those with Him to hear or understand what He was doing. When Peter brought the event to the Messiah's attention the next day, as they were passing by the scene, Yeshua gave an explanation that, in retrospect, could not have really satisfied the disciples. Why?

The cursing of this particular fig tree has baffled theologians down through the centuries. In fact, Mark even said that "it was not the season for figs" (verse 13). On top of that, we should realize that it was barely time for the tree to have leaves! This event occurred four days before Yeshua's crucifixion in 30 A.D. and, according to the *Aid to Bible Understanding*, "Along about February, the first fruit buds appear on the branches of the previous season and precede the leaves by about two months, SINCE THESE [THE LEAVES] DO NOT APPEAR UNTIL THE FINAL PART OF APRIL OR IN MAY." (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York. 1971. P.580).

A Puzzling Event!

It has puzzled people for centuries why the Messiah was so upset with a fig tree that BY NATURE should not have had much in the way of leaves, and no figs! Notice what *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* has to say:

The most difficult passage to interpret is the story of Jesus' cursing the fig tree (Mark 11:13-14, 20-21; and its parallel in Matt.21:18-21), which seems so OUT OF CHARACTER. Many explanations have been offered, but without any permanent solution. That it may have been a dramatic illustration of the parable in Luke 13:6-9, pointing to the tragic end of those who produce no fruit from their lives, seems possible. The absence of the early spring green figs (Song of S. 2:13), which normally precede the leaves and indicate that the tree would bear fruit that season may have been the basis of the story, though it WOULD NOT EXPLAIN THE IMPULSIVE ACTION OF JESUS. Perhaps the story was originally intended as an apocalyptic symbol. That the original context and meaning of the story HAVE BEEN OBSCURED OR LOST is clear.-- Abingdon Press, N.Y. & Nashville. 1962. P.267.

Harper's Bible Dictionary advances this theory:

A fig tree that failed to bear figs was cursed by Jesus (Matt.21:18-19) PERHAPS as a metaphor for the destruction of the Temple that similarly failed to bear proper

religious fruit. Edited by Paul J. Achtemeier. Harper & Row, San Francisco. 1985. P.308.

The Interpreter's Bible, Volume VII, provides us with these additional thoughts:

The DIFFICULTIES of the story should be frankly faced. To propose that Jesus saw the tree was already diseased, and said so, DOES NO JUSTICE to the undeniable curse in vs. 19. It also OVERLOOKS the fact that men then believed that a righteous man's curse has POWER. To propose that Christ would blast a tree, but not a human life, is SIMPLY UNCONVINCING. Would Christ deal thus even with a tree, especially if-- as Mark's Gospel says -- it was NOT the season for fruit? It is better to ASSUME that this is a rewriting of the parable of the Jewish nation recorded in Luke 13:6-9. It is significant that Luke does not record this story except as a parable. A tree, standing alone where all men could see it, having promise of fruit but no fruit-- a fitting symbol of Jewry in the time of Christ. -- Abingdon Cokesbury Press, N.Y. & Nashville. 1951. Pps.507-508.

James Hastings, in his *Dictionary of the Bible*, attempts to interpret Yeshua's actions that day on the road from Bethany:

When our Lord came to the fig tree near Bethany (Mk.11:13), just before the Passover, i.e. from late in March to the middle of April, "the time of figs was not yet," that is, the season for ripe figs had not come. Among the VARIOUS EXPLANATIONS of Christ's action which may be given, the only ones which seem to us worthy of consideration are the following:

(1) That being hungry, and seeing from a distance that the tree had leaves, and therefore was not dead, he came, not to find new figs, but to find and eat any figs of the last season which might have remained over on the tree. The expression "if haply he might find anything thereon" implies that he did NOT expect to find much. One or two figs will often stay an empty stomach marvelously. According to this OPINION, the offence of the fig tree was the fact of not having what must have been a very exceptional relic of a former harvest.

(2) That, finding leaves, he knew that there should be young fruit, and hoped that there might, even at that EARLY PERIOD, be "the first ripe figs," bikkurah. According to this interpretation, the fault of the fig tree was in not having a precocious fig or two before the time, "for the time of figs was not yet." We will not dispute the possibility of finding a winter fig or two on a tree (ALTHOUGH DURING A RESIDENCE OF THIRTY-THREE YEARS IN SYRIA WE HAVE SEARCHED AND INQUIRED IN VAIN FOR THEM), or of the exceptionally early maturing of some variety of figs, perhaps not now cultivated. Neither of these theories, however, ACCORDS WITH OUR CONCEPTION OF CHRIST'S JUSTICE. In neither case would the fig tree be blameworthy. We are not accountable for extraordinary attainments in religion.

(3) Christ was at the moment hungry. Orientals do not eat early in the morning. Labourers and artificers come fasting to their work, and often toil an hour or two before eating. So it is presumable that our Saviour, in his morning walk of two miles from Bethany to Jerus., had not broken his fast. The physical sensation of hunger as a basis gave direction to his thoughts, as he happened to see a most familiar spectacle, a fig tree, at a distance, with fresh, young foliage. The fact that it is mentioned that "the time of figs was not yet" (RV), WOULD SEEM TO PROVE THAT CHRIST WOULD NOT HAVE THOUGHT IT STRANGE HAD HE NOT FOUND WINTER FIGS OR PRECOCIOUS FIRST FRUITS. It is hardly conceivable that he could have condemned the tree for that. But, when he arrived, he found no fruit at all. Immediately the disappointment of unsatisfied hunger was lost in the moral lesson which flashed across his mind. A fig tree with leaves should have at least green fruit. This one had none. There was pretension, which, in the moral sphere, is hypocrisy. Having leaves and no fruit, it was a deceiver. The ripeness of the fruit is not the point. If it had unripe fruit, it would not have been condemned. It was condemned because it had nothing but leaves.-- Vol.II, 1958. Page 5-6.

The bottom line here is CONFUSION! There are as many interpretations of this event as there are interpreters! All because they have not SOUGHT OUT the real significance, origin, and symbolism of the fig tree.

A Miracle With Great Symbolic Importance

Looking at the cursing of the fig tree with an open mind, it is without a doubt that the whole event was a MIRACLE from start to finish. Why would the Messiah go to all this trouble with a nondescript fig tree growing alongside the road into Jerusalem? For the Messiah to go to all this trouble to produce a sign of this nature, there must have been some great, symbolic importance and meaning to it. If there was no symbolic importance to this event, then it simply makes NO SENSE at all and has no RELEVANCE to the last days of Yeshua on this earth! But it does, as we shall see, have GREAT symbolic importance in understanding the tremendous sacrifice of our Lord and Savior.

Ernest L. Martin, in his book *Secrets of Golgotha*, has this observation:

The fact that the fig tree had leaves was in itself a miracle because leaves would not have naturally been on the fig tree for at least a month later. Also, there should not have been any figs on the tree. Since the tree was located on a main thoroughfare into Jerusalem and with the heavy population around the city at that Passover season, it is not to be imagined that Christ expected to find a few dried figs of last year's crop on the branches. The tree would surely have been stripped clean of its fruit. Christ MUST HAVE KNOWN that he would NOT find any figs on this unusual fig tree. The truth is, however, the lack of figs and the abundance of leaves were important FACTORS in a miraculous occurrence. In this scene we are provided with a most important symbolic teaching by Christ with his actions.- ASK Publications, Alhambra, CA 1988. p.259-260.

Since it is obvious that some great, symbolic importance IS attached to this unusual event, let us now examine the fig tree itself in greater detail, and see whether it also has any symbolic significance.

Identifying the Tree!

The first mention of the fig tree, in the ***Bible***, is found in Genesis 3:

And when the woman [Eve] saw that the tree [of the knowledge of good and evil] was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, AND A TREE TO BE DESIRED TO MAKE ONE WISE, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband [Adam] with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed FIG LEAVES together, and made themselves aprons.-- Verses 6-7.

Although the Genesis account does not DIRECTLY say that the fig tree is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, it alludes to it by having Adam and Eve sew fig leaves together to hide their shame RIGHT AFTER describing the eating of the tree's fruit.

Harold N. Moldenke and Alma L. Moldenke, in their book ***Plants of the Bible***, make this association:

While tradition usually holds that it was the "apple" (that is, apricot) which was the "tree of knowledge" in the garden of Eden, OTHER LEGENDS say that this mythical tree WAS THE FIG. The latter claim is doubtless based on the statement in Genesis that Adam and Eve took FIG LEAVES with which to clothe themselves IMMEDIATELY after eating of the forbidden fruit.-- *Chronica Botanica Co.*, Waltham, Mass. 1952. Page 105.

W.R. Paton suggests that the story of Adam and Eve and their aprons is reminiscent of an ancient custom of fertilizing fig trees BY A PAIR OF HUMAN SCAPEGOATS who, like the victims of the Thargelia, associated themselves WITH THE TREE by wearing its foliage or fruit (*ibid*, page 104 -- footnote).

Is this, then, a CORRECT association to make? Should we rightfully associate the sewing together of fig leaves with the eating of the fruit? Let's see what Jewish tradition has to say:

What was the tree of which Adam and Eve ate? Rabbi Yosi says:

It was the FIG TREE...the FIG whereof he ate the fruit opened its doors and took him in (*Midrash*, Bereshith Raba, 15,7).

The FIG LEAF which brought remorse to the world (*ibid.*, 19,11).

We also find (Berahot 40a) the following:

The tree of which the first man ate...Rabbi Nehemiah says: It was the FIG, the thing wherewith they were spoiled, yet were they redressed by it. As it is said: And they stitched a FIG-LEAF.

In the non-canonical *Book of Adam and Eve*, we find further confirmation of this viewpoint:

I sought a leaf to cover up my nakedness and found none, for, when I ate, the leaves withered off every tree in my plot except for the FIG, and from it I took leaves and it made me a girdle, EVEN FROM THE TREE OF WHICH I ATE. (20:5).

It is quite apparent, then, that the Jews consider the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil to have been the FIG; but what about the traditions of OTHER nations or religions?

Evidence from Other Nations

There is, it turns out, ABUNDANT EVIDENCE from many peoples of the Middle East and Asia to support this viewpoint. Notice, now, the traditions of India:

The tree more particularly revered by Buddhists is the Bo-tree, or Tree of Buddha. Often it is used as a symbol of Buddha. It belongs as close to Buddha as the Cross does to Jesus Christ. Legend states that Buddha attained his great ENLIGHTENMENT after six year's meditation under the Bo-tree. Bo is a contraction of Bodhi, WHICH MEANS WISDOM THROUGH A TREE. Here again we are confronted with THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.-- *Tree Worship*, by Charles Alldritt. Strong & Ready Ltd., Auckland. 1965. P.60.

And what TYPE of tree was the Bo-tree? A new book published by the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of New York answers:

Deciding that the answer was to be found in his [Buddha's] own consciousness, he sat in meditation under a PIPAL, OR INDIAN FIG TREE. Resisting attacks and temptations by the DEVIL MARA, he continued steadfast in his meditation...until he supposedly transcended all KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING and reached enlightenment. -- *Mankind's Search For God*, 1990. P.137.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1943) confirms this:

The SACRED FIG, peepul or bo (F. religiosa), a large tree with heartshaped, long-pointed leaves on slender footstalks, is much grown in southern Asia....in India it is chiefly planted with a religious object, being regarded as sacred by both Brahmans and Buddhists. A gigantic bo, growing near Anarajapoor, in Ceylon, is, if tradition may be trusted, one of the oldest trees in the world. It is said to have

been a branch of the tree under which Gautama Buddha became ENDUED WITH HIS DIVINE POWERS, and has always been held in the greatest veneration.-- Vol.9, p.229.

The same encyclopedia, under the heading Bo-Tree or Bodhi-Tree, has this to say: "The name given by the Buddhists of India and Ceylon to the Piplal or SACRED WILD FIG (*Ficus religiosa*). It was a tree of this species beneath which the Buddha is traditionally supposed to have attained PERFECT KNOWLEDGE." (Vol.3, p.951).

The identity of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is further proven by Alexander Porteous in his intriguing book, *Forest Folklore, Mythology, and Romance*:

In the town of Calicut, in Madras [India], there is a SACRED GROVE OF WILD FIG TREES, the scarlet berries of which were said to have been the CAUSE OF THE FALL OF MAN. The largest of these trees was surrounded by a wall or terrace, on which the SACRED SERPENTS (COBRAS) sunned themselves, and they reared their young in the recesses of the stately SACRED TREE.-- London, 1928. P.220.

How much PLAINER can that be?

The traditions of the Brahmas are very similar to those of the Buddhists. Notice the following quote from the same volume by Alexander Porteous:

The Pippala [FIG TREE] was one of those trees SACRED TO VISHNU, who is often depicted as sitting on its heart-shaped leaves [just like Buddha?]. He was born under one of these trees, and when Brahma APPOINTED RULERS OVER BEASTS, BIRDS, AND PLANTS [reminiscent of Adam in the Garden of Eden] the HOLY FIG TREE became the sovereign over all trees. A SIIK-WORM, which feeds on its leaves, is called DEVA, OR DIVINE, AND SHARES IN THE SANCTITY OF THE TREE.-- Pg.221.

In the *Upanishads* -- part of the sacred writings of Hinduism -- we find the story of the two birds:

Two birds always united, OF THE SAME NAME, occupy the same TREE. One of them enjoys the sweet FRUIT OF THE FIG, the other looks on as a witness. Living on the same tree, the DELUDED SOUL is grieved by the WANT OF POWER, and when it perceives the Ruler, and his glory, then its grief ceases. When the BEHOLDER sees the golden-coloured maker, the Lord, the Soul, the source of Brahma, THEN HAVING BECOME WISE, shaking off virtue and vice, without taint of any kind, he obtains the highest identity.-- Mundaka Upanishad, III. 1,1-3.

If we examine the traditions of Iran or ancient Persia, we find very similar vestiges of the Garden of Eden scenario: "The legend concerning the birth and the first

exploits of Mithra runs thus. He was BORN OF A ROCK [dust of the ground-- Adam] ON THE BANKS OF A RIVER under the shade of a SACRED FIG TREE...When he had clothed himself with the LEAVES OF THE FIG-TREE, DETACHING THE FRUIT [TO EAT?] and stripping the tree of its leaves by means of his knife, he undertook to subjugate the beings ALREADY CREATED in the world." (*The Mythology of All Races*, vol.VI. P.287).

Charles Alldritt clarifies this Mithras legend:

Mithras was said to have been born of a rock, and gifts were brought to him by wise men and shepherds who had witnessed the miracle. But of course we must again HAVE OUR TREE [of the Knowledge of Good and Evil]; and the new born babe, to relieve cold and hunger WENT IMMEDIATELY TO A LARGE FIG TREE AND ATE THE FRUIT AND CLOTHED HIMSELF WITH FIG LEAVES. -- *Tree Worship*, page 60.

What about the ancient Egyptians? With one of the oldest civilizations this side of the flood, we should expect to find evidence of legends built up around the tree in the Garden of Eden. We are not disappointed! Returning to the work *Forest Folklore, Mythology, and Romance*, we find this evidence:

In the great hall of the temple at Heliopolis in Egypt there once stood a VERY ANCIENT SYCOMORE TREE OR SYCOMORE FIG (*Ficus Sycomorus*), of which it is said that THOTH AND THE GODDESS SEFCHET, "the lady of writing, the ruler of books," wrote the name of the Pharaoh on its leaves, and that the god Atum, following her example, "wrote the name on the NOBLE TREE with the writing of his own fingers." -- Page 220.

And who was Thoth? None other than the Egyptian GOD OF WISDOM! Notice what J.E. Manchip White writes about this Thoth:

Thoth, the Greek Hermes [Cush]...was vizier and scribe of the gods and controller of the seasons, the moon and the stars. He invented hieroglyphic writing, mathematics, the keeping of accounts, languages, magic, the legal system and even the game of draughts. He was married to the heavenly librarian Seshat [Sefchet], who inscribed on the leaves of the Tree of Heaven [fig] the record of every man's life. -- *Ancient Egypt: Its Culture and History*, Dover Publications, N.Y. 1970. P.24.

Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson underscores the importance of the FIG TREE to the ancient Egyptians:

Of FIGS and grapes they [the Egyptians] were particularly fond, which is shown by their CONSTANT introduction, even among the CHOICE OFFERING PRESENTED TO THE GODS; and figs of the sycamore must have been HIGHLY ESTEEMED, since they were selected as the HEAVENLY FRUIT,

given by the goddess Netpe to those who were judged worthy of admission to the regions of eternal happiness.-- *The Ancient Egyptians: Their Life and Customs*, vol. 1, Crescent Books, N.Y. 1988. P.181.

On page 259 of this same volume, the author reveals this incredible piece of information:

Of fruits, the SYCAMORE FIG, and grapes were the MOST ESTEEMED for the service of the altar. They were presented on baskets or trays, frequently covered with leaves to keep them fresh; and sometimes the FORMER [SYCAMORE FIGS] were represented placed in such a manner, on an open basket, AS TO RESEMBLE THE HIEROGLYPHIC SIGNIFYING "WIFE."

Isn't that amazing? Here we see the figs linked with "wife"-- ADAM'S "WIFE," EVE!!

It is interesting to note that in the Andaman Islands (lying between the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea) the most dignified form of burial is on an elevated platform (much like some of the North American Indians) IN A FICU (FIG) TREE. These people also believed that if a baby dies, its soul returns to the tree (fig) from whence it originally came. Also, even to this day, in Palestine, the Sycamore Fig tree is believed to be inhabited by devils!

Now let's not leave ancient Rome out of the picture! In Latin myths the FIG TREE plays a very important role. Held sacred to Bacchus, it was employed in religious ceremonies; and the fig tree that OVERSHADOWED the twin founders of Rome -- Romulus and Remus -- in the wolf's cave, AS AN EMBLEM OF THE FUTURE PROSPERITY OF THE RACE, testified to the high value set upon the fruit by the nations of antiquity. In fact, the fig tree was so important to ancient Rome that the following incident was recorded by Alexander Porteous:

There was once a famous Fig tree in Rome which, so it was said, had sheltered the infants Romulus and Remus while they were being suckled by the wolf. The tree was thus known as the Ruminialis, or the RUMINAL FIG, and on one occasion, so tradition avers, when it began to show signs of decay, the UTMOST CONSTERNATION prevailed in the City of Rome at such an AWFUL OMEN. Fortunately, however, for the tranquility of the inhabitants, the tree eventually put forth new shoots and regained its verdure. -- *Forest Folklore, Mythology, and Romance*. P.227.

There is another intriguing legend out of the Middle East that narrates that "Eve, in absence of mind, carried away with her from Eden a BRANCH OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, which she planted; while another tells that the Archangel Michael handed to Eve a branch bearing three leaves, detached from that tree, with instructions to plant it on the GRAVE OF ADAM. She did so, and it grew into a tree, which was

REPLANTED AS AN ORNAMENTAL TREE BY KING SOLOMON IN THE TEMPLE..." And what was this tree? None other than the fig tree!! (*Ibid*, P.211).

The Biblical Evidence

Last, but certainly not least in authority, is the Bible! Notice, now, Jeremiah 24:

The Lord shewed me, and, behold, TWO BASKETS OF FIGS were set before the temple of the Lord, after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. ONE BASKET HAD VERY GOOD FIGS, even like the figs that are FIRST RIPE: and the other basket had VERY NAUGHTY [EVIL] FIGS, which could not be eaten, THEY WERE SO BAD. Then said the Lord unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, FIGS; THE GOOD FIGS, VERY GOOD; AND THE EVIL, VERY EVIL, THAT CANNOT BE EATEN, THEY ARE SO EVIL.
-- Verses 1-3, KJV.

Here we see the two baskets of figs, representing the two fig harvests, called GOOD AND EVIL, HENCE THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL! How plain and evident that is! Why have we not seen that before?

YEHOVAH continues, in verse 8, "And as the EVIL FIGS, which cannot be eaten, THEY ARE SO EVIL; surely thus saith the Lord, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes...And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt..."

There it is, as PLAIN as daylight -- THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL IS NONE OTHER THAN THE FIG!

Now that we have clearly established the fig tree was indeed the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, we can approach the question of the Messiah's enigmatic action in cursing the fig tree of Mark 11.

Resolving the Enigma!

Recall that the next day after Yeshua cursed the fig tree alongside the road from Bethany, the disciples found it COMPLETELY WITHERED (Mark 11:20, 22; Matt.19:19, 20)! Now what was so significant about that? Since the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was a fig tree, and this tree, when Adam And Eve first ate the fruit thereof, brought SIN AND DEATH to them (and, of course, in an extended sense to ALL of humanity), then this tree (of the Knowledge of Good and Evil) is NOW WITHERED AND DEAD, as pictured by the tree alongside the JerusalemBethany road!!

According to Jewish tradition, the only tree under Adam's care in the Garden of Eden that did not shed its leaves after the progenitors of the human race partook of the fruit, WAS THE FIG TREE. It was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But with our Savior's miracle on the Mount of Olives during that last week of His life, it meant THAT THIS SYMBOLIC TREE WAS NOW WITHERED AND DEAD! Do you understand that? Let Ernest Martin explain:

It [the withered and dead fig tree] signified that NO LONGER would that symbolic tree be in the midst of humanity TO ENCOURAGE MANKIND TO SIN IN THE MANNER OF OUR FIRST PARENTS. But there is even more teaching. It meant that when Christ went to that miraculous tree looking for some figs to eat (like Eve did), CHRIST WOULD NOT FIND ANY WHATSOEVER! This signified that there was NOT going to be a REPETITION of what Eve (and later Adam) did in regard to the fig tree that they partook of. One fig tree [in the Garden of Eden] was the instrument to bring "sin" into the world, BUT THE SON OF GOD COULD NOT FIND ANY FIGS ON HIS FIG TREE (the miraculous tree on the Mount of Olives that was typical of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil). Christ cursed THAT symbolic tree at the top of Olivet SO THAT NO MAN WOULD EAT OF IT AGAIN. And to COMPLETE his victory over sin, four days later Christ was going to be SACRIFICED FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD JUST A FEW YARDS AWAY FROM THIS WITHERED AND DEAD TREE. -- *Secrets of Golgotha*, p.260.

Isn't that awe-inspiring?

What Yeshua (the second Adam) was actually doing during the last week of His life on planet Earth was ACTING OUT A SYMBOLIC VICTORY over the very factors in the Garden of Eden around which Adam and Eve failed! Do you grasp that? The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was now WITHERED AND DEAD, and the TREE OF LIFE, a short distance away on the spot where Shem buried the skull of Adam (Golgotha -- Place of "THE" Skull), became the very tree on which the Messiah was put to death! THE TWO TREES -- THE FIG TREE ALONGSIDE THE ROAD AND THE TREE YESHUA DIED ON -- SYMBOLIZED THE TWO TREES IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN!!

The Fig Tree and the Church of God!

The symbolism doesn't end here! The FIG TREE also represents the Church of God; and the lessons we have already learned can equally be applied to YEHOVAH's church in the last days! The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, found in the thirteenth chapter of Luke, is a POWERFUL WARNING to a church NOT bearing fruit-- an apostate church that has left a state of much truth and plunged into a state of lukewarm theology and rampant compromise.

Leading up to this parable, Luke records the warning words of Yeshua, as He rails against a church blinded by lethargy and corruption.

That the Messiah is talking about the Laodicean Church of Revelation 3:14 is quite apparent in Luke 12:35-36: "Let your waists be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who WAIT FOR THEIR MASTER, when he will return from the wedding, that when HE COMES AND KNOCKS they may open to him immediately." This parallels Revelation 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and KNOCK. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."

Yeshua then explains that He came to bring DIVISION to this earth: "Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, NOT AT ALL, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Why would "the Prince of Peace" bring division to a home and, in the greater sense, to His church? Because everyone will not accept the TRUTH of YEHOVAH God! Those of the "Laodicean" spirit will not accept "new truth" from YEHOVAH, nor accept His warning message without rancor. Some in the Church of God become angry when the FACTS of their spiritual barrenness are laid out before them, and DIVISION ensues. The TRUTH of YEHOVAH God has always brought division, because it sorts out the men from the boys -- those who are luke-warm and compromising from those who have a burning desire to get as close to YEHOVAH God and His way of life as possible.

Further proof that Yeshua is talking about the Laodicean Church is found in the next verses from Luke 12:

Then He also said to the multitudes, "When you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is. HYPOCRITES! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it YOU DO NOT DISCERN THIS TIME?-- Verses 54-56.

How PERFECTLY this describes the Churches of God today! The Worldwide Church of God, under apostate leadership, has derisively thrown prophecy out the window -- a full ONE THIRD of the Bible! They say that we should be more concerned with our "spiritual temperature" than excitedly anticipating and waiting for the return of YEHOVAH God and our Lord and Savior -- "counting down" to that much prophesied event. No wonder they are BLIND to YEHOVAH's calendar and the correct day of Pentecost! This culmination to the Passover season was EXCITEDLY anticipated by the Jews -- to such an extent that they COUNTED THE DAYS and crossed them off as they passed -- until the "day of Lawgiving" was nigh. This takes devotion and spiritual ZEAL, something that the Worldwide Church of God and her sister congregations have lost.

Yeshua continues this condemnation by exhorting His people to REPENT -- repent or perish. "There were present at that season some who told Him about the

Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Yeshua answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you REPENT you will all likewise PERISH." Unless those of the LAODICEAN SPIRIT come to their senses and WAKE UP AND REPENT, they will certainly be consumed by YEHOVAH's wrath.

Now to the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree:

He also spoke this parable: "A certain man [YEHOVAH God] had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard [Yeshua], 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down. -- Luke 13:6-9.

The SPECIAL WARNING conveyed by this parable is obvious from the context. We have just seen the Messiah CORRECTING His church for not discerning the times, and warning His people that unless they repent they will perish. This parable offers not merely an exemplification of these predictions of the Messiah, but sets before us what underlies it -- THE CHURCH IN ITS RELATIONSHIP TO YEHOVAH GOD; the need of REPENTANCE; the church's DANGER; the nature of repentance and its URGENCY; the relationship of Yeshua to His church; the Gospel; and the FINAL JUDGMENT on those who refuse to repent.

As we read this parable we can see that the fig tree has been specially planted by the owner in his vineyard, which occupies the choicest of the land. Alfred Edersheim notes that this was not unusual:

Fig-trees, as well as palm and olive-trees, were regarded as SO VALUABLE [like the people of God], that to cut them down if they YIELDED EVEN A SMALL MEASURE OF FRUIT, was popularly deemed to deserve DEATH at the Hand of God. Ancient Jewish writings supply interesting particulars of this tree and its culture. According to Josephus, in favoured localities the ripe fruit hung on the tree for ten months of the year, the two barren months being probably APRIL AND MAY, before the first of the THREE CROPS which it bore had ripened. The FIRST FIGS ripened towards the end of June, sometimes earlier. The SECOND, which are those now dried and exported, ripened in August; the THIRD, which were small and of comparatively little value, in September, and often hung all winter on the trees. A species (the Benoth Shuach) is mentioned, of which the fruit required THREE YEARS for ripening. The fig-tree was regarded as the MOST FRUITFUL of all trees [as the Church of God should be]. On account of its repeated crops, it was declared not subject to the ordinance which enjoined that fruit should be left in the corners for the poor. Its artificial inoculation was known. The practice mentioned in the Parable, of digging about

the tree, and dunging it, is frequently mentioned in Rabbinic writings, and by the same designations. Curiously, Maimonides mentions THREE YEARS AS THE UTMOST LIMIT which a tree should bear fruit in the land of Israel. Lastly, as trees were regarded as by their roots undermining and deteriorating the land, a BARREN TREE would be of THREEFOLD DISADVANTAGE: it would yield no fruit; it would fill VALUABLE SPACE, which a fruit-bearer might occupy; and it would needlessly DETERIORATE THE LAND. Accordingly, while it was forbidden to destroy FRUIT-BEARING trees, it would, on the grounds above stated, be DUTY to cut down a 'barren' or 'empty' tree (Ilan seraq).-- *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI. 1990. Pp. 246-247 (B.II).

These informative particulars will help us to more FULLY understand the details of the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree. Allegorically speaking, the FIG TREE served as an emblem of YEHOVAH GOD'S CHURCH -- of the leaders and the church in general. The VINEYARD is, in the New Testament, the symbol of the Kingdom of God; and we thus see that YEHOVAH God called His church as a nation-- a SPECIAL PEOPLE -- and planted it in the most FAVORED spot: as a fig tree in the vineyard of His own Kingdom. And He "[came] seeking fruit," as He had every right to do, "and [found] none." It was the third year that He had VAINLY looked for fruit, when He turned to the keeper of the vineyard -- the Messiah, to whom the vineyard [Kingdom of God] is committed as its king -- with this direction: "Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?" Not only does this barren tree [Church of God] occupy the best location, it also uses up [deteriorates] the ground -- when it should be bearing the BEST of fruit. Its THREE YEARS of barrenness has established its UTTERLY HOPELESS CHARACTER. Then we see the keeper of the vineyard [Yeshua], in His infinite compassion, plead for the fig tree [Church of God] which He Himself had planted and tended, that it should be spared "this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it."

This is parallel to Yeshua knocking on the door of the Laodicean Church with the hope that someone would open the door and let Him in. "And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, AFTER THAT [at the return of Yeshua] you can cut it down." In the words of an author of the last century: "Between the tree and the axe nothing intervenes but the INTERCESSION of the Gardener [Yeshua], Who would make A LAST EFFORT, and even His petition applies only to a SHORT AND DEFINITE PERIOD, and, in case it pass WITHOUT RESULT [no fruit of the spirit of God], this petition itself merges in the proposal, "But if not, then CUT IT DOWN."

This warning should have us shaking in our very boots! YEHOVAH's people must bear fruit and, if not, the future is a grim prospect indeed. It's time the LAODICEAN CHURCH woke up to their spiritual decadence and lethargy; its time the Worldwide Church of God, Church of God International, the so-called "Philadelphia" Church of God and all the little splinter groups came to their senses and HEEDED the warnings from YEHOVAH God! Yeshua is knocking on the door-- WAKE UP AND LET HIM IN, for your very existence is at stake!

The withering of the fig tree along the Bethany road can also be applied to the Church of God. When the Messiah returns-- WHATEVER THE SEASON -- he expects to find fruit in his church; and if disappointed, He will have the tree [church] wither away to a state of utter uselessness. The very fact that Yeshua said "Let no fruit grow on you ever again" clearly implies that the fig tree ONCE HAD FRUIT! So, too, did the Laodicean Church! In the early years of Herbert Armstrong the church bore much fruit and had much truth; but in the declining years of its leader and, after his death, in the years of Joseph Tkach and his son, the fruit of the fig tree has fallen to the ground and rotted; and the tree has become BARREN. WAKE UP AND DUNG YOURSELF BEFORE ITS TOO LATE!

The Trees of Life

The identification of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil has enabled us to draw back the veiling curtain that has obscured the TRUE understanding, and significance, of that baffling event that occurred on the road to Jerusalem just a few days before the Messiah, the Lamb of God, sacrificed Himself for ALL humankind that ever lived! The cursing of the fig tree was a CRUCIAL HIGHLIGHT in the stream of events that had to occur as our Lord and Savior Yeshua the Messiah closed out the final chapter of His first presence on this earth.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is now withered and dead-- NO LONGER WILL MANKIND PARTAKE OF THIS TREE AND HAVE TO SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS WITHOUT HOPE OF FORGIVENESS AND RESTORATION UPON REPENTANCE AND ADHERENCE TO THE LAWS OF OUR GRACIOUS GOD!

When YEHOVAH God returns to the Mount of Olives and enters the Temple through the eastern gate, a river will flow out from the Temple to the Dead Sea. Along the banks of this river will grow trees just like those to be in the New Jerusalem:

Then the angel showed me the RIVER OF LIFE, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the TREE[S] OF LIFE bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its [their] fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree[s] are for the HEALING OF THE NATIONS. NO LONGER WILL THERE BE ANY CURSE. Rev.22:1-3.

In a direct reference to the WITHERING of the fig tree, we find this in Ezekiel 47:

Along the banks of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees [of life] used for food; THEIR LEAVES WILL NOT WITHER, AND THEIR FRUIT WILL NOT FAIL. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for HEALING.-- Verse 12.

The symbol of the Church of God will now be the ALMOND TREE-- the tree of life -- and YEHOVAH God's church will be nourished by the spirit of YEHOVAH God and will continually BEAR FRUIT in ALL seasons; and YEHOVAH's people will heal the nations. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil [the fig tree] is now WITHERED AND DEAD. No longer will this tree be in the midst of humanity to encourage mankind to sin in the manner of Adam and Eve. No longer will good and evil be in YEHOVAH's church. The Tree of Life will then nourish and heal the nations-- the very tree that Yeshua was sacrificed on!

How breathtaking is YEHOVAH's truth when "rightly divided" and understood! How mind-boggling is the plan of YEHOVAH God in all its intricacies and details! Thank the Eternal God for His infinite mercy in revealing these truths to us.

Who Was Melchizedek?

The very Jewish way of thinking displayed in the Melchizedek material in Hebrews 7 has opened the door for possible misunderstanding of the identity of the king and high priest Melchizedek. The Melchizedek Order of Priesthood is held now by the Messiah Jesus. That much is very clear. One translation (NASB) speaks of this mysterious personage as "without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest forever."

Believers in a preexisting Son of God find in this and similar translations proof of Jesus' pre-human state. But one Bible annotates our passage with the following: "Some believe the appearance of Melchizedek to be a manifestation of Christ before His incarnation, but the comparison 'like the Son of God' *argues against such an interpretation.*" The very fact that Melchizedek was described as LIKE the Son and not actually the Son should alert us to the fact that he could not *be* Jesus. Jesus *was* the Son of God. Melchizedek was a "type," a pointer to the coming Son of God, the Messiah.

The translation given in the highly respected **Word Biblical Commentary** is illuminating. "His father, mother, and line of descent are unknown, and there is no record of his birth or of his death, but having been made to *resemble* the Son of God, he remains a priest continuously." Such a rendering clears up all difficulties and gives no support for a pre-historic Jesus as Son of God.

Looking more closely at the context of our passage we find that "every high priest is taken from *among men* and appointed their representative before

God, to offer sacrifices for sin. For he is able to bear patiently with the ignorant and erring since he too is beset by weaknesses" (Heb. 5:1, 2). Thus it is said of Jesus: "Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every way, so that he might be merciful and faithful as their high priest before God" (Heb. 2:13). Paul emphasized the uniqueness of Jesus' priesthood and his relationship with his Father in 1 Timothy 2:5: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, himself *man.*"

Consistent with the idea that high priests are chosen from among *men*, God appointed the man Messiah Jesus (cp. 1 Tim. 2:5) to the order of Melchizedek's priesthood (Ps. 110:4). The point to be grasped is that there is *no record of Melchizedek's parentage*. That is what is meant by his having "no father and mother." It is not said of Melchizedek that he was fatherless! His father is simply unknown. Jewish writings state that Sarah was motherless, because the name of her mother is not recorded.

What *is* known about Melchizedek is that he did not belong to the family of Levi. Hebrews 7:6 implies that Melchizedek's family history is traceable to someone, but not to Levi. Melchizedek was an exalted man, a "type" of the ultimate priest, Jesus Christ. He represented a priesthood superior to that given to Levi under the Law. According to Psalm 110:1 Jesus was a human being, just as Melchizedek was. Jesus was not God, but the human Son of God. Melchizedek, likewise, was a human person, chosen by God to typify that later non-Levitical priesthood of Jesus, who was of the seed of Judah and David.

YEHOVAH's *TITHE* IN SCRIPTURE

Happily there are many people throughout the world who recognize that it is a religious and moral obligation to give. So now, as in past ages many earnest people not only approve but practice the principle of setting aside from their incomes "not less than a tenth for YEHOVAH God." Scriptural studies may help many inquirers to "perceive and know" what is the mind and will of YEHOVAH respecting their giving and that they may have "grace and power faithfully to perform the same," is the prayer and fervent desire of the Authors.

Henry Lansdell
John D. Keyser
Part One

THE hieroglyphics of Egypt, the cuneiform tablets of Babylonia, and early writers of Greece and Rome inform us that before the Bible was written, it was an almost universal practice among civilized nations for people to pay tithes to their gods. However, none of these sources tell us when, or where, the practice began, or who issued the law for its observance.

Therefore, it is our object in this series of articles to investigate what may be learned concerning tithe-paying from the Bible, and from Jewish writings of the period between the Old and New Testaments.

If we begin our study concerning tithe-paying by reading the book of Genesis, we naturally turn first to such passages that tell of the offering of material things to YEHOVAH. We find at least six persons who made such offerings-- namely, Cain and Abel, Noah, Abram, Isaac, and Jacob; and we proceed to ask what we learn from them as to patriarchal or what is called pre-Mosaic tithe-paying.

Cain and Abel

Very early Christian writers connected the rejection of Cain's offering with tithing. Tertullian [1 *Adversus Judaeos* 2:2], for instance, in the third century wrote that YEHOVAH God rejected the sacrifice of Cain, because he did not rightly divide what he offered -- using as a source a Latin version of Genesis 4:7, made from the Septuagint. Clement of Rome also (*Ep. Ad: Corinth. N 4*), who lived in the first century, and Iranaeus, who wrote in the century following (*Adv. Hares. Bk. iv. ch. 34*), both quote the seventh verse of Genesis 4 according to the Septuagint reading. In the fourth century

Hilary, Bishop of Pointiers, explaining Psalm 118, maintained that the receiving of tithes was a natural commandment from the beginning. So, again, in the twelfth century did Hugo, Abbot of St. Victors, and Peter Comestor; while five centuries later, Grotius wrote regarding this text that the sense, according to the Septuagint, was that Cain either did not offer the best, or else that he gave a less proportion than the tenth, "which," he continues, "from the most ancient ages was the proportion due to God." Some perhaps would call this reading a meaning into the text, rather than drawing one out of it: but before we make this judgment let us see what can be said in its favour.

Concerning Cain and Abel, our present Hebrew text (Genesis 4:3-7) reads (as literally as I can translate it) thus:

"And it came to pass at the end of days Cain brought of the fruit of the ground a present to Jehovah. And Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his sheep and of their fat. And Jehovah looked favorably upon Abel and upon his present; but upon Cain and upon his present He did not look favorably. And it vexed Cain exceedingly, and his countenance fell. And Jehovah said to Cain, Wherefore did it vex thee, and wherefore did thy countenance fall? If thou wilt do well, shall not thy face be lifted up? but if thou wilt not do well, sin is couching at the door."

Professor Cheyne (*Encyclopaedia Biblica*, I 620, Article, "Cain") translates the sixth verse thus: "Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? Surely, if thou doest well, thou canst lift up thy head, and if thou doest not well, thy sin must cause it to fail; from irritating words abstain, and thou take heed to thyself."

But passing now to the Septuagint, or Greek, translation of Genesis, this sixth verse runs as follows:

"And the Lord God said to Cain, Wherefore didst thou become vexed, and wherefore did thy countenance fall? If thou didst rightly offer, but didst not rightly divide, didst thou not sin? Hold thy peace."

The Greek version, be it remembered, was made about three hundred years before the Christian era, from a Hebrew copy that must have been more than a thousand years older than the oldest Hebrew manuscript we possess now. This translation, moreover, was perfectly familiar to the writers of the New Testament. And if we may reverently picture the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews glancing over his Greek Bible before penning his chapter of Old Testament worthies, we should remember that he had before him these very words concerning Cain's not dividing rightly, when he wrote, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more abundant sacrifice than Cain," (Hebrews 11:4).

Various suggestions, of course, are offered to show what Cain's sin consisted of. A favorite one is that he brought no blood. But neither, in after years, did an Israelite farmer bring blood, when he presented his first fruits to Jehovah, as commanded in Deuteronomy 27:1-11. The Hebrew word commonly used for sacrifice with blood, *zebach*, does not occur in the passage under consideration; for both Cain's fruits and

Abel's firstlings are called by the same word, *minchah*, a present. But, be that as it may, Abel is said to have offered "by faith." Now faith has reference to obedience, which implies that a previous command had been made known. Where no law has been given there can be no transgression. Unless directions had been communicated to these two worshippers as to the amount or proportion of their property to bring, and if either was at liberty to offer as much or as little as he pleased, then it is not easy to see why Cain should by implication be blamed for bringing less. The occasion was, I take it, a farmer and a grazier each bringing the first fruits of his increase, not so much as a propitiatory sacrifice (for we are not told they had sinned), but rather as a present or thank offering to YEHOVAH in token of His lordship over them. We read this was done from the earliest time in Egypt, which illustrates an almost universally accepted belief in the ancient world -- whether pagan or otherwise -- that it was not lawful to eat of the new fruit until God's portion had been divided off from the rest.

Thus far, it will be observed, no altar has been mentioned -- nor is it said that Abel's firstlings were burnt. It is not until long afterwards that we find a sacrificial distinction mentioned between clean beasts and unclean, (Genesis 7:2), and then we have on record the building of an altar on which clean animals and clean birds were consumed by fire.

In the case of Noah's sacrifice -- with which we learn YEHOVAH was pleased-- we have another instance of the presentation of a material offering to God, with the added accompaniments mentioned of an altar, fire, and a distinction between clean and unclean animals.

About three hundred years later we read that Abram built an altar on two occasions, (Genesis 12:7-8), and he called on the name of YEHOVAH, who appeared to him. At Mamre, Abram did the same, (Genesis 13:18), and later, when inquiring of YEHOVAH, he was expressly commanded to sacrifice a heifer, a shegoat, and a ram, each of them three years old, as well as a turtledove and a young pigeon, (Genesis 15:9). We have yet another instance of Abraham building an altar when about to sacrifice his son, for whom, however, he ultimately substituted a ram.

We read, likewise, of the patriarch Isaac, that he built an altar at Beersheba, (Genesis 26:25), and the same may be said of Jacob, at Shalem, (Genesis 33:20). At Bethel, we are told, Jacob at first set up a pillar, and poured oil thereon, (Genesis 28:18-19), which act he repeated in later years, adding to the oil a drink offering, (Genesis 35:1, 6, 14).

If we now review the data thus far selected, we see the first recorded act of the first two of Eve's sons manifesting a sense of dependence on, or obligation to, the deity, by presenting to YEHOVAH the first fruits of their increase. We see men of succeeding generations offering to YEHOVAH God the choicest of clean beasts, of clean birds, and fruits of the ground, as well as a drink offering and oil; thus fully establishing, in connection with abundant information from pagan literature, that in all ages in the ancient

world, men have thought it their duty to offer a portion of their substance to the divine Being.

Abram and Jacob

We now pass to the example of Abram, of whom we read that the proportion of his spoils that he devoted, was a TENTH. Returning from the slaughter of the kings with spoils of war, he was met near Jerusalem by a kingly priest, Melchizedek, who brought to Abram bread and wine, who blessed Abram, who praised God for the victory gained, and to whom Abram offered a tenth of all.

Here, then, we have an instance of tithe-paying which occurred (according to Ussher's chronology, which is here followed throughout) about 1900 B.C., and this has ordinarily been regarded as the earliest recorded instance of the payment of the tithe.

But recent discoveries, transmitted to us by students of cuneiform literature, have thrown a flood of new light upon the land of Canaan before it was peopled by the Israelites. Professor Sayce, tracing the migration of Abram from Ur of the Chaldees, says in his *Patriarchal Palestine* (p. 66):

"Ur lay on the western side of the Euphrates in Southern Babylonia, where the mounds of Mugheir mark the site of the great temple that had been reared to the worship of the Moon-god long before the days of the Hebrew patriarch.

"Here Abram had married, and from hence he had gone forth with his father to seek a new home. Their first resting-place had been Harran in Mesopotamia Harran signified 'road' in the old language of Chaldaeae, and for many ages the armies and merchants of Babylonia had halted there when making their way towards the Mediterranean. Like Ur, it was dedicated to the worship of Sin, the Moon-god; and its temple rivalled in fame and antiquity that of the Babylonian city, and had probably been founded by a Babylonian king.

"At Harran, therefore, Abram would still have been within the limits of Babylonian influence and culture, if not of Babylonian government as well. He would have found there the same religion as that which he had left behind him in his native city

"Even in Canaan Abram was not beyond the reach of Babylonian influence Babylonian armies had already penetrated to the shores of the Mediterranean, Palestine had been included within the bounds of a Babylonian empire, and Babylonian culture and religion had spread widely among the Canaanitish tribes. The cuneiform system of writing had made its way to Syria, and Babylonian literature had followed in its wake. Centuries had already passed since Sargon of Akkad had made himself master of the Mediterranean coast, and his son Naram Sin had led his forces to the peninsula of Sinai."

Now if Babylonian culture and religion had thus spread to the Canaanites, it suggests a reason why the colony of Phoenicians from Tyre, who founded Carthage (say about 900 B.C.) were tithe-payers. Also, if Melchizedek may be regarded as a Canaanitish priest, then it would be as natural for him in his royal and priestly character to expect tithes from Abram as it was for Abram to pay them. Hence the professor, alluding to this incident, says (*Patriarchal Religion*, p. 175):

"This offering of tithes was no new thing. In his Babylonian home Abram must have been familiar with the practice. The cuneiform inscriptions of Babylonia contain frequent references to it. It went back to the pre-Semitic age of Chaldea, and the great temples of Babylonia were largely supported by the *tesra* or tithe which was levied upon prince and peasant alike. That the god should receive a tenth of the good things which, it was believed, he had bestowed upon mankind was not considered to be asking too much. There are many tablets in the British Museum which are receipts for the payment of the tithe to the great temple of the sun-god at Sippara, in the time of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. From one of them we learn that Belshazzar, even at the very moment when the Babylonian empire was falling from his father's hands, nevertheless found an opportunity for paying the tithe due from his sister."

A question may here be asked as to the extent of Abram's tithes: were they a tenth of all his spoils only, and so given voluntarily and specially on this particular occasion-- or were they a tenth of all his income and something paid as a due?

Neither the Hebrew of Genesis nor the Greek of the Epistle to the Hebrews limits the word "all" to the spoils. In Hebrews 7:4 the writer argues that Melchizedek was greater than Abram because Abram paid tithes to him. Now, when a man pays a tribute or due, we look upon the receiver as being, for the moment, superior to the giver; and the writer of the epistle adds that without contradiction the person less in dignity is blessed by the person who is greater in dignity. Hence we conclude that the tenth paid by Abram was not merely an offering, which the patriarch was at liberty to render or to withhold as he pleased, but a *payment of obligation*.

This, too, appears the more likely because Abram by right of conquest might have claimed all that he captured from Chedorlaomer. The king of Sodom, recognizing this, invites him to take the goods to himself, (Genesis 14:21). But Abram declines to take anything for himself, though, as a conqueror, he seems to have recognized that he had no jurisdiction over YEHOUAH's tenth; and whilst surrendering his own claim to nine-tenths of the spoil, he acted as though he could not surrender YEHOUAH's. (Compare *Gold and the Gospel*, p. 24.)

It seems, moreover, exceedingly probable that the priestly acts which Melchizedek performed for Abram were simply such as this priest king would from time to time perform for any Canaanitish chief returning from a victorious expedition-- as also perhaps when his people paid their tithes on ordinary occasions. And since Abram often was dwelling within a day's journey of Salem (that is, Jerusalem), we need not at all

conclude that this was either the first or the last occasion on which Abram paid a tenth of his increase to Melchizedek. If the patriarch did so annually, it would be only in keeping with the practice of his Babylonian ancestors, and what we know was afterwards conceded by the Carthaginians to be due to their Phoenician priesthood.

This inference or supposition is strengthened to something like probability by consideration of the subsequent conduct of Abram's grandson Jacob, who, being about to undertake a journey, did what we know quite well was common among the Semites, the Greeks and Romans, and, indeed, is still practiced: he vowed a vow, and he said:

"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee," (Genesis 28:20-22).

Now it will be remembered that Abram lived till the boyhood of Jacob; that Jacob was brought up in the faith of his grandfather; and that at Bethel YEHOVAH confirmed to Jacob and his posterity all the promises He made to Abraham. What, then, could be more natural than that Jacob should avow himself ready to practice Abraham's religious observances? He promises to take the God of Abraham for his own God, to dedicate a certain place to His worship as did Abraham, and also to follow his grandfather's practice in dedicating to YEHOVAH God a tenth of all he should receive. But there are manifested certain points in Jacob's tithe-paying which we could not have certainly inferred in the offering of a tenth by Abram (*Gold and the Gospel*, p. 28).

For, first, Jacob's vow was, manifestly, to be continued *throughout his lifetime*, and was not framed for the occasion or the journey, only.

The second feature in Jacob's tenth differing from that of his grandfather, is, that no part of Jacob's tithe is mentioned as paid for the use of a priesthood. We read no more of Melchizedek or of his successor; however YEHOVAH's claim is not remitted or abated, and Jacob's tithe-paying is presented to us as an act of homage to YEHOVAH.

How, then, do these facts bear upon what may be called the scientific aspect of the question?

The prevalence of tithe-paying amongst ancient nations, quite apart, so far as we see, from the Bible, has, if possible, to be accounted for. If it was originally left to every man to give for religious purposes merely according to his own inclination-- that is, as much or as little as he pleased -- then how should so many peoples have hit upon a tenth for YEHOVAH's portion, rather than a fifth, or a fifteenth, or any other? Does not the universality of this proportion point to a time when the ancestors of those nations lived together, and so derived the custom from a common source?

No secular author, and no account or tradition known to us in any country, professes to give that origin -- nor does the Bible do so in express terms. Can we, then, frame any hypothesis that would account for the facts before us?

Most men, presumably, will allow that sacrifice was not a human invention, but a divine institution appointed by YEHOVAH God. And if YEHOVAH appointed also that some things were acceptable to Him as "clean" and others not so, is it reasonable to suppose that He would have omitted directions about the quantity, or proportion in which such things should be offered?

If, then, we may venture the hypothesis that YEHOVAH from the beginning taught Adam that it was the duty of man to render a portion of his increase to his Maker, and that that portion was to be not less than a tenth, then we shall see that the facts recorded in Genesis not only do not contradict such a supposition, but corroborate and strengthen it.

The Septuagint version, then, would show an instance of covetousness in the person of Cain, as does the Acts of the Apostles in the persons of Ananias and Sapphira, each pretending to offer more than was really given, each attempting to deceive the Almighty, and thus, in New Testament language, lying to the holy spirit, (Acts 5:3).

In accord with this theory, also, Abel's fuller sacrifice was accepted; and so sacrifice and tithe-paying may be presumed to have continued all along the centuries to the days of Noah. Then, when his descendants built cities in Babylonia and afterwards became scattered, they would naturally take with them, among other primeval customs and traditions, the offering of sacrifice and tithe-paying. And thus would be accounted for, only a few centuries later, the existence of these customs as recorded in cuneiform literature on the tablets we possess, as well as the information given us about tithe-paying in the literatures of Egypt, Greece, and Rome.

It is not pretended that this hypothesis must be true, or that no other can be advanced; but I am among those who think that it meets the facts of the case, and who hold themselves ready to examine another theory if forthcoming. After this article was written, my attention was called to Professor Cheynes articles on "Cain" and "Abraham" in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (vol. I. 23, 260), which would make the accounts of these two persons of later origin by several centuries than is generally received. But this does not greatly affect the main purpose of my argument. Moreover, if Professor Petrie is right in telling us that from three to four thousand years or more before Christianity appeared, the ancient Egyptians repudiated, before the judgment of Osiris, sins such as "cutting short the rations of the temples," "diminishing the offerings of the gods" and stealing their property, then the story of Cain, as interpreted from the reading of the Septuagint, has a striking resemblance thereto, and is thereby rendered more credible.

It may be objected, of course, that we do not read in Genesis of a law for the payment of a tenth. This is no proof, however, that no such law had been given, seeing there existed various laws in primeval times of which we have no written evidence now.

Do any, for instance, doubt that there was, from the beginning, a law against murder, the breaking of which Cain was punished? Or against adultery, in keeping with which Judah said of Tamar, "Bring her forth and let her be burnt"? (Genesis 38:24). Similarly, it is possible that tithe-paying may have been among the "commandments and the statutes and the laws" of YEHOVAH which Abraham is praised for keeping, but which have not come down to us in writing, (Genesis 26:5).

Or, again, if it be urged that tithes are not even mentioned until the days of Abram and so were till then unknown, it is easy to point to persons and things which we feel sure must have existed long before they are mentioned in the order of events recorded in Genesis.

Melchizedek, for instance, is the first man in the Bible called a priest. Amraphel of Shinar is the first man called a king, (Genesis 14:1), and Abram the first called a prophet. But when these three lived, men had been on the earth for a great many years; and are we to suppose that mankind had lived century after century without priests, kings, and prophets?

Again, Noah is the first who is expressly called a "righteous man" and Abram is the first who is said to have "believed in God," yet we know that before these, Abel and Enoch were both righteous, and also believed in YEHOVAH God. Once more: the human race had been on the earth, according to the received chronology, about a thousand years before we read of musical instruments, (Genesis 4:21), and it was a thousand years later still when Abraham weighed shekels of silver as payment. But he would be a bold man who would affirm that before these dates, respectively, mankind possessed neither music nor money.

The mere omission, therefore, of the definite mention of a law concerning tithe giving -- in the less than a dozen chapters given to us in Genesis concerning the early history of the world -- is no proof or presumption whatever that such a law did not exist.

As another objection to our hypothesis, it has been suggested that the pagan nations of antiquity may have learned the practice of tithing from the Jews. But can this suggestion be supported by one tittle of evidence? Can a single passage be adduced from any Greek or Roman classic to confirm such an idea? Is there the remotest reason to suppose that the Greeks before the Trojan war, or the Romans in the days of Romulus, knew anything about the Jews? Or, even if they did, that they thought of them otherwise than with contempt?

Nor does the suggestion much help us that the Phoenicians of Tyre might have learned tithe-giving from Abram before they colonized Carthage, because it has been all but demonstrated that tithes were paid in Babylonia before Abram was born. So for the origin of the practice we are sent further back, seemingly, than 2000 B.C.

In face of the overwhelming probability that a tenth was the proportion of increase originally required by YEHOVAH God from man, I, for one, prefer to believe

that sacrifice and tithing existed and continued from the beginning, and, as men dispersed, were taken throughout the ancient world.

It is not my purpose here to inquire how far the practice became modified afterwards among pagan nations, but rather to follow up tithing as brought out of Babylonia by Abram, as observed by his grandson Jacob, and afterwards adopted amongst Jacob's descendants, the children of Israel.

Israel's Three Tithes

We have now reached a higher platform, which suggests a change of venue, or, at all events, the looking at our subject from a different standpoint.

So far we have heard of the custom of tithing throughout the ancient world, and have argued, from the universality of the observance, that there was probably some primitive law which enjoined it. Neither secular literature nor ancient monuments inform us what that law was, who enjoined it, or when -- nor does the Book of Genesis make these points clear to demonstration.

If, however, we assume that YEHOVAH directed from the very first that a tenth of man's increase would be a fitting proportion to render to Himself, as the great Lord of all, we find absolutely nothing in Genesis to conflict with a theory of this kind. On the contrary, we see several passages connected with patriarchal religion that seem to confirm such an idea, and to make the assumption highly probable.

When, moreover, we come to other books of the Pentateuch, we are brought face to face with written laws which distinctly deal with tithing payments-- not indeed as a new institution, but as regulated and adapted to a new form of government on which was based the Jewish polity.

Thus we read in Leviticus 27:30-33,

"And all the tithing of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. And if a man will redeem aught of his tithing, he shall add unto it a fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithing of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and that for which it is changed shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed."

From this passage we learn:

1) That a tenth of the produce of the land, whether of seed or fruit, was claimed by YEHOVAH, and was to be regarded as holy (or set apart) for Him.

- 2) That if the offerer wished to retain this tenth of seed or fruit, he might do so by paying its value, and adding to it one-fifth.
- 3) That every tenth calf and lamb also (that is, increase of the herd or flock) was to be set apart for YEHOVAH.
- 4) That this form of animal tithe might not be redeemed, nor the animals exchanged: but if an owner, notwithstanding, presumed to change a tithe animal, then both the tithe animal and that for which it was exchanged, were to be forfeited, and set apart for YEHOVAH. The manner of tithing, as described by Maimonides, was this: "He (the owner) gathers all the lambs and all the calves into a field, and makes a little door to it, so that two cannot go at once; and he places their dams without, and they bleat, so that the lambs hear their voice, and go out of the fold to meet them, as it is said, whatsoever passeth under the rod: for it must pass of itself, and not be brought out by his hand; and when they go out of the fold, one after another, he begins and counts them with the rod: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and the tenth that goes out, whether male or female, whether perfect or blemished, he marks it with a red mark, and says, 'This is the tithe'" (Hilchet Becorot, c. 6, sect 1; from *Gills Exposition*, on Leviticus 27:32)

From Numbers 18:21-24 we learn that the tithe just mentioned, though claimed by YEHOVAH Himself, was given by Him to the Levites. Thus:

"And unto the children of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they serve, even the service of the tent of meeting. And henceforth the children of Israel shall not come nigh the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin, and die. But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, and among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. For the tithe of the children of Israel, which they offer as a heave offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance."

Therefore this FIRST, or Lords tithe, is known also as the Levites tithe, and has the following stipulations --

- 1) That from this tithing no produce of land, or increase of herd or flock, is expected.
- 2) That the offerer has no voice in its disposal.
- 3) That though it was called a heave offering, the offerer did not receive any of it back again.
- 4) That this tithe was not an amount that might be diminished, or an alms that the owner might render or not as he pleased, but a *divine claim*, the withholding of which was regarded by YEHOVAH as dishonesty, (Malachi 3:8).

It may further be noted concerning this FIRST TITHE that the Levites to whom it was given by YEHOVAH God, were required by Him to render a tenth of what they received as a heave offering to YEHOVAH, and to pay it to Aaron the priest, (Numbers 18:26-28).

The Second Tithe

We now proceed to a SECOND TITHE, which reads as follows, (Deuteronomy 14:22-27):

"Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of thy seed, that which cometh forth of the field year by year. And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose to cause His name to dwell there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herd and of thy flock; that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always. And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it, because the place is too far from thee, which the Lord thy God shall choose to set His name there, when the Lord thy God shall bless thee: then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: and thou shalt bestow the money for whatsoever thy soul desireth, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul asketh of thee: and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy household: and the Levite that is within thy gates."

Concerning the SECOND TITHE, we learn:

- 1) That it consisted of the yearly increase of the land.
- 2) That it was to be eaten by the offerer, his household, and the Levite, with firstlings of herd and flock, but only *at the appointed place of worship*.
- 3) The object of this was that Israel might always fear YEHOVAH.

This tithe might be converted at home into money, to be spent at the capital for sacrifices and feasting.

The tithe-payer was to eat and rejoice before YEHOVAH.

The due payment of this SECOND TITHE involved a stay of at least a week each at the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles -- as well as a shorter period at the Feast of Weeks, (Deuteronomy 16:3, 13, 16).

It will help us better to understand this SECOND, or festival tithe, as it is sometimes called, if we consider the end it was to serve. All the males in Israel (with their families, if they chose) were to assemble at the sanctuary three times a year for the worship of YEHOVAH God, (Deuteronomy 12:6-7).

"And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and the heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herd and of your flock: and there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households."

The primary end, therefore, of the festivals was to foster religious principles and to furnish a time and place for social observances and the offering of sacrifices. This was done in recognition of YEHOVAH's bounty, and as acts of fealty and worship to Him. Now, in all nations, the main idea of a sacrifice has been that of a meal offered to a deity (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th ed., "Sacrifice," by W. Robertson Smith, vol. 21, 132). In some cases the meal was made over entirely to the god; but more commonly the sacrifice was a feast, of which the god and the worshippers were supposed to partake together. In other words, the offering rendered -- whether animal or vegetable -- was sometimes wholly burnt; at others, was consumed partly by fire and partly by the priest. Or, once more, part was burnt, part was taken by the priest, and a part returned to the offerer.

So, if an Israelite sinned, his appointed way to forgiveness was by sacrifice; and if he had vows to redeem, or thanksgivings to make, all involved the presentation of sacrifice. But this and other sacrifices were not to be offered in just any place the worshipper chose, (Deuteronomy 12:17-18), but must be taken to the ecclesiastical capital, such as was afterwards established at the resting-places of the Ark *in Shiloh, and in Jerusalem*.

Generally speaking, the Jewish sacrifices consisted of the nature of expiation (for sin committed), of dedication (when seeking a favour), or of thanksgiving (for favour received). The kind of sacrifice presented was according to the intention of the offerer.

In the case of the burnt offering proper, the priest took the skin, but all else was consumed by fire, (Leviticus 7:6). In the case of the sin offering, the trespass offering, and the meat (or meal) offering, that which was not burnt was for the officiating priest, or the priests generally, (Leviticus 5:2-10, 7:6-10), while, in the case of the peace offering, the breast and right shoulder only belonged to the priests, and the remainder might be consumed by the offerer.

Thus the Israelite would have the opportunity of eating and rejoicing before YEHOVAH, and feasting with his household. The SECOND, or festival, tithe, was intended to furnish the means for doing this.

Furthermore, if the first and second tithes be compared, it will be seen, by way of distinction, that whereas the offerer had no voice whatever in the disposal of the first tithe, the disposal of the second tithe was largely in his own hands. Also, whereas the offerer did not receive again any portion for himself of the first tithe, he might receive in some cases the greater part of the second tithe for his own use, or purposes-- as well as for the enjoyment of others.

The Third Tithe

We now come to a THIRD TITHE, (Deuteronomy 14:28-29),

"At the end of every three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase in the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates; and the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest."

This teaches that:

- 1) A tenth of every third year's increase was to be laid up at home.
- 2) This tenth was to be shared by the local Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.
- 3) The object of this tithe was, that YEHOVAH might bless the work of the tithepayer's hands.

Some think this was not a third tithe, but a triennial substitute for the second tithe, so that in the third, and again the sixth, years (as well as the seventh year, when the land was not to be cultivated), the Israelite would not take the second, or festival, tithe to the sanctuary, but would dispose of it among the poor at home.

Perhaps this view may have been in part suggested by the Septuagint, which varies the punctuation, and reads: "After three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase. In that year thou shalt lay it up in thy cities," (Deuteronomy 14:27). In support of this opinion may be quoted the words of Maimonides: "On the third and sixth years from the sabbatical year, after they have separated the first tithe, they separate from what remains another tithe, and give it to the poor, and it is called the poor's tithe; and not on those two years is the second tithe, but the poor's tithe." -- *Gill* on Deuteronomy 14:28; Maimonides, *Hilchot Mattanot Anayim*, c. 6, sect. 4. See also *Speaker's Commentary* on Deuteronomy 14:28-29, and *McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia*, vol. 10. p. 433.

Selden and Michaelis also argue in the same direction, saying that a THIRD TITHE should be an excessive demand upon the income of a man who had already expended two-tenths of his increase (*McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia*, vol. 10, p. 434). Peake likewise says: "It may be urged that it is not probable that a double tribute should be exacted from the crops." And again: "Nor is it probable that a tax of nearly one-fifth of the whole produce should be imposed on the farmers." (Article "Tithe," in *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, I, p. 780.)

On the other hand, in opposition to these conjectures, it may be observed:

1) That the Hebrew text *nowhere* says explicitly that the THIRD TITHE should be substituted for the SECOND.

The injunction is several times repeated that every male should go up to the festivals yearly -- but neither the third, sixth, seventh, or any other year is excepted. Some (and Professor Driver, *International Critical Commentary*, Deuteronomy, p. 168, among them) have supposed that, as the land was not to be sown in the seventh year, no tithe would be paid (*McClintock and Strong*, vol. 10, p. 435). But if so, how were the Levites during that year to live, unless a double or triple tithe was to be paid in the sixth year? And this the law had already provided for. "If ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase. Then will I command My blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years," etc., (Leviticus 25:20-22).

Besides, not going up to the festivals on the third, sixth, and seventh years would be attended with a further and practical difficulty: for if a man had sinned after returning, say, from the last feast of the fifth year, he would, under normal circumstances, be deprived of the opportunity of offering a sacrifice of expiation at the sanctuary until after an interval of two years.

Moreover, we have at least three witnesses of prominent rank for the THIRD TITHE being an *addition to*, and not a substitute for, the second tithe. The author of *Tobit*, for instance, when stating how he walked in the ways of truth and righteousness, notwithstanding the falling away of his father's family from YEHOVAH's command to sacrifice at Jerusalem, makes his subject say:

"I alone went often to Jerusalem at the feasts, as it hath been ordained unto all Israel by an everlasting decree, having the first fruits and the tenths of mine increase, and that which was first shorn; and I gave them at the altar to the priests, the sons of Aaron. The *tenth part* of all mine increase I gave to the sons of Levi, who ministered at Jerusalem: and the *second tenth* part I sold away, and went; and spent it each year at Jerusalem: and the *third* I gave unto them for whom it was meet, as Deborah my father's mother had commanded me," (Tobit 1:68).

The above quotation is the revised English version from the *Vatican Codex*; but the reading of the *Sinaitic Codex* is still more noteworthy. I translate this passage as follows: "Having the first fruits, and the firstborn and the tithes of cattle, and the first shearing of the sheep, I proceeded to Jerusalem, and I gave them to the priests, the sons of Aaron, at the altar; and the tenth of the wine, and of the corn, and of olive, and pomegranate, and the other fruit trees to the sons of Levi ministering in Jerusalem. And the *second tithe* I sold away for money during six years, and I used to go every year and spend it in Jerusalem. And I gave them (i.e. the tithes) to the orphans, and to the widows, and to the strangers living among the children of Israel. I brought in and I gave (the tithes) to them in the third year, and we ate them according to the ordinance ordained concerning them in the law of Moses and according to the commandments which Deborah, the mother of Ananeel our father, commanded."

Again, Josephus is quite clear as to a THIRD TITHE. He writes:

"Beside those two tithes which I have already said you are to pay every year, the one for the Levites, the other for the festivals, you are to bring every third year a tithe to be distributed to those that want; to women also that are widows, and to children that are orphans," (Josephus, *Antiquities*, bk. 4).

After Josephus we have the testimony of Jerome, who, like the preceding two witnesses, lived in Palestine. He says one tithe was given to the Levites, out of which they gave a tenth to the priests; a second tithe was applied to festival purposes, and a third was given to the poor (*Commentary* on Ezekiel 45:1, 565. quoted in *McClintock and Strong*, 10, 434). Evidently, Chrysostom understood this, for he preaches: "What, then, did they (the Jews) give? A tenth of all their possessions, and another tenth, and after this a third (tenth)," etc. (*Homily* 64 on Matthew 20:27).

Once more, a modern opinion regarding this question may be found in that of Dr. Pusey, late Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, who, preaching on Ash Wednesday at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, is quoted as follows:

The Pharisee "paid tithes of all which he possessed: a double tithe, you will recollect, one for God's priests, the other for the sacrifices, and yet another every third year for the poor: 4s. 8d. in the pound he anyhow gave to God, not, as our custom is, underrating property for the poor-rate, but a good 4s. 8d. in the pound on the average of the three years," Pearson, *Systematic Beneficence*, p. 11.

In fact, I can find no authority in favour of this supposed triennial substitution of the THIRD TITHE for the SECOND, until the twelfth century, when Maimonides says that in the third and sixth years the SECOND TITHE was shared between the poor and the Levites, i.e. that there was no THIRD TITHE, De Jur. Paup. 6, 4. quoted in *McClintock and Strong*, 10, p. 434. But even then we have a contemporary rabbi of the same century (Aben Ezra) who says: "This was a THIRD TITHE, and did not excuse the SECOND TITHE." (See *Gill* on Deuteronomy 4:28.)

The reader can therefore judge concerning the plain statement of the law -- supported by what we have seen was thought right by the author of the book of *Tobit* in perhaps the third century before Christ. He can also evaluate the record of Josephus (two or three centuries later, and when tithe-paying was still practiced), together with the testimony of Jerome (who lived in Palestine four centuries later, and may be presumed to have known how his contemporaries, at least among the Samaritans, were paying their tithes) as to whether all this is not more likely to be true than a statement such as that of Maimonides, who, though buried in Palestine, yet flourished in Spain -- but not until a thousand years after the Jewish nation had been dispersed.

As for the objection that a THIRD TITHE would be an excessive demand upon income the late Sir Monier Williams, Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, referred me to passages of Sanskrit law, especially the code of Manu. This oldest compendium of the

laws of the Brahmans pointed out that the usual proportion of produce taken by the king was a sixth part (as we have seen was the case in Egypt), but that in times of necessity he might take one-fourth of the crop (Monier Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, p. 264).

We may remember also that, in the time of the Maccabees, the inhabitants of Judea seem to have been taxed to the extent of one-third of their seed and half of their fruit, (I Maccabees 10:30).

For a more modern illustration I asked about taxes on my first visit to Bokhara, in 1882, and received widely divergent answers in different parts of the Khanate. At one place they said that out of ten batmans of harvest they paid eight (or four-fifths) for taxes; and at another, four (or a half); and that, a matter of fact, the beks took more and more, and as much as they pleased (Larsdell's *Russian Central Asia*, vol. 2. p. 187).

Again, in 1894, when travelling through most of the large towns of Italy, I was told more than once that the taxes then being levied upon the people amounted to at least 20 per cent of their incomes. Given, then, a conscientious Italian paying 20 percent of his income to the State, and, as expected by the Council of Trent, (session 25, ch. 12) another tithe, or 10 percent, to his church, these demands, united, would be a heavier claim upon income than the three tithes of YEHOVAH's law. Moreover, if Josephus could enjoin the Jews to pay three tithes for their own religion, when they were paying also taxes to the Romans, much more might the Mosaic law require three tithes under the theocracy, especially as the payment of these procured to the Israelite not a few of the judicial, educational, and social benefits for which other nations now pay taxes.

It would seem, then, that the Mosaic law enjoined upon the Israelite to pay yearly, in connection with his religion, two-tenths, and, at the end of three years, a third tenth, of his income.

Mosaic Offerings

BESIDES three tithes, properly so-called, the Pentateuch imposed other fixed claims, both annual and occasional. Thus the Israelite was commanded:

"When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleaning of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather the fallen fruit of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the stranger," (Leviticus 19:9-10).

Again:

"When thou reapest thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it

after thee; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow," (Deuteronomy 24:19-21).

From the above we learn that, at the time of fruit-gathering, the owner was to leave for the needy, fallen fruit, overlooked olives, and small bunches of grapes. In the harvest field he was not to gather up forgotten bundles nor gleanings (that is, ears of corn dropped in the hands of the reaper); and he was not even to cut the corners of his fields .

The Mosaic law does not specify how large the corners thus left were to be. However, as a matter of practice we learn, in later years, from a chapter on "the corner" in the Mishna, that "they do not leave less than a sixtieth part" of the whole (*Gills Exposition of Old and New Testament*, Leviticus 19:9).

Another annual claim upon the Israelite was that of his first fruits. Although the law, once again, does not define the amount of the offering, it is instructive to notice how Maimonides asks concerning the quantity to be brought, "What measure do the wise men set?" which he answers, saying, "A good eye [or a bountiful man] brings one of forty; a middling one [one that is neither liberal nor niggardly] brings one of fifty [or the fiftieth part]; and an evil one [a covetous man] one of sixty [or the sixtieth part]; but never less than that" (*Gill* on Exodus 22:29). Another authority -- referring to the Mishna and its chapter on first fruits -- names one-fiftieth of the produce. (See *McClintock and Strongs Cyclopaedia*, article "Tithe," vol. 10, p. 434.)

But besides the first fruits to be offered annually, the law enjoined certain charges to be paid occasionally. Thus:

"Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast; it is Mine."

Again:

"The firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto Me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with its dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it Me," Exodus 22:29-30.

The firstborn of man was to be redeemed by a payment of five shekels. This is still observed, apparently, among modern Jews in Lemberg. Mr. Israel Sunlight, an ex-rabbi of my acquaintance writes as follows: "At the beginning of the month I was invited to be present at a unique ceremony, the redeeming of the firstborn," and he continues, in short, as follows: "The parents present the child to the cohen (or priest), who takes it in his arms, and then asks them whether they wish him to keep the child, or whether they would rather redeem it for the sum of five shekels (about twelve shillings). The parents, of course, take the latter alternative, and pay down the redemption money: whereupon the priest pronounces his blessing upon the child, and hands it back to its parents (*Jewish Missionary Intelligencer*, March, 1903, p. 43). The firstlings of unclean animals were to be redeemed also. The firstling, however, of a cow, a sheep, or a goat might not be

redeemed; but it was brought to the altar, and the flesh, after being offered to God, became the property of the priest, (Numbers 18:16-17).

Another fixed charge was made at the time of the census in the wilderness to the amount of half a shekel. The rich were not to give more, nor the poor less, (Exodus 30:11-15). Also the law prescribed that when the Israelite should plant a fruit tree, the fruit for three years was to be regarded as unclean, and not to be eaten; whilst in the fourth year the fruit was to be set apart for giving praise to YEHOVAH, (Leviticus 19:23-24).

Moreover, the seventh year was to be a year of release, when every creditor was to refrain from enforcing re-payment for that which he had lent to his neighbour:

"Beware that there be not a base thought in thine heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou give him nought: and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee," (Deuteronomy 15:1-2, 9).

Such, then, were the fixed deductions, annual or occasional, laid by the Mosaic law upon an Israelite's increase -- the discharge of which was a duty and the withholding a sin.

The Freewill Offering

Besides the foregoing, a freewill offering was enjoined for the Feast of Weeks:

"Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give, according as the Lord thy God blesseth thee: and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are in the midst of thee, in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there," (Deuteronomy 16:10-11).

The nature and amount of the freewill offering is here left to the liberality of the giver; and this seems to be the only one of the feasts held at the metropolis to which the stranger, fatherless, and widow are expressly named as persons to be invited. But the law contemplated other offerings also, the bringing of which was not obligatory, but which YEHOVAH expressed His willingness to accept from any of His people who were disposed with a willing heart to give. A famous example of this occurred at Sinai, at the making of the tabernacle, when the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they take for Me an offering: of every man whose heart maketh him willing, ye shall take my offering," (Exodus 25:2). The result of this appeal was such that the people had to be restrained from bringing, "for the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much," (Exodus 36:7).

We have frequent mention also, in the law, of vows and freewill offerings. It was directed that "whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the Lord to accomplish a vow, or for a freewill offering, of the herd or of the flock, it shall be perfect to be accepted," (Leviticus 22:21). An imperfect bullock or lamb might be brought for a freewill offering, but not for a vow, verse 23. Other directions concerning vows and devoted things take up nearly the whole of the last chapter of Leviticus.

The general rule, seemingly, for voluntary giving at the festivals was this:

"Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee," (Deuteronomy 16:16-17).

At the same time, concerning vows in general, the law enjoined:

"When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, a freewill offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth," (Deuteronomy 23:21-23).

Another general rule, that might be practiced every day and everywhere, was:

"If there be with thee a poor man, one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt surely open thine hand unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth . . . Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto," (Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10).

Such, then, were the tithes and offerings of the Mosaic law. In some cases the amount or proportion due was definitely stated; in others it was not stated with precision-- as, for instance, with the second and third tithes. **It is not stated whether each tith was to be a tenth of the whole or a tenth of the remainder after the previous tith or tithes had been deducted.** Therefore, it is not easy to reduce to figures what an Israelite was called upon annually to pay, and encouraged to give-- especially in relation to such matters as the firstlings and tithes of cattle, and his own firstborn son. This also includes the fruit of young trees for four years, as well as debts not enforced in the seventh year.

Other Possible Deductions

Other possible deductions include a freewill offering at the Feast of Weeks, (Deuteronomy 16:10), animals in payment of vows or things devoted, (Leviticus 27:9, 28), remission of debts in year of release, the redemption of the firstborn, and thank offerings generally.

From the foregoing it will be seen that if a farmer's standing crop amounts to 6,000 ephahs, or bushels, an estimated 1/60 must be left in the corners, or as gleanings, or forgotten sheaves, for the poor. Then, of the remaining 5,900 bushels, an estimated 1/40 more is to be offered as first fruits. From the 5,750 bushels left, the Lord's tithe for the Levites is to be taken, which reduces the ingathering to 5,175 bushels. When the festival tithe is taken from this, it leaves the owner with 4,658 bushels. From this must be deducted 1/30 (or a third of the triennial tithe), by which the net remainder is reduced to 4,503 bushels, or three-fourths of the original whole.

Out of this remainder, however, there might have to be provided the redemption for a firstborn son, or, once in seven years, the remission of debts; and from the same source, according to the owner's liberality, would come a freewill offering at the Feast of Weeks; and, on other occasions, animals for the payment of vows, or devoted things and thank offerings, generally.

So, then, on the principle of tithing the remainder, a liberal Israelite's outgoings would amount to, at least, a fourth of his income. On the other hand, if each item is charged upon the whole 6,000, then it will be seen that there would remain, after the payment of fixed claims, only 4,350. Added to this, the consumption of time for several weeks, for the observance of festivals, would be considerable. If 350 bushels more may be regarded as an equivalent for this loss, as well as for redemption of the firstborn, remitted debts, for vows and freewill offerings, then a man's outgoings would amount, on this principle, to a third of his entire harvest.

Perhaps, therefore, we are justified in supposing that the Mosaic law required the Israelite to set apart, in some way or other connected with his religion, from one-fourth to a third of his income. Or, to put it in another way: a conscientious man, wishful to act up to his duty, might begin by setting apart a tenth of his income for the Lord's tithe. He would regard his firstborn and the firstlings of his cattle as belonging to the LORD. The fruit of young trees for three years he would not eat, and on the fourth year would set apart the fruit for YEHOVAH, whilst every seventh year he would not claim money from his debtors. At the time of every harvest he would leave to the poor the corners of his field, the gleanings and forgotten sheaves, as well as fallen fruit and overlooked olives and grapes. He would then set aside a second tenth for expenses connected with going up to the sanctuary, taking with him a freewill offering at the Feast of Weeks, and possibly animals for payment of vows, or thank offerings, or things devoted, in addition to his first fruits. These first fruits he would put in a basket, and, coming to the priest, would say to him: "I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the land which the Lord swore unto our fathers for to give us," (Deuteronomy 26:3).

Upon this the priest would take the basket and set it down before the altar, and the offerer then would solemnly say before YEHOVAH God, (Deuteronomy 26:5-10):

"A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous: and the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: and we cried unto the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice, and saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression: and the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: and He hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which Thou, O Lord, hast given me."

The first fruits thus dedicated, the offerer would worship before YEHOVAH, in gratitude and acknowledgment of all the good given to him, his family, the Levite, and the stranger, (Deuteronomy 26:2-11).

This beautiful form was provided for yearly use, whilst every third year, a third tenth having been set apart for the local poor, our pious Israelite would solemnly declare before YEHOVAH:

"I have put away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all Thy commandment which Thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed any of Thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them: I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I put away thereof, being unclean, nor given thereof for the dead: I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, I have done according to all that Thou hast commanded me. Look down from Thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Thy people Israel, and the ground which Thou hast given us, as Thou swearest unto our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey," (Deuteronomy 26:13-15).

Having now collected various pieces of information concerning Mosaic tithes and offerings, we will do well to notice the nature of the evidence thus brought together. Professor Driver, in his *Commentary* on Deuteronomy (p. 172), would have us to believe that "the data at our disposal do not enable us to write a history of the Hebrew tithe." But this is not sufficient reason why we should not make the most of the information we have, remembering, however, that the evidence is not primary, direct, and complete, so much as subsidiary, indirect, and fragmentary.

We have not, for instance, throughout the Pentateuch so much as a single chapter -- or even a long paragraph -- dealing with tithe as a whole. We have had to collect our information mainly from three short passages in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy -- these passages being there introduced not so much for their own sakes as for their bearing upon other things.

Therefore, the first authoritative statement (in the generally received order of the books) of the great foundation principle that a tenth of the produce of the land and of beasts belongs to YEHOVAH, is not ushered in, as we might expect, with the solemn preamble, "The Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto the children of Israel," etc. We see this great truth specifically mentioned for the first time at the end of Leviticus, in a supplementary chapter regulating the making of vows and determining how far things or animals devoted to YEHOVAH might be redeemed. Here the subject of the tithe comes in, quite incidentally and without explanation. It is then spoken of, not for the purpose of enjoining it as something new, or as though it were not already in use, but in order to exclude the tithe portion from vows, and to prescribe how far and under what conditions, like vows, tithe might be redeemed (*Langes Commentary* on Leviticus 27:30-33).

So again, after the rebellion of Korah in Numbers 18, when several laws are being given concerning the priests and Levites, this FIRST TITHE is again introduced. It is introduced not so much for its own sake, but to show how the Levites, though having no inheritance among the tribes, are to be repaid for their labour by its appropriation to their benefit.

Once more, when we come to Deuteronomy 14 we have a chapter regulating what may be eaten and what may not be eaten, of beasts, fishes and fowls; and then follow directions concerning eating before YEHOVAH of the SECOND TITHE at an appointed place of worship.

Furthermore, what we are told about tithes is not only fragmentary, but it is also incomplete. The Mosaic law, for instance, does not define particularly what seeds, fruits, or animals are to be tithed; nor does the legislator give directions "whether the tenth is to be paid of all newly born animals; whether it includes those newly purchased or exchanged; whether it is payable if a man have less than ten cattle, or at what age of the animals the tithe becomes due" (*McClintock and Strong*, 10, p. 434). Nor, as already observed, does the law say whether each tithe is to be computed in reference to the whole, or out of what remains after previous tithes have been deducted; nor, again, is it clear whether the second tithe includes a second tenth of all animals. By way of illustration we may observe, as a somewhat parallel case, the importation of the word "fasting" into the *Book of Common Prayer*. In the prefatory matter is "A Table of the Fasts and Days of Abstinence," also a list of the days of fasting; and in the Communion Service the curate is directed to declare what fastings days are to be observed. But nothing is said as to who is to fast, nor in what fasting consists, where it should be observed, or with what accessories, nor why or how, but only when. Just, then, as these minutiae, when the first English Prayer Book was issued, were well known and understood, and were taken so to be; so, presumably, the less needed to be said by the writer of the Pentateuch about the particulars connected with tithing, because the people were familiar with the custom as descended from their forefathers.

The law concerning tithe, then, in general has in one respect a close resemblance to the law concerning the Sabbath. When YEHOVAH promulgated the Decalogue as a statute or written law, He said, "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy," thereby

implying that the commandment was already in existence or had been enjoined before; and the same might be said of other commandments which were laws of God and rules of life for man, and for keeping of which Abraham is praised, and for the nonobservance of which punishment is recorded, long before Jehovah's laws were published on Sinai.

So, with regard to Mosaic tithes and offerings, it has been shown elsewhere that before the descendants of Jacob left Palestine it was a well-established custom in Egypt to make regular offerings to the gods and to pay to the temples first fruits of the harvest, (see *Sacred Tenth*, p. 3) so that with these customs, at any rate, the Israelites, on leaving Egypt, would be familiar. They would likewise remember that two-tenths, or a double tithe, of increase was paid by the Egyptians to Pharaoh, who supported the priests, and that, by virtue of the legislation of their own ancestor, Joseph, whose bones they were taking up for burial in the land of Canaan at the very time their own law was given; whilst as for tithes, how could the Israelites forget the observance of this custom by their great ancestor Abraham, or fail to remember the vow of his grandson Israel, "Of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee"? (Genesis 28:22).

These things, presumably, must have been to them as household words, and hence there can be little doubt that the inspired legislator adopted the already existing practice of tithe-paying, and inserted it in the statute law of the divine code, because he found that, with some modification, this ancient payment might be made a proper stipend for the servants and officers of the theocracy, and also that second and third tithes might furnish the means of promoting regular worship at the national sanctuary, and foster social intercourse and good feeling between rich and poor. (See *McClintock and Strongs Encyclopaedia*, 10, p. 436.)

We have thus reached, as already intimated, a higher platform than any upon which we have yet stood. We have emerged from the clouds of probability and conjecture concerning the origin of tithe-paying, to see the custom recognized, regulated, and embodied in what has been generally accepted as a most ancient code of written laws.

It is claimed for this code that it was written by inspiration of the God of Israel, of whom Jews and Christians alike believe that He never yet made a law that was unjust or unwise, or that did not tend to His people's happiness. If, then, YEHOVAH God has given laws upon tithe-paying, they are sure to be worthy of at least our respectful study, and we accordingly proceed to examine, so far as our data enable us, the working of these laws among the Israelites, from their entrance into Canaan down to the close of Old Testament history.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Hope of Israel Ministries Is On the *INTERNET!*

THE HOPE OF ISRAEL WEBSITES ON THE INTERNET now have hundreds of articles for download, as well as books and many other features for the discerning Christian who is seeking answers to the mysteries of life and the hereafter. Be sure to visit the Hope of Israel home pages at: <http://hope-of-israel.org> and <http://hope-of-isreal.net>

Letters from Our Readers ..

The Hoped Israel Mail Bag



Dear Mr. Keyser,

Enclosed please find a check in the amount of.....for an offering for the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

I am feeling better than last year from the Fibromyalgia, back and abdominal pain, but have not felt up to correspondence or deep study due to the extreme fatigue. My son just had a 2 hour seizure and was in the hospital 10 days. In his emergency transport his right leg was injured, but he is beginning to walk again.

Thank you so much for sending us your *Berean Voice* magazine with many thought provoking articles. Also, thank you for sending the book about Islam which I ordered. It is answering a lot of the contradictions I have heard.

Sincerely,
P.A. (Ohio)

P.S. Have a wonderful Passover season!

COMMENT: I would encourage our readers to pray for the health of this lady and her son.

Could you please add me to your mailing list to receive a one-year free subscription to *The Berean Voice*. It can be forwarded to.....

I have felt compelled for the past few months to search the Scriptures with regard to the current Christian Sabbath as well as the origin of our holidays. I am beginning to see that we may be off the map as far as celebrating the Sabbath and the holidays on the current days as well as in compliance with the Roman Catholic Church, from which of course it all was derived, or should I say contrived. Any information or booklets you could provide me to assist me in my determination of the truth would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks for everything! God bless.

C.A. (New Hampshire)

Sir;

Just a line to let you know, that I enjoy reading the articles that you put out for us, who do not have the time or the resources, to find all the articles that you have, print and put them in a magazine, so that I read them, and to tell others what I have learned from them.

A few years back I wrote an article on Gen. chapter 18, where the three men, came to see Abraham, I always thought that these three were Jesus, Michael, and Gabriel, but in your article, (*Yeshua Did Not Preexist*) I do not fully understand, will you try to explain this to me more fully.

And when I can afford it I will order more of your articles.

Thank you,
L.R. (Florida)

COMMENT: Since Yeshua did not pre-exist, then obviously the being mentioned in Genesis 18 was not the Messiah. The being with the two angels was none other than YEHOVAH God Himself. YEHOVAH has resided on this planet many times as the Bible indicates. He resided in the first and second temples in His Shekinah Glory form, and appeared in the form of a human being to contend with Jacob.

To Hope of Israel Ministries:

Please send me *The Berean Voice* and a copy of the Sacred Calendar 2002 and would like to take up on your kind offer as to one year's free subscription.

Vol. 1, No. 1 I have come across so I say:

Herbert W. Armstrong I know -- Jonathan Brown (*Keeping Yahweh's Appointments*) who is he?

Did some Sacred Namers run ahead of us in the quest for plain truth?

If I am to keep the Sabbath as per new moon timing, when will this be for me here in N.Z.? I don't believe that God stuck the date line at this end of the Pacific where the modern day starts some 10 hours ahead of Jerusalem.

It may be that these and other questions will be answered for me by *The Berean Voice*.

Hope so and thank you,
P.J. (New Zealand)

COMMENT: Dear P.J., I'm not sure what you mean by the Sacred Namers running ahead of us in the quest for truth. YEHOVAH's truth is out there in its entirety -- it's just not found in one place! The goal and thrust of this ministry is to gather up YEHOVAH's truth into one location for those with the spirit of YEHOVAH to read and study. We don't claim to have all truth-- it's a slow, steady process as we are led forward by the spirit of YEHOVAH.

Regarding the Sabbath, it should be observed per the New Moon timing in Jerusalem -- not in your local area. For further information read our articles about the Sabbath and the calendar,

Hello H-O-I,
I am reading your article on the Aztec migration. I am currently learning about these things. But curiously, in your article you mention that the Aztecs were originally from a place called Aztlan. Do you know there is a site in Southern Wisconsin named Aztlan with a sunken city in Rock Lake 3 miles away?

If you are interested in furthering your study check out:
www.rocklakeresearch.com
www.ancientamerican.com

There are several books on this subject by Frank Joseph: *Atlantis in Wisconsin*, by Frank Joseph.

Somebody excavated half a billion pounds of the world's highest grade copper from the Upper

Great Lakes at the same time Europe erupted into the Bronze Age. Between both continents, the island of Atlantis was described by the Greek philosopher, Plato, as rich in mineral wealth. In this sequel to *The Lost Pyramids of Rock Lake* read the untold story of the Ancient World's greatest mystery.

The Lost Pyramids of Rock Lake by Frank Joseph.

The history and discovery of a prehistoric, stone City of the Dead at the bottom of a Wisconsin lake. Read about its connections to the Valley of Mexico & beyond. Chapters include "How Did the Pyramids Sink?" and "Native Americans Remember the Pyramid Drama."

I realize that your article explains some of these things, but these books explain things maybe better.

Thank you for your time,
By the way, what is your denominational affiliation and are you a 501 c 3?

L.P.

COMMENT: Thank you, L.P., for your input -- I will certainly check out these publications. For the true location of Atlantis, consult *The Sunken Kingdom: The Atlantis Mystery Solved* by Peter James. For an explanation of the copper mining in the Upper Great Lakes read, *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found*, by Steven M. Collins.

Dear Brother in the name of our Savior Jesus,

Greetings of love and grace be to you all in the name of our savior Jesus Christ.

I am the pastor serving the God's work keeping and winning souls for Jesus by my commitment and meditation and also underwent to Bible Course Training and going on carry at Siddantham and surrounding villages by name GOOD SHEPHERD DESTITUTE CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY that beside of Lord's work there is something service that orphan hunger children Home that there are so many children and some body are begging in the streets before Hindu people. But I am not able to supply all of their needs but some time I am

feeding and supply some of their needs to all of them with Christian understanding love why because I know the poor situation that I came also from poor family of Idolatry worship that by the Will of God the Almighty God chosen and called me for His service to carry forward in His grapes garden. So I know what is person in poor condition. So I am feeding them who are poor and needy and orphan hunger children as per Word of God that James 1:27; Isaiah 58:7-8 and etc., that due to lack of sufficient offerings from poor and needy church members I am facing money problems and unable to supply all of the needs. So pray for us all needs of Lord's work and orphan hunger children as per living Word of God to get righteousness right side people, Matt. 25:31-40.

We are praying for you all and your wonderful service. Pray for us all and our render service. The Almighty God bless you all and service out of Zion.

Awaiting your blessings and benedictions in Holy Jesus Name.

Your Loving Brother in Christian Love,
P.S.R. (India)

We are amazed by the information on keeping the Sabbath by the lunar phases. We have observed the Sabbath by the Roman calendar for many years. For the past 1 1/2 years we have been interested in and studying the "New Moon" without understanding exactly why. We would appreciate your opinion on a couple of questions: 1/. A few times a year the "First Crescent" is sighted in the USA the night before it is spotted in Jerusalem. Do you start the countdown to the first Sabbath based on the USA sighting or Jerusalem, and what is your rationale for your decision?

2/. Do you observe the Feast of Trumpets when the moon is in conjunction or at the first crescent sighting?

3/. Do you have any additional information (in addition to that in your website articles) on the Babylonian Rabbis changing the Sabbath from lunar based to a rotating seven-day cycle?

4/. I am amazed that a change as fundamental to the Jewish Religion and culture as the rotating

seven-day cycle could have been implemented without major uproar and controversy. Do you have any evidence of such an uproar?

5/. The Jewish leadership must have been observing the Sabbath on the correct day during Messiah's ministry or he would have upbraided them for it. Also he would have taught his disciples correctly and they would have recorded it for us. My conclusion is that until at least 90 AD the correct Sabbath was being observed. In your opinion, when was the Sabbath cycle changed, and what do you base this opinion on?

6/. Do you know of any other groups which follow Sabbaths based on the Lunar Phases? Do you know of any Jewish or Nazarene Sects which observe this?

I thank you for any info you can provide to these questions.

J. & P.M. (Washington)

COMMENT: Thank you for your message and thoughtful questions. I will try to answer them as best I can.

1/. The countdown to the first Sabbath of the month is based on the first crescent in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was chosen by YEHOVAH God as the capital of the world and the place where He and the Messiah will reside when they return. During the lifetime of the Messiah the new moons were observed in Jerusalem and transmitted by fire beacons to people in outlying areas and lands. If the Sabbath is kept according to local sightings nothing but chaos will ensue with people around the world keeping it at different times.

2/. We observe the Feast of Trumpets when the moon is in the first crescent sighting.

3/. We have nothing more at this time regarding the changeover from the lunar week to a rotating seven day cycle. There is some interesting information about the weekly cycle on James Dwyer's website at: www.creation-answers.com

Books you can read on this topic are: *The Seven Day Circle: The History and Meaning of the Week*, by Eviatar Zerubavel; and *Rest Days: The Christian Sunday, the Jewish Sabbath, and Their Historical and Anthropological Prototypes*, by Hutton Webster.

4/. The changeover in the weekly cycle may have caused an uproar -- evidence just hasn't come down to us, or it may have been lost. Or it's possible that the most of the people just accepted it just like they did when postponements were introduced into the Jewish calendar. However, some people continued without postponements in their calendar, indicating that some disagreement took place which hasn't come down to us.

5/. Yes, the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem and most of the people in general were observing the Sabbath at the correct time or Yeshua, as you mention, would have severely upbraided them. There is no evidence of this in the New Testament. I believe the changes took place amongst the Jews in Babylonia about the time that the oral traditions were written down and the postponements were added to the calendar.

6/. There are a number of groups in this country observing the Lunar Sabbath, and some in India, the Philippines, South Africa and Australia. It has become a hot topic among Jewish groups and I am being either cursed by them or given the benefit of the doubt pending further study on their part.

Dear John,

It has been a long time since V. (my wife) and I have been so excited to read newsletters, magazines, booklets, published by the many churches of God, offshoots of HWA's WCG, as the one you've been sending us, since September 2001. *The Berean Voice* -- we devour it, from cover to cover. Thank you!

We go back to the 1960s in our reading, to 1969 baptism for V., and 1979 baptism for me. I'll not bother you with the details, which for the past few months have also included WFD/TPM in our diet of printed and audio materials. We now are among the many scattered brethren of what I call "The Kitchen Table Church of God" (the two of us, alone at home, we are in our early 70s).

In the past 20+ years we've known 3,600 WCG brethren by face, 2000 by name, and have supped with 600 of them. So to be alone is somewhat aggravating to me. The command to assemble with your brethren cannot be

accommodated just now, even though all the large splinters have local congregations here in northwest Arkansas. I'm concerned about that.

I've downloaded all issues of *The Berean Voice* from January 2000, except the Sep-Oct 2000 issue was not available on either of your websites. If you have hardcopy, please send it to me, or email me the bv5.pdf file. Thank you!

I've also downloaded the first group of Bible Correspondence courses and the test and answer sheet. That is our next work.

The Rapture issue also aggravates me. Do you have any material specifically directed to that issue that you could send me? Thank you!

Here's my take on it for now, and if I am totally off the wall, I'd appreciate your correction. (My occupation was as a true systems analyst; everything I ever accomplished came out of the minds of my co-workers -- I simply knew how to do it, they didn't -- which is my way of saying I am easily corrected.)

This is "Rapture" speculation: Scientists have discovered a particle in our blood that is indestructible, even to atomic blast. In my opinion, everything is frequency, there is nothing that isn't frequency; every cell in our body has many particles that resonate to frequencies -- even prayer is frequency and has been measured both in the doing and in the results. Yeshua's voice is frequency (many frequencies). When he shouts "Come up here" the First fruit(s) will respond and take a round trip to the 3rd heaven, just as He, the first of the First fruit(s), did. Not all saints are First fruit(s). We are given Yehovah's Holy Spirit to grow in knowledge and understanding of His Word. Some are given the Spirit of Christ (Yeshua), Agape. Only the command "to love your neighbor as yourself" can be accomplished by the saints who have Agape. (John, I know you understand this because of what you have written lately re your own WCG history and later association with WFD and now on your own since 1999.) Yeshua was supposed to teach for seven years but was cut off midway. He still must teach those last three and one-half years. Those who are raptured will rule under Yeshua in the millennial Kingdom of God. (Many more resurrected saints will serve them in that government.) No amount of discipleship in any church of God will teach any of us what we need to know to rule even a

corporation, let alone a city or more. At least we develop right attitudes toward others, our brethren, and the folks across the street, our neighbors, with Agape.

D.B. (Arkansas)

COMMENT: I believe we sent you the missing Sep-Oct 2000 issue. If not let us know and we will get it to you. As soon as time allows, we will convert this issue into a .pdf file and place it on the websites.

Regarding the *Bible Correspondence Course*-- it is up for review and major changes in content and layout are taking place due to the exciting truth YEHOVAH God has led us into. As a result, many things in the old course are way off the mark. As soon as the new course is completed it will be posted on the websites.

Unfortunately, the "Secret Rapture" theory is completely bogus and was not even a consideration in the doctrines of Christianity until the 19th century. We are planning a comprehensive article on this subject sometime in the future. In the meantime, there are two articles on our websites that cover this issue to some degree. They can be found at our main website at: <http://hope-of-israel.org/p240.htm>
<http://hope-of-israel.org/rapture2.htm>

Sirs,

I'm Jewish and a believer in Messiah. I received a copy of your publication in June 2001. I scanned it and put it away for a few weeks because of the study I was involved in at the time. After reading your publication (that I have no idea how I got it), I was impressed and the comments and scripture understanding is very fundamental and very Hebraic. Can you please send me your publication on a regular basis. I received the May-June Issue. Can you catch me up and please send any other information that will be beneficial to me and my other Jewish brethren that have come to the knowledge of Yeshua HaMashiach. Thanks in advance.

Shalom,
D.M. (Texas)

P.S. 1. Please send me your Statement of Faith.

2. Is your foundation fundamental Judaism? (Not Talmudic)

3. I'm seeking a proper TaNakh and have decided on an Artscroll, Stone edition. How do you feel about the Artscroll? Which TaNakh do you suggest and how can an indigent inmate acquire a volume?

4. Send me any information on the resurrection of Ez. 37.

5. How do you feel about Rashi Ramban?

Thanks.

COMMENT: We do not have a "Statement of Faith" as such because YEHOVAH God is leading us into more and more truth that would invalidate any "Statement of Faith" we may have come up with in the past!

Our foundation is YEHOVAH's Word, the Bible -- both Old and New Testaments. You could say that our foundation is fundamental Judaism in that we clearly see that the Sabbath and Holy Days are to be observed -- and not the pagan holidays of so-called Christianity. However, we do not subscribe to all the baggage and "traditions of the elders" that is a part of Judaism.

I am not familiar with the Artscroll/Stone edition of the Tanakh. I use The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text as a part of my reference library. I refer to many other versions of the Bible in my research since most of them have their own errors or "quirks" and I don't like to be tied down to one particular translation.

Regarding Ramban or Maimonides, he is just another false rabbi or purveyor of Talmudic and Mishnaic rubbish that has become a part of Judaism as we know it today. Judaism, as practiced today by the Jews of the world, is a far cry from the truth YEHOVAH God placed in the Bible.

Dear Mr. Keyser, and fellows there working.

How much can I thank you for this latest *Berean Voice*? This is eye opening articles. I'm not through reading yet, as I must study it. But, it

occurred to me I have two good friends who were long time members of Worldwide, one now with the Mr. Meredith group, and the other with United.

So here's two addresses and may the great Yahweh open up their eyes to truth.

Enclosed a little for the postage, etc. It costs, I've been mailing them some things that I copied.

And may the great Father just keep on inspiring your people there, I pray that the whole world would learn truth.

Sincerely,
R.C.

Hello, and thank you for sending me *The Berean Voice*. After reading *Counting in the Hebrew Idiom* I still have a question. After all is said and done, is Saturday the Sabbath or not?

Thank you again,
N.T.

COMMENT: No, Saturday is not the Sabbath. However, the weekly Sabbath can fall on Saturday occasionally -- just like it can on any other day of the week in the present Gregorian calendar.

Shalom:

Your original article in the Jan/Feb 2000 *Berean Voice* re: Yahweh's Sabbath Day came from the "Your Arms to Israel" newsletter and I must confess I devoured it. Not only does it make so much intuitive sense, you have done a great job of laying it out from scripture. It truly has the ring of authenticity about it. I am surprised that it has taken this long to "make the rounds."

I then sent you an e-mail asking about a current calendar and subsequently, came across the article in your Nov/Dec 2001 re: The Calendar. I want to tell you that I did not know it is possible to be that excited and then crash on the rocks of new-age thinking all in the same day. There is plenty of reference in the Scriptures to the month of Abib being Yahweh's beginning of

months and an excellent understanding by the Karaites as to what Abib really means.

I am not a Karaite but I respect their willingness to keep the true biblical calendar and be our watchmen on the wall regarding these matters.

Rather than repeat, I have included a faq from their website that defines the pertinent scriptures and explanations for use in determining Abib as Yahweh's beginning of months.

Your use of the equinox and solstices does not work. It would be difficult to imagine that the Priests would use a celestial component when the agricultural components are available. It also is not correct to assume that there would be no grain in the "rest" years otherwise there would also not be a wave sheaf offering in those years.

The barley has been seen in an Abib state and the new year started at sundown on March 15 in Jerusalem. While Hillel II's calendar, "the Jewish calendar" is off by a day or two generally because it is based on the conjunction, it usually follows the months pretty closely because of their nineteen-year cycle.

My hope would be that we can promote the new-moon based Shabbats by following Yahweh's command to begin the new year in the month of Abib.

Keep up the great work.
With Love, in the name of Yahshua,
Y.

COMMENT: Dear Y., thank you for your message. Regarding the calendar some (including yourself, it seems) have believed, due to the fact that YEHOVAH's calendar highlights agricultural details, that the state of the barley harvest determines which new moon to start the year. You believe, it seems, that the barley has to be sufficiently in ear during the Feast of Unleavened Bread to be used for the omer of the wave sheaf offering.

However, we should note the fact that during the 40 years of Israel's wanderings in the wilderness that they did not sow or harvest crops because they were supernaturally fed by YEHOVAH God -- see Exodus 16:35. They, therefore, would not have used the criterion of the maturing barley to determine when the new year should begin. Even when they arrived in the land of Canaan

there were to be Sabbatical years when they didn't sow or reap crops. Not only that, but there can be as much as two months variation in the ripeness of barley from one region of Palestine to another due to altitude, climatic conditions, etc.

When Noah was in the ark, it is obvious he couldn't monitor the growth of any crops to figure out when the new moon began. Based on these (and other factors) it is safe to assume that the beginning of the year is determined by ASTRONOMICAL factors -- not agricultural ones. YEHOVAH makes that clear in Genesis 1:14 where He says that the sun and the moon determine days, months, festival and Sabbath times and years. In fact, what must determine the beginning of the year is the relationship between the sun and the moon in spring -- specifically the EQUINOX and the new moon that falls right after it.

The vernal (spring) equinox usually occurs on March 20th, and is the point at which the sun passes vertically over the equator. It returns to this point at the time of the autumn equinox around September 22nd. The Egyptians knew the exact times of the spring and autumn equinoxes and Moses was surely conversant with this knowledge. It is the combination of this knowledge -- of the time of the spring equinox and that of the new moon right after it -- which determines the beginning of YEHOVAH's year. We find reference to the vernal equinox in 2 Chronicles: "At the turn [tequphah] of the year..." (2 Chronicles 24:23). This same word *tequphah* is used in Exodus 34:22 in referring to the equinox at the time of the autumn Feast of Tabernacles: "Celebrate...the Feast of Ingathering at the turn [tequphah] of the year" (Ex. 34:22). The word *tequphah* only occurs 4 times in the Old Testament and refers to the completion of a cycle -- the cycle of the sun in the sky. That cycle is from one equinox to another.

Now we do not find any instruction in the Bible regarding the ripeness of the barley. The command in Leviticus merely says the "first grain" or "sheaf of first fruits." The Hebrew words mean the "first" or "principal" grain or fruit. The wording does not necessarily imply first-ripe at the time of the wave sheaf offering -- although the principal grain would naturally be the first to ripen in due course. But IT DOES NOT mean that it has to be ripe at the time of cutting it for the wave sheaf offering.

In Leviticus 2:14, we find that green[ish] ears of corn could be used, dried by the fire (KJV). The word "green" is #3418 in *Strong's*, "yereq" and means yellowish green. The same word is used in Gen. 1:30; 9:3; Ex. 10:15; Ps. 37:2; and Is. 15:6, where there is no reason for it to mean anything other than green, in context. Obviously, the eyes of corn are not totally ripe yet, but beginning to ripen.

This is corroborated in the account of the Exodus from Egypt, where in chapter 9:31 it mentions how the barley was irretrievably destroyed because it was already in "ear." The word used here is *abiyb* (*Strong's* #24) meaning "to be tender," "green." We can see, therefore, that the maturity of the first-fruits does not necessarily imply ripeness, although the heads of barley could be ripening.

There is a wide variation in the ripening of barley in Palestine -- more advanced growth was always seen in the crops in the plains of Jericho. Since barley generally ripens in April and is fully ripe in early May, if Israel had to rely upon a naturally ripe wave sheaf during the middle of Abib, they would have frequently kept the month several new moons past the spring equinox. Abib, then, would not have been the first month of the year to them.

Since the word for "month" -- *chodesh* -- has one meaning as "(new) moon," it also very strongly implies the WHOLE month. This can be seen by examining its use in Gen. 29:14; 8:4 and Ex. 12:3. It is THE WHOLE MONTH of Abib which is the beginning -- not just the new moon. Therefore the entire month should be in the spring -- AFTER the equinox.

I want to thank you for all the good literature that you have sent me. I've just now finished the study of that, and have sent notes to my sister in Ohio, she has macular degeneration and therefore it is a little difficult for her to read the print. I type huge letters for her on the computer, or she could use tapes. Do you have tapes...

R.C.

COMMENT: I'm sorry -- we do not have tapes at this time. Hopefully in the future.

Is *Judaism* the Religion of Moses?

At last we come to that shocking period in Jewish history when "Judaism" commenced. Here is how Greek tradition replaced the Law of Moses in the third century before Jesus' birth.

by Ernest Martin
Part Six

THE ONE hundred years following Ezra and Nehemiah can properly be described as a time of peace and prosperity for the Jews (Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. i, pp. 406, 407). The Jews had established themselves firmly in Palestine-- in every section of the province of Judaea. They were observing the Law of Moses in its entirety. It was the constitutional law of the land.

The Great Assembly, established by Ezra and Nehemiah, was the head of Jewish state under the Persian governor. This great religious assembly of priests directed the people in observing the Laws of Scripture. The priests saw that the people had proper religious instruction every Sabbath in the local synagogues scattered throughout the land. The children were educated in the elementary schools that were attached to the synagogues.

As long as the Jews were under the authority of the Persian Empire, they were allowed to carry on their own religious customs without interference. The Persians seemed to care little how the Jews worshipped God as long as the tax was being paid and a respectable amount of loyalty was being shown to the governor and king. The Jews were disposed to keep the good graces of the Persians by submitting to their benevolent rulership.

The extraordinary goodwill that the Persians had for the Jews came to a sudden end in 332 B.C. At that time, Palestine -- a part of the Persian Empire -- was conquered by a rising young Empire in the West-- the Empire of the Greeks!

Alexander the Great

Beyond the western frontier of the Persian Empire, while the Jews were enjoying their peaceful existence in Palestine, a young general was preparing an army for the conquest of Persia and the East. In 334 B.C., after amassing an army of considerable strength, Alexander the Great swept over the Hellespont and into Persian territory.

Moving with such rapidity, and with such remarkable successes, Alexander the Great in 10 short years conquered the Persian Empire and all of civilized Asia to the Indus River, as well as Egypt on the south. The Jews, because of this, came under the domination of the Greeks.

A New Way of Life -- Hellenism

With the coming of the Greeks, a whole new manner of life was brought into Palestine and among the Jews. Under the Persians, the Jews had been allowed to observe the Law of Moses with the Great Assembly (the Sopherim) as their religious leaders. But this was all changed with the advent of the Greeks.

Alexander the Great was steeped in the belief that the Greek way of life was the only suitable one for mankind to follow. He was imbued with the enthusiasm of infusing the culture and society of the Greeks among all the nations he had conquered. And Palestine was no exception.

"Hellenism" is the term to describe the belief in practicing the manner of life of the Greeks -- to imitate every phase of Greek society, its politics, domestic life, philosophies, religions, etc.

The basic philosophy behind Hellenism was this: EVERY MAN HAD THE RIGHT TO THINK FOR HIMSELF ON ANY MATTER AS LONG AS THERE WAS NOT A REAL DEPARTURE FROM THE CUSTOMS THAT WERE ESSENTIALLY GREEK.

This philosophy -- freedom of thought or individualism -- which is seemingly altruistic in principle, resulted in myriads of confusing and contradictory beliefs among the Greeks in every phase of life. Every man was allowed his own ideas about the sciences, the arts, laws AND ABOUT RELIGION. So varied were the opinions among the Greek scholars in the various fields of study that individuals took pride in contending with one another over who could present the greatest "wisdom" and "knowledge" on any particular subject.

The Greeks sought wisdom in order to understand the world they lived in and the reasons for life. And their confusion of beliefs resulted from the fact that their ideas came from their own rationalizing -- their philosophies represented almost EVERY HUMAN IDEA.

Here was the beginning of the philosophy of individualism -- a product of Hellenism. When the Greeks came to Palestine they brought all their conflicting secular teachings as well as their many religious doctrines, all of which were prompted by the individual philosophies of men.

It would be unfeasible to even attempt an adequate description of the manifold religious cults among the Greeks, or of their heathenistic doctrines. Their various

religions and religious beliefs were the man-made products of the philosophy of individualism. Practically every religious belief capable of being devised by the human mind was found in pagan Greece. In their religious beliefs "we find ghosts and spirits and nature gods, tribal religions, anthropomorphisms [gods in human form], the formation of a pantheon [a temple for the worship of many pagan gods], individual religion, magical rites, purifications, prayers, sacrifices [animal, vegetable and human]-- ALL ARISING FROM THE COMMON STOCK AND THE SUCCESSIVE PHASES OF RELIGIOUS HUMANITY" (Harrison, "Religion of Ancient Greece," pp. 12, 13). Many of their doctrines and customs will be relevantly discussed in future pages of this thesis.

Hellenism Spread Throughout Alexander's Empire

Wherever Alexander or his successors went, they carried with them an intense desire to Hellenize all nations. They took with them Greek society and imposed it upon all their captive peoples. They spread Hellenism from one end of the new Empire to the other. Palestine was as much infused with the New Greek culture as any other nation.

The Greeks considered it their right to govern in the way they deemed most suitable. In consequence of this, the Greeks disbanded the official Sopherim, the religious guardians of the Law of Moses. They would not tolerate the Jews being taught a different way of life from their own. Hellenism was established throughout the whole of Palestine.

Sopherim No Longer in Authority

It is not known how the Greeks dismissed the Sopherim from their official capacity as teachers of the Law. But within a score of years after the coming of the Greeks, the Sopherim disappear from history as an organized body having religious control over the Jews. It is obvious that the Greeks took away the authority of the Sopherim and forbade them to teach. Whether this was done forcibly or by peaceful methods remains a mystery. But it is definitely known that their authority was very soon taken away.

Without the religious guidance of the Sopherim, many of the Jews began to imbibe the customs and ideas of the Greeks which were inundating the land. The Greeks were establishing their whole society firmly in Palestine and all the Empire.

"With the change from Persian to Greek rule, Hellenism made its influence felt AND CAME POURING LIKE A FLOOD into a country which had known nothing of it. THERE WAS NO ESCAPE FROM ITS INFLUENCE. IT WAS PRESENT EVERYWHERE, in the street and the market, in the everyday life and ALL THE PHASES OF SOCIAL INTERCOURSE" (Herford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p. 77).

When the Sopherim were removed from the scene, along with the teaching of the Law of Moses, and this new culture substituted for the Law, we can comprehend why the

Jews began to absorb many elements of Hellenism. The Jews had no one to guide them in understanding the Law of Moses, except a few isolated teachers here and there who had no authority as the Sopherim.

It will soon be shown that after a few years of this influence, the people literally came to a state of religious confusion. Some were endeavoring to keep a form of the Scripture teachings, but with Hellenism everywhere, it became almost impossible to keep the true form of the Law of Moses. The Greek way of life was entirely different from that promulgated by the Scriptures, and the two were not compatible.

The human opinions of the Greek poets and philosophers, as well as the doctrines of the various heathen sects of the Greeks, were propagated among the Jews. Almost everything the Greeks brought to the Jews was antagonistic to the Laws of God and, without the religious guidance of the Sopherim, many of them began to tolerate these innovations and even, as time progressed, to take up many of the Greek ideas and customs themselves.

Alexander Recalls a Vision

Josephus, the Jewish historian, records an interesting incident concerning Alexander the Great when he had conquered the Palestine area and was about to enter the city of Jerusalem. He was met on the outskirts of the city by Jaddua, the High Priest, with many inhabitants of Jerusalem. The High Priest was bedecked in his priestly robes and leading the procession of people who met Alexander.

Upon seeing the High Priest and the procession following him, Josephus says that Alexander recalled a dream he had had previously in which such a procession was seen with a person dressed in exactly the same attire of the High Priest leading it. Alexander reckoned that his dream was a sign to leave the inhabitants of Jerusalem alone. He entered the city peaceably with the High Priest and offered a sacrifice to God. Afterward, he was shown the prophecy of Daniel 11:2-3, which revealed that a mighty king from Greece would conquer the Persian Empire. Josephus says that Alexander recognized that Daniel was writing of him. After reading this prophecy, Alexander became very glad and gave favors and gifts to many of the Jews. See *Antiquities of the Jews*, xi, 8, 5 & 6.

The prophecy of Daniel had more to say of Alexander and his Empire. In Daniel 11:4 we read: "And when he [Alexander] shall stand up [be in his power], his kingdom SHALL BE BROKEN, AND SHALL BE DIVIDED TOWARDS THE FOUR WIND OF heaven ..." This is exactly what happened! Upon the death of Alexander, his Empire was divided into FOUR SECTIONS. Each section was headed by one of Alexander's former generals: Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus and Ptolemy.

The Palestine area fell to the Grecian Ptolemy of Egypt. However, the Seleucid kingdom on the north also laid claim to Palestine and had loyal troops stationed within

the area. Neither kingdom was willing to concede that the other was the sole ruler of this territory.

In order to firmly secure Palestine to himself, Ptolemy of Egypt in 320 B.C. attacked the Seleucid garrisons stationed in it and conquered the country. However, the Seleucids took it back in 315 B.C. But again, the Battle of Gaza in 312 B.C. gave Palestine back to Ptolemy. There were many more skirmishes between these two kingdoms until the year 301 B.C. At that time, the Greek government of Egypt took final control of Palestine and maintained that control for a little over one hundred years-- until 198 B.C.

Life Under Greek-Egyptian Control

This one hundred year period of Greek-Egyptian domination is very important as a period in the religious history of the Jews. This is the period that great and significant changes took place in the religious life of the Jews.

While in this period of Egyptian control, the effects of Hellenism upon the Jews were extremely great. What had been started by Alexander the Great was brought to its greatest degree of perfection among the Jews during this one-hundred-year period. The customs and traditions that had been handed down by the Sopherim were completely overshadowed by the Hellenistic culture of the Greeks as promulgated by the Egyptians. In plain language, the Jews during this period of Egyptian control, by the sheer force of environment and circumstance, surrendered themselves to Hellenistic ideas and ways of life.

"During the comparatively quiet rule of the Ptolemies [the Egyptians], Greek ideas, customs, and morality HAD BEEN MAKING PEACEFUL CONQUESTS IN PALESTINE. Their own inherent attractiveness, and the fact that they were supported by the authority of the dominant race, cast a glamour about them [the Jews] which made the severe religion of Jehovah [to Hellenistic minds], the simple customs and the strict morality of the Jews, seem barren and provincial. All the other peoples of Palestine Hellenistic Greek was the language of commerce and polite society. Greek literature was widely studied. Greek manners were the standard throughout southeastern Palestine" (Kent, *History of the Jewish People*, pp. 320, 321).

Everyone in Palestine was affected by the new Hellenistic culture. The Ptolemies of Egypt were anxious, following the example of Alexander the Great, to see that manners of the Greeks were implanted throughout their Empire. All phases of life connected with Hellenism were being practiced in Palestine during this period.

"It is safe to say that NO ONE, HIGH OR LOW, who was living in Judea in the period which includes the whole of the third and the beginning of the second century B.C., WHOLLY ESCAPED THE INFLUENCE OF HELLENISM ..." (Herford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p. 77).

Egyptian Rule Comes to an End

In 198 B.C., the Seleucid Kingdom on the north again came into Palestine and drove out the Egyptians.

The rulers of THIS kingdom were equally Hellenistic in their beliefs as were the Egyptians. However, the new ruler expected the Jews to follow their ways -- and only their ways -- of interpreting Hellenism. Only the Hellenism that supported the aims and customs of the Seleucids was allowed to exist.

Many of the Jews, after a century of Hellenistic influence, accepted his new enforcement of Seleucid Hellenism. About the only difference between the Egyptian Hellenism and that of the Seleucids was in the national aspect. The Seleucids demanded loyalty to THEIR rule and THEIR customs. The whole Hellenistic system was as much in effect among the Seleucids as with the Egyptians. In fact, if anything, the Seleucids were stronger in their Hellenistic convictions.

"A passion for Greek costumes, Greek customs, and Greek names SEIZED THE PEOPLE. Large numbers were enrolled as citizens of Antioch [the capital of the Seleucid Kingdom]. Many even endeavored to conceal the fact that they had been circumcised. To the horror of the faithful, HELLENISM SEEMED TO BE CARRYING ALL BEFORE IT ... To demonstrate that he had LEFT ALL THE TRADITIONS OF HIS RACE BEHIND, Jason [the High Priest himself] sent a rich present for sacrifices in connection with the great festival at Tyre IN HONOR OF THE GOD HERCULES" (Kent, *History of the Jewish People*, pp. 324-325).

It is remarkable the extent of the paganism that the Jews were observing at this time. So strong did Hellenistic beliefs become, that the High Priest himself was offering sacrifices to pagan gods. Because of this a reaction began to take place among some of the Jews. Some of them could not bring themselves to go as far as the High priest. However, the vast majority had fallen under the sway of the Hellenism of the Seleucids as they had under the Egyptians.

The Prophecy of Daniel

The eleventh chapter of Daniel is the longest single prophecy in the whole Bible. It deals with events from the time of Daniel to centuries into the future of his time. The prophet Daniel in this long prophecy foretold that the Persian Empire was to fall. It was to be conquered by a mighty king from Greece (v. 3). That king was Alexander the Great. In the height of his glory he was to die (which Alexander did in the thirtythird year of his life) and his kingdom was to be divided into FOUR divisions (verse 4).

This happened exactly as foretold.

The prophecy continues the foretelling of Palestinian history by revealing in verse 5 that two of these four kingdoms would be fighting over Palestine for many years.

Daniel calls the respective kingdoms, "the king of the south" and "the king of the north." These two kingdoms were specifically the Egyptian kingdom (Ptolemies) on the south, and the Seleucid kingdom, on the north. This prophecy shows, over 300 years in advance, the exact political conditions in Palestine during our period of discussion. History proves that this prophecy gave the precise state of affairs that did exist.

Daniel did not stop in verse 20, however, concerning the political situations in Palestine. In verse 21 Daniel speaks about a "vile person" who was to arise in the kingdom of the north -- the Seleucid kingdom. This person was to be most wicked and was to cause many terrible indignities to the Jews. Verses 21 through 39 describe the activities of this man. And, the prophecies concerning him were fulfilled to the letter. This king of the north -- the vile person -- was Antiochus Epiphanes.

Antiochus Epiphanes Appoints Jewish High Priest

In the year 175 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes obtained the throne of the Seleucid kingdom, and thereby assumed control of Palestine.

When Antiochus took over the Seleucid kingdom there was a reaction between several of the priests in Jerusalem who were contending for the position of High Priest among the Jews. Jason, the brother of the reigning High Priest, persuaded Antiochus Epiphanes to permit him to be High Priest in his brother's stead. Because of the large sum of money he offered for the honor, Antiochus transferred the priesthood to Jason. The position of High Priest had dwindled to more of an aristocratic political honor. There was little regard paid to the Law of God by these High Priests. Most of them were outright Hellenists. See *Cyc. Bib. Theo. and Ecc. hist.* vol. i, p. 271.

About three years later, however, a Jew, Menelaus, of the tribe of Benjamin (not from Aaron), offered Antiochus Epiphanes a larger bribe than Jason, and he was named High Priest instead. Because of this, Jason fled beyond Jordan to the Ammonites for refuge.

Many of the Jews thought that Jason had been unjustly deprived of his priesthood. A good number of the Jews in Palestine began to take sides-- between these two men -- some were for Jason and others for Menelaus. So hot did tempers become between these factions that a good deal of violence broke out between them. Actually, those on the side of Jason were fighting in rebellion against the recognized authority that Antiochus Epiphanes had set up. The High Priest, Menelaus, had been given his position by the Seleucid government -- even though Menelaus had bribed Antiochus into giving it to him -- and fighting against this authority constituted fighting against the dictates of the Seleucid Kingdom. See *Antiquities of the Jews*, xii, 5, 1-5.

The Jewish War for Independence

The Jewish war for independence from the Seleucid Kingdom has often been called the Maccabean Revolt. Some people have hastily assumed that this revolt was

begun because the religious Jews wanted to rid Palestine of the pagan influences that had been in the land for one hundred fifty years or more. However, such was not the case. The Jews, on the whole, had accepted Hellenism to a major degree, as had all the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region. It was not the desire to eradicate Hellenism from Palestine that prompted the Maccabean Revolt, surprising as that may seem.

The one rebellion which had been recorded in history as directed against Hellenism, that of the Maccabees in Judea WAS NOT, in its origin, A REACTION AGAINST HELLENISM. From the contemporary or almost contemporary accounts in I and II Maccabees it is clear that HELLENISM HAD PROCEEDED FAR INDEED, AND APPARENTLY WITHOUT PROTEST, before the insurrection began. VIOLENCE STARTED in consequence of rivalry between equally hellenized contenders for the high priesthood, AND RELIGION WAS NOT AN ISSUE (Hadas, *Hellenistic Culture*, p. 43).

The revolt began when fighting broke out between the Jews on the side of Jason, the deposed High Priest, and those on the side of Menelaus, the High Priest appointed by Antiochus Epiphanes. It infuriated Antiochus that many of the Jews began to take sides against his appointed official -- in fact, against the government! When a good number of the Jews gathered to the side of Jason, the real reason for the revolt, the desire for independence from the Seleucid yoke, began to be voiced. Religion did not enter in the controversy at first, for Jason was as Hellenistic in his beliefs as Menelaus. The insurrection began as a POLITICAL REVOLT for independence from the Seleucid Kingdom.

The Maccabean uprising, at least in its initial stages, WAS NOT AGAINST HELLENISM BUT FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE (Goodspeed, *The Apocrypha*, p. xiv).

Religion Becomes A Factor

However, religion was later brought into the matter. In order to get the whole of the Jews in a revolt against the Seleucids, the dissenters began to point to the heathenistic beliefs of the Seleucids and of Menelaus the High Priest, claiming that such things were anti-Jewish. Thus, the rebels brought religion into the issue, which they reasoned would serve as a mark of distinction between the Jews and the Seleucids. So, in various quarters the cries went up that the government was proclaiming policies that were fundamentally anti-Jewish -- especially to the religious customs of their forefathers.

In 168 B.C., Antiochus Epiphanes, while endeavoring by war to take over the Egyptian government, was forced by the Romans, after a humiliating experience, to withdraw from Egypt and to forget his plans of conquering that country. On his way back to Antioch, his capital to the north of Palestine, he determined to put an end to the rebellion that was beginning in Judaea.

Because the issue of religion had been brought up in the insurrection, and because many of the rebels were proclaiming that their struggle was for religious freedom, Antiochus Epiphanes in a maddened frenzy, determined to obliterate any vestiges of the religious customs of the Jews! He boldly repudiated God and entered the Temple in Jerusalem and dedicated it to the pagan god Jupiter. He set up an idol which he called the "lord of heaven." He also offered swine's flesh on the Holy Altar and polluted the Temple with all the indecencies he could perpetrate. He even turned the Temple into a center of prostitution.

Notice some of the things commanded by Antiochus Epiphanes in his desire to exterminate any semblance of the commands of God. We find that many innocent Jews who had no thoughts of rebellion suffered many indignities as well as the guilty.

By royal decree, the observance of the SABBATH or of the SACRED FEASTS, and practicing the rite of circumcision, WERE ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN UNDER PENALTY OF DEATH. ALL COPIES OF THE LAW WERE DESTROYED. Heathen altars and temples were erected throughout Judaea, and every Jew was compelled in public to sacrifice to idols, swine's flesh or that of some other unclean beast, AND TO PRESENT CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE THAT HE HAD CEASED TO OBSERVE THE LAWS OF HIS FATHERS (Kent, *History of the Jewish People*, pp. 328, 329).

All women who had their sons circumcised were publicly marched around the city of Jerusalem and then thrown from the high walls to their death. One group of people who fled to a cave near Jerusalem in order to keep the Sabbath service were surprised and committed to the flames. Such things were everyday occurrences against the Jews who failed to abide by the decrees of Antiochus Epiphanes. (Margolis, *History of the Jewish People*, pp. 137, 138).

Judas Maccabeus

Because of the outrages of Antiochus Epiphanes, many of the Jews became more than ever desirous of independence from the rule of the tyrant. Among them was Judas Maccabeus and his four brothers. They abhorred the actions of this crated ruler from the north, and not desiring to put up with the abuses that were being done to the Jews, they fled for refuge to the mountains of Judaea. While there, they gathered together many more of the dissenting Jews and formed an army. Their vow was to exterminate the foreigners from Judaea.

After a series of successful skirmishes, these men gathered more and more Jews to their cause. Surprisingly, in three short years (by 165 B.C.) they had defeated the Seleucids to such an extent that, for all practical purposes, their desire for an independent autonomous Jewish state was realized. The Maccabees became the leaders of this new state.

Why the Maccabean Revolt?

It should be remembered that this revolt of the Jews was not at first a matter of religion. The main reason for the insurrection was to establish an independent Jewish state.

The Maccabean uprising, at least in its initial stages, was not against Hellenism BUT RATHER FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. And when independence, real or nominal, was secured, the object of the Maccabean principality was to hold its head up among other principalities that had arisen out of the ruins of the Seleucid Empire; there was NOTHING LIKE AN ANTIGREEK PROGRAM (Goodspeed, *The Apocrypha*, pp, xiv, xv).

The majority of Jews had not been anxious to depart from their Hellenism. What they wanted primarily was their freedom from the foreign yoke. The matter of religion was really invoked to get the people united in one common cause-- to drive the foreigner from Judaea. There was no real desire among the multitudes to get back to the Law of God. And religion only became a major issue when Antiochus Epiphanes voiced his anti-religious decrees.

The Jewish historian, Moses Hadas, adequately describes the situation during the Maccabean Revolt.

The standard of religion was raised in the countryside, and then served to rally the people to the cause. It was only after religion had become the battle cry of the rebels that Antiochus IV [Epiphanes] issued his decrees against the observance of central religious rites, and it is highly significant that as soon as the anti-religious decrees were rescinded the pietest group [the religious people] withdrew from the fighting. The object of the Hasmonaean [Maccabean] rulers WAS NOT TO PROTECT RELIGION ... but to maintain a sovereignty ... among others which were being carved out of the weakened Seleucid empire" (*Hellenistic Culture*, p. 43).

After independence was realized, the Hellenistic element still remained among the Jews. They had been so wedded to its influence for so long that it was an impossibility to remove that influence from them. We will read more of this next time!

Upcoming Articles...

Colossians 1:15-20

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Jehad and Paradise

Islam is one faith, which has divided humanity into two permanently warring factions: those who believe in Allah and Muhammad, are the God's Party, and those who do not, are the Devil's Party. The former have the most sacred duty to eliminate and subdue the latter. So urgent is this purpose that Islam not only encourages its followers to murder, plunder and seduce the women of the "infidels" but also projects such murder, plunder and seduction as the greatest virtues. Islam calls it "Jehad," which guarantees the Mujahid (holy warrior) salvation, i.e. a seat in Paradise.

by Anwar Shaikh
Part Three

The Battle of Tours

The Battle of Tours (also known as the Battle of Poitiers) is considered as one of the most important episodes of history. Before discussing its ramifications, one ought to probe into the causes that precipitated the bloody event in 732 A.D.

Its major cause is Jehad, a clever contrivance of Islam, whose stated purpose is to establish on man the rule of Allah, "the Almighty, the Creator and the Perfect."

In fact, this device has been invented as a pretext to destroy all those who do not believe in Allah and Muhammad. More accurately, this is a stratagem for setting up Muhammad as the holiest of holies because a person such as a Jew, a Christian or a deist is treated as an infidel despite being an adherent of God. This fact reveals the true color of this doctrine. When looked at carefully, it transpires that *Jehad* is an insult to God, who is depicted as "the Almighty, the Creator and the Perfect." Thus, being Absolute, He needs no help from anyone to install Him as the Supreme, but the device projects God as dependent on man for establishing His glory; it is blasphemous by its very nature. If "God, the Creator" really wanted to be believed in, and worshipped by man, He would have created him as His "Obedient Servant".

The *Jehad* that disgraces the dignity of God and acts as the most heinous tool of destruction against innocent and the helpless, cannot be a holy principle.

Since *Jehad* is anti-divine by its nature, it has got to be the tool of Prophethood, which enables a man (the Prophet) to pursue his personal interests in Divine clothing. The doctrine of Prophethood, in fact, is the apex of dominance-urge, which goads a person to seek maximum power through force, frivolity and feigning. *Jehad* uses all these

methods to secure personal supremacy of Muhammad because it legitimizes violence by inspiring belief in the myth of paradise and encourages deception to win battles.

The Prophet Muhammad was an orphan without any paternal inheritance, yet he rose to be the ruler of Arabia and founder of the Arab Empire. It shows the magnitude of his dominance-urge, which he executed masterfully:

He prepared a plan of personal power and holiness in which God (Allah) acts as his factotum. Islam insists that:

- 1/. To be a believer, the confession of Muhammad's Prophethood is the most essential element of faith because belief in Allah alone counts for nothing. Thus a Jew, a Christian or a deist is an infidel, and shall go to hell.
- 2/. A person is not Muslim unless he treats the Prophet as the Model of Behavior and imitates Muhammad's way of life in all details. As he was an Arab, his non-Arab follower has to live as a cultural satellite of Arabia.

This is the reason that the Prophet bestowed very high reverence on his motherland and its institutions. For example, a Muslim, no matter where he comes from, is obliged to prostrate, at least five times a day toward Mecca, Muhammad's birthplace; he must not defecate facing this City; even after death, his body must be buried facing Mecca to qualify for Divine mercy.

The net result of this Arab-worship is that the non-Arab Muslims, especially from India and Africa, have more reverence for Arabia and less for their own countries. This is the attitude that has made them (non-Arab Muslims) the spiritual slaves of Muhammad's motherland at the expense of their own.

This is what makes Islam a complex plan of Arab Imperialism, although packed in an alluring box of internationalism. Stated simply, it means that higher the stature of a nation, the greater the prestige of its leader and cultural institutions. Again, greatness is achieved by might and not meekness irrespective of how moral, mellifluous or mesmerizing it may look. Only a mighty nation is the fountain of mirth, majesty and marvel. Thus, for making the Arabs a powerful nation, the Prophet turned them into a fighting force by prescribing Imperialism as the goal of their existence and appointed JEHAD as the fundamental doctrine for achieving it.

This statement is not based on fantasy but hadiths i.e., the sayings of the Prophet, which actually gladdened, guided and goaded the Arabs to stake their lives in bloody battles to secure secular ascendancy and paradisiac hopes. See the truth for yourself:

- 1/. About the Jews, the Prophet said: "The Hour will not be established until you (the Arabs) fight with the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say 'O Muslim! there is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him.'"

2/. About the Turks, the Prophet said: "One of the portents of the Hour is that you will fight with people wearing shoes made of hair; and one of the portents of the Hour is that you will fight with broad faced people whose face will look like shields coated with leather." (*Shih Al-Bookmark*, Vol. IV: 178)

Again, the Prophet said about the Turks: "The hour will not be established until you fight with the Turks; people with small eyes, red faces, and flat noses. Their faces will look like shields coated with leather. The Hour will not be established till you fight with people whose shoes are made of hair." (*Sahih Al-Bokhari*, Vol. IV: 179)

3/. About Khosrau (Iran) and Caesar (Constantinople), the Prophet said: "Khosrau will be ruined, and there will be no Khosrau after him, and Caesar will surely be ruined and there will be no Caesar after him and you (the Arabs) will spend their treasures in Allah's cause." He said, "War is deceit." (*Sahih Al-Bokhari*, Vol. IV: 267)

Before I explain these hadiths, I ought to add that the Prophet Muhammad was not only a preacher but also a warrior. A hadith states that, when the Battle of Badr took place: "The Prophet was clad in his armor at that time. He went out saying to me (the narrator, Ibn Abbas): their multitude will be put to flight and they will show their backs. Nay but the Hour is their appointed time (for their full recompense) and the Hour will be more bitter than their worldly failure." (*Sahih Al-Bokhari*, Vol.IV: 164)

1/. The Prophet was a warrior because he participated in battles wearing armor.

2/. He actually led his armies with the sole purpose of winning battles because he believed that "war is deceit", and therefore he might resort to any tactic, which would produce the desired result. Yet he called himself the "Mercy of Allah to entire mankind," which ought to include unbelievers as well, but it does not. On the contrary, it seeks their annihilation.

3/. To make his people most zealous warriors, he not only trained them militarily but also brainwashed them with the doctrine of Jihad, which preached destruction of unbelievers in the name of Allah as the greatest virtue against all principles of morality. Its purpose was to make his followers indifferent to the appeal of conscience.

From the hadiths quoted above, it is evident that the Prophet had a keen desire to create an Arab Empire. So he expressed it as the will of God that the Arabs must build a huge empire to gain the pleasure of Allah. What a shrewd plan of Imperialism it was! To give it the Divine authority, he stated as a predestined fact that the Hour would not come until the Arab had smashed up the Jews and the Turks as well as the Iranian and Roman (Byzantinian) Empires. This is exactly what happened, enabling the Arabs to set up within twenty years of the Prophet's death an empire, which was larger than the Roman Empire that had required centuries to build.

The Prophet's imperial designs, of course, extended to both the East and the West, but as I am about to describe the Battle of Tours, it is desirable to concentrate on the Arabian thrust toward Europe.

Every invader, irrespective of his religion, is a predator, and his acts of brutality rank highly immoral, and thus pave his way toward hell but it is quite different in the case of a Muslim: his savagery is counted as an act of propriety, purity and probity by Allah, who guarantees to wipe off all the sins of a Muslim warrior (Mujahid): it is this strange Divine approval, which enables him to enter paradise inhabited by most beautiful virgins and boys.

Broadly speaking, a hadith (saying) of the Prophet Muhammad is a command to a Muslim. As we have seen, the already quoted hadiths clearly advocate decimation of the Jews, the Iranians, the Turks and the Romans. The Iranians were one of the first victims of Islam, and despite freeing themselves from the political hegemony of the Arabs, they carry the cultural and spiritual yoke of Arabia even in modern times

To implement the message of the hadith that command subjugation of the Turks, Qutaybah, in 715 eventually conquered Kashghar (Chinese Turkestan) and is supposed to have even reached China proper. However, tradition bestows this honor on Nasr bin Sayyar, who between 738 and 740 reconquered these territories. In fact, the Apostolic mission was completed in 751 when the Arabs occupied al-Shash (Tashkand), and thus completed their supremacy in Central Asia. The Mongoloid people of these areas had adopted Buddhism, and Buddhist monasteries had sprung up in Bokhara, Bulkh and Samarkand. Since Islam is the only true religion of Allah, (according to the Arabian philosophy), they destroyed all vestiges of the Buddhist worshipcenters to perpetuate their own creed for eternity.

However, the hadith requiring destruction of Constantinople must be interpreted in the context of the whole of Christianity because this City was the political Capital of this faith. Thus it is necessary to refer to the events that led to the Battle of Tours:

The first Arabian civil war, which ended with the assassination of All, brought Muawiyah to power. He was not only a tough soldier and a tactful politician but also a shrewd ruler. Realizing the delicate state of his domestic affairs, he resorted to political expediency, and through the truce of 658 agreed to pay an annual tribute to the Emperor Constance II. However, Muawiyah, a zealous Muslim, could not ignore the hadith commanding conquest of Constantinople. Thus the truce meant no more than a stratagem. As the circumstances changed, he started hostilities against Caesar. Twice did his armies reach the capital of Christendom but without achieving the desired goal i.e. its capitulation, which had to wait until the arrival of the Ottoman Turks, centuries later. However, the Arab raids were not for fun; they assumed the form of razzias i.e., predatory raids, which were regularly conducted every summer according to the precedent set by the Prophet for his followers.

These incursions were fierce, fanatic and fatalistic. As early as A.H. 34(655), a fleet of Muawiyah scored victory over the navy led by the Emperor Constance II. This engagement which took place at Phoenix (modern Pinike) on the Lycian coast, is considered the first great naval success of Islam. This event is known as Dhu-al-Sawari in the Arab chronicles.

A Muslim reader may face a sudden volley of puzzlement to realize that the military campaign of A.H. 49 (669), which actually succeeded in reaching the high triple wall of Constantinople, was led by Munwiyah's son, Yazid, the crown prince, who stands so maligned in the world of Islam for killing Hussain (the grandson of Muhammad) and his family-members that even Devil envies him in notoriety.

Yet he was the commander of the faithful, who obeyed his orders enthusiastically in search of booty through menace, murder and mutilation. One wonders, how Allah will open the doors of paradise for the crusaders under the direction of Yazid!

May be I should also add that Yazid fought with such a fervor, fortitude and ferocity that he earned the title of "Fateh-al-Arab" (Hero of the Arabs). An attempt to conquer the Byzantine capital was itself an act of extraordinary courage. As his sword flashed, pushing the Christians backward, the battlefield rang with the slogans of "Allah-O--Akbar" and "Fateh-Al-Arab"; equally, his opponents showered similar praises on their own commander when he demonstrated his dare, defiance and dragonism inflicting devastation on the Arab invaders. According to the purifying merits of Jihad, Yazid was a Mujahid (holy soldier of Islam) dedicated to establishing its splendor, superiority and supremacy through the process of pillage, plunder and perdition.

In the campaign was also legendary hero Ayub al-Ansari, once the standard bearer of the Prophet. He was one of the few faithful, who had heard the Prophet predict fall of Caesar at the hands of the Arabs. His repeated recital of the hadith filled his fellow crusaders with an unusual zeal to humiliate the infidels by gathering maximum booty from them. Many were impelled to earn martyrdom, which is the guarantee of the greater prize of paradise that puts to shame the reward of pillage. Abu Ayub, a Companion of the Prophet, whose presence stamped Yazid's contingent with sanctity and honor, died as a valiant crusader during the siege of Constantinople. So sacred was the spot of his burial that it became a shrine even for the Christian Greeks, who traveled long distances to pray for rains and obtain celestial blessings. Centuries later, when in 1453, the Turks laid siege to Constantinople, some soldiers discovered the morning sun shower its rays on a tomb with uncommon profusion. It could not be the burial place of anyone but Abu Ayub. Since this discovery ranked as a miracle, a mosque was built on the site to honor his holiness; thus it rose to become the shrine of three nations-- the Arabs, the Greeks and the Turks.

Since Abu Ayub had participated in the battles of Badr and Uhud in the company of the Prophet, his tomb was to serve as a heavenly inspiration for the Turks to carry out their military campaigns in the east and west for establishing a Turkish Empire to please Allah. May be they experienced similar moods of piety in relation to their European

subjects as the Europeans did when, centuries later, they carried 'White man's Burden' in their Asian colonies: a wolf is proud of any pretense to maim, murder and mutilate, no matter how paltry, puerile and precarious it may be.

The mosque of Abu Ayub became the proud and pious choice of the Turkish sultans for holding "martial inaugurations" which carried divine succor for crumbling, humbling and jumbling the non-Muslims.

Since the campaign led by Yazid was attended by Abu Ayub, who had been a "friend and follower of All", glorifies it considerably, one is inclined to reconsider the status of Yazid, who was raiding the center of Christianity to uphold reverence of the Prophet's word. Though the campaign failed to execute the expectations of the hadith, it cleverly interpreted Constantinople as the entire Christendom, thus sowing the seeds of the Battle of Tours, which sought to threaten the followers of Jesus with perpetual humiliation.

Islam entered Europe via Africa when Musa Ibn Nusir came to hold the Arabian territories directly under the Caliph in Damascus. His father was one of the Christian captives, who had fallen in the hands of Khalid bin walid, the famous Arab general.

In Africa, the Arabs came in contact with another racial group, the Berbers, who once belonged to the Semitic stock. Though they had embraced Christianity, they were not Romanised, and mentally stood closer to their distant Arab cousins owing to their nomadic and semi-nomadic way of life. Their ethnic tendencies were aroused by the Islamic principle of *Jehad*, which promised rewards of wealth, women and wine through aggressive wars waged for "the glory of Allah"! They readily accepted Islam and became clients of their Arab masters. Their ferocity and fighting skills made a considerable contribution to the Arab Imperial expansion.

The conquest by Musa of the North African coast, as far as the Atlantic, prepared the way for the Arab advance into Europe. A freedman of Berber origin, called Tariq Ibn Ziyad, was appointed by Musa as his lieutenant. In 711, he crossed into Spain with an army of 7,000 men, mostly of Berber origin but had no commission to conquer Spain. It was purely a marauding expedition for seeking booty. He landed near a mount, which history immortalized after his name as the Jabal-Al-Tariq, later corrupted as Gibraltar.

On July 19, 711, when he met the armies of King Roderick at the mouth of the Barbate River, his forces had been supplemented to 12,000. Though Roderick had 25,000 soldiers at his command, their superiority of numbers was not good enough to compensate for their inferiority of spirit: he had deposed his predecessor, the son of Witiza, and thus, was looked upon as a usurper, having no legitimate authority to rule. In those days, it was a sin for a Christian to obey the laws of such monarchs. Again, robbing non-Muslims was an act of great piety for the followers of Islam. The Berber invaders dazed by the expectations of untold plunder, which also promised entry into paradise, in case of fiasco, were emboldened beyond measure and felt crazy for a battle. Defeat of the half-hearted Visigothic army was made sure by the political enemies of the King headed

by Bishop Oppas, a brother of Witiza. Nobody knows what happened to Roderick, who seems to have vanished into thin air.

The marauding expedition of Tariq succeeded in occupying half of Spain within one year. It glorified the name of Tariq, the freedman; he had achieved this historical brilliance with an army of Berbers who had begun to envy the Arabian splendor, superiority and supremacy. Jealousy of Musa, the Arab governor, was aroused by the phenomenal success of Tariq. He raised an army of 10,000 pure Arabs with a view to dimming the Berber's shine of arms and hurried to Spain in June 712. Here one can see an element of racial jealousy, which explodes the myth of Islamic brotherhood. It also demonstrates that the Arab military excursions had nothing to do with the glory of Allah: they were rooted in the lust of loot and imperialism, and Allah's name was used as a means to make the viciousness of misdeed and murders look as righteousness of pious and proud actions.

The true color of this campaign emerged with full intensity when Musa met Tariq in Toledo. Charging him with insubordination for not halting in the early stages of the expedition as ordered, he spanked and reviled Tariq publicly and then scourged him mercilessly and finally put him in chains as an ignominious prisoner to magnify his guilt. Having humbled his lieutenant, Musa proceeded to complete the conquest of Spain for decorating himself with the laurels of the triumph. What is really amazing is that, after all this disgrace, Tariq still served such an arrogant and egoistic master in his campaign. Obviously, Tariq's misconduct was a stunt, otherwise he could not have been trusted.

At this point one ought to note the irony of fate: during autumn of the same year, the Caliph al-Walid summoned Musa to appear before him in distant Damascus. He had been charged with the same offense as Tariq -- exceeding his authority by invading a foreign country without the consent of his superior i.e. the Caliph.

Lust for power overrides all considerations. The Caliph, whose dominions Musa had extended, forgot all his services to demonstrate who held the real power and thus privileged to decide the matters of peace and war. With a view to expressing the size of his benefits to the Imperial cause, Musa took with him a huge train of spoils, which included four hundred Gothic nobles fully dressed in gold coronets and girdles; a sign of the Divine blessings, the train also included thirty thousand most delicate European women, whose beauty was more radiant than the jewelry they wore; among them were also handsome young boys of exquisite white and pink hues destined to embellish the male seraglios of the Caliph and other Muslim notables. Nobody knows the exact size of the treasures that Musa carried with him to appease and please his master but they were certainly enormous and had been bestowed by Allah upon His servants, the Muslims, as a sign of mercy, which was an act of extreme misery to those who had been robbed, ravaged and ruined. Well, then this is what Jihad is all about.

As the train of spoils entered Tiberias (Palestine), Musa received a secret message from Suleman, the brother and heir-apparent, that as Al Walid, the Caliph, was seriously ill, he must delay his entry into the Capital. It was Suleman's ploy to claim the glory of

victory and booty for his own reign, but it did not materialize because Al Walid recovered temporarily. Having heard the tales of extravagant plunder, crowned with fabulous luster of female and male beauties, the Caliph relented and received Musa favorably. The magnificent Ummayyad Mosque was decorated where he was rewarded with Imperial praises and courtesies.

Among the numerous gifts that Musa presented to his master, was a superb table (maidah) whose craftsmanship went back to the reign of Solomon, the Wise. This superb Jewish ruler, who enjoyed the pleasures of 300 wives and 700 concubines, was extravagant enough to adorn every inch of the table with the most precious diamonds and rubies that he could lay his hands on. Solomon was a great poet whose imagination was enriched, not only by sagacity but also erotic lavishness, which called for a huge harem of intoxicating beauties gathered from his own subjects, Egypt and many other lands. Thus he was also a lover of arts and its underlying mysteries. The said table was more conspicuous for its craftsmanship than the glitter, gloss and glow of its gorgeous stones.

According to the legend, this unusual table had been removed from Jerusalem to Rome by Romans, who were eventually deprived of it by the Goths. Inspired by the splendors of Solomon, every Gothic King vied with others during his reign to embellish it further with grace, gaiety and grandeur to carve his name in the annals of aesthetics. When Musa plundered this table, it was kept in the cathedral at Toledo; the Bishop had 'borrowed' it from the Lord for his personal use. Obviously, it was a sin for the Bishop because the Lord does not hold accountable his own representative for their misdeeds.

From the stories of the marvel, mystery and majesty, surrounding the Jewish table, it appears that its different parts could be detached and reassembled easily without any harm to its appearance and dignity. It is said that Tariq, having been bewitched by it, removed one of its legs and then dramatically produced it when the table was being presented to the Caliph. He obviously wanted to draw royal attention to his own person.

Though Musa's magic worked on Al Walid, it had exactly the opposite effect on Suleman, who succeeded him. He brought him before a partial judge, who found him guilty of vanity and falsehood. Musa was whipped publicly; stood a whole day in the blazing sun before the palace gate until he begged for exile to Mecca as a pilgrim. He was granted this request but his entire property was confiscated. History has noted that this conqueror of Africa and Spain lived as a beggar in Wad-al-Qura, a remote village of al-Hijaz.

Musa, destined to be a mendicant, was a zealous Muslim and planned to carry out the hadith, which demanded subjugation of Constantinople. His designs are known to history; he thought of Spain as the first step to bring Europe in the fold of Arab Imperialism. In fact, he had planned to cross the Pyrenees with the intention of entering France and Italy to establish the Islamic rule there. What goaded him more fervently was his desire to preach the Koranic tenets from the pulpit of the Vatican. Once the Arabian grip had been tightened on these Christian lands, he would love to conquer Germany and

then gradually proceed to Constantinople to realize the full blessings of the prophetic hadith.

The dream that Musa failed to materialize, did not die with him because it was not personal to him; it emanated from a hadith, which commanded destruction of Constantinople, the Christian seat of power. In 717 or 718, al-Hurr Abd-al-Rahman al-Thaqafi took up this sacred cause.

Behind this sanctity of purpose lay the lust of plunder provoked by the riches of French convents and churches. Thus, al-Hurr started the raids that were continued by his successor al-Samah Ibn-Malik al-Khawlani. In 720, his luck ran out at Toulouse, the seat of Duke Eudes of Aquitaine where he was offered effective resistances by the French fighters. Here al-Samah died.

Now we are nearing the moments of the Battle of Tours, known as the Bataille de Poitiers in France. This city had become the spiritual pupil of France owing to the body of Saint Martin, which lay buried there. Ordinary Christians, who preferred the paradisiac blessings to the worldly comforts, saved every penny to make votive offerings at the shrine. Though the offerers' flesh had been made lean by starvation, the guardians of the shrine enjoyed layers of corpulence without suffering any qualms of conscience. The popularity of Saint Martin had lent a good deal of prestige to the local churches and convents, which boasted of gold plate and costly goblets as the results of pious offerings.

The year 732 is a landmark in European history because this is when Abdel-Rahman Ibn-Abduallah al-Ghafiqi, successor of al-Samah, as Amir over Spain, advanced through the Western Pyrenees. In fact, this is the year that also marks the first centennial of the Prophet's death. During these 100 years, the Arabs had succeeded in establishing an empire which was greater than that of Rome at its zenith. It extended 'from the Bay of Biscay to the Indus, and the confines of China and from the Aral Sea to the lower cataracts of the Nile". Still, the Prophet's command concerning Constantinople had not been fulfilled: the expected victory at Tours was to lead to the realization of this holy aim.

As flowers attract bees, an infidel's wealth entices a Muslim to declare Jihad against him to plunder it. Saint Martin might help the French to secure comforts of paradise in the world-to-come but, in this life, his wealth-gathering tomb coaxed all the discomforts of the Islamic sword, which flashed in search of booty.

Though the Battle of Tours is one of the decisive events of history, its exact location has not been established. Some historians believe that it was fought at Mussais la-Bataille, six miles south west of Chatellerault. Others think that it was not one but a series of running engagements ending near Poitiers in the defeat of Abdur Rahman, the Chief of Cordoba (Spain).

However, there is no doubt that the major engagement of the Battle took place between Tours and Poitiers. The French had given no cause for the Battle: its excuse was

determined by Allah, who had laid on the Muslims to suppress, slaughter and seduce non Muslims until they accept Islam or surrender and pay tribute to acknowledge their inferiority. Tours attracted this predatory expedition from Spain because it was a Christian spiritual center, also ebullient with worldly treasures. Obviously, Jihad was the most suitable action which could guarantee submission of the infidels through plunder and carnage.

The hitherto victorious Arab onslaught was in for a rude shock. The invaders were met by Charles, whose valor, tenacity and martial wisdom earned him the famous surname Martel i.e. hammer; he smashed the Islamic dream in the West. He was not the King of France but the Mayor of the palace at the Merovingian Court; owing to the authority he wielded, he was considered as the de facto ruler.

Provinces of Gaul (France) were ruled by the descendants of Clovis, who was known for his military prowess, but they did not possess their ancestral qualities. However, all was not lost. Among the French chiefs was one Eudes, the Duke of Aquitaine. He was bold enough to usurp king's authority in the southern provinces of Gaul. To acknowledge him as a Christian hero, the Goths, the Saxons and the Franks, united under his standard to fight the Islamic aggressors from Spain. To start with, he proved a successful leader: he repelled the first invasion of the Saracens (Arabs) led by Samah, lieutenant of the Caliph. In this engagement at Toulouse, Samah lost his life and army.

To the Arabs, the Christian victory was unthinkable because it brought shame on the faith that had been incredibly victorious so far; it also kindled the revengeful instincts of the Arabian occupants of Spain, who earnestly longed for an opportunity to put the Christian infidels in their place.

When a nation is destined to rise and prosper, it experiences an amplitude of heroes. That was the time when the Arab national star was racing toward its apogee. Abdur Rahman, who had been restored to his high position by the Caliph Hashim, led his military campaign, which was both punitive and predatory. His first task was to deal with Munuza, the rebellious Moorish Chief, who had become an ally of Eudes in return for his beautiful daughter. This expediency though later turned into a nuptial tie, was looked down upon by the French, who had a live sense of national honor. The Moorish chief was subdued and beheaded. His French widow was counted as an article of booty, and suffered the same fate as other pretty women of the vanquished nobility. She was sent as a present to the Caliph at Damascus, who like his predecessors, had become a connoisseur of pretty flesh and delicate manners.

Having dealt with Munuza, Abdur Rahman marched on and surprised the Eude's camp on the banks of the Garonne and heaped a shattering defeat on him; thereafter, he stormed Bordeaux, set its churches on fire and demolished people's homes mercilessly. The fate of the Christians was a picture of flaming hell. Historians have not been able to estimate the number of the slain, which is 'known only to God'. The inhuman devastation that the Saracens perpetrated in the countryside far excelled the Mafiatype vulgarity,

brutality and savagery of modern times. These worshippers of the Most Merciful Allah proved to be the most merciless killers, whose atrocities surpassed the scenes of torture described in the books of the Old Testament. The romances of chivalry have, however, been created from these tales of abomination, which please and tease readers according to their aesthetic taste and psychological leanings.

Abdur Rahman came face to face with Charles Martel at the junction of the Clain and the Vienne between Tours and Poitiers. Charles, the illegitimate son of the elder Pepin seems to be one general, who had studied not only the military tactics of the Arabs but was also aware of their psychology, and the factors that motivated it. He knew that the Muslim zealots fought for booty; they called it *Jehad*, the most sacred fighting, because all their moral outrages were reckoned as acts of piety by Allah, who, instead of punishing them with hell-fire rewards them with the luxuries of paradise. Considering the unusual nature of the Islamic ethics which treats vice as virtue in the guise of *Jehad* -- a process fully committed to robbing and murdering non-Muslims, Charles adopted a very shrewd policy to beat the Muslims with their own stick.

Though half of his country had begun to suffer from domination of the Saracens, he betrayed no symptoms of panic associated with haste and fear. Historians have not paid proper respect to Charles's tactful delayed preparations for the Battle. Judging by his military genius, it is not difficult to conclude that it was all intentional on his part: he wanted the Saracens to plunder as much as they could. This pillage had the inbuilt cover of protection for two reasons: firstly, he wanted their greed for booty to reach the point of saturation so that they had no further desire of looting and secondly, he planned to make them immobile under the burden of their plunder.

Added to the military genius of Charles was his personal courage and zeal of patriotism. The series of engagements called the Battle of Tours, lasted for seven days. During the first six days, the Saracens held the upper hand but, on the last day, the fortunes of the combatants were reversed. There was Edes along with his men to avenge his honor; voluntary German allies of Charles displayed their proverbial fighting skills and the chivalrous thrust of Charles and his Frenchmen, whose country's destruction had made them wild, became oblivious of the word: retreat. The Saracens started losing ground, yet their retaliatory pugnacity showed no abatement; their cries of 'Allah-O-Akbar' (God is Great), which still radiated their usual terror and tenacity, could have routed the European forces, but the Lord Jehova seemed to have come to the aid of his Christian worshippers. As evening was about to spread its murky net, Abdur Rahman received a fatal blow and the Saracens became leaderless. There appeared a disorder in their rank, but they did not take to a cowardly flight. The black curtain of night acted as a barrier between the deadly foes.

Strange as it may seem, now the same spirit of *Jehad* rose to shatter solidarity of the Muslim combatants, which had acted as their uniting force. In fact, the wisdom of Charles that he had displayed with regard to satiating the plundering greed of Allah's soldiers, asserted itself in the form of Christian victory that was to seal the Arab fate in Europe and save civilization from infinite regression.

Members of the invading armies were not purely Arabs: they had an equal number of Berbers, who claimed Arab descent, perhaps out of inferiority complex but were equally African nomads having distant racial ties with Arabia. The Berbers were paid lip sympathy by the Arabs for their fortitude, fearlessness and fighting skills. They had accepted Islam owing to the doctrine of Jihad, which served them well to alleviate their poverty and also give them a say in administrative affairs of the government. Thus, the real relationship between the Arabs and the Berbers was waging Jihad for booty. Though this process was completely horrendous, it disguised its ugliness as the command of Allah and thus declared the sour as sweet, blight as blessing and bleak as bright.

The Muslims had gathered a lot of booty before Abdur Rahman was slain in the battlefield. This enormous loot was affecting them on two counts: firstly, it had become cumbersome to their mobility, and secondly, they had got what they wanted. Why enter further clashes? It is only a hungry wolf which searches for a lamb; and the satiated one has no such need.

Having lost their leader, the Saracens were in a critical position. It was not possible to elect instantly a military commander of AbdurRahman's stature to win the field; unending dissension was bound to be fatal not only to their lives but also their looted possessions. While gaining plunder is Jihad, losing it is contempt of Jihad. So, the Saracens decided to retreat under cover of darkness leaving the glory of the Battle of Tours to Charles Martel.

It is an irony of history that *Jihad*, the sacred vehicle of plunder, which gave Islam a tremendous boost through booty gained in the Battle of Badr, turned out to be the biggest hurdle to the expansion of Islam in the West owing to the massive pillage in France which they earnestly tried to protect at the expense of the sacred spirit of fighting. It reveals the true nature of *Jihad*. Lesson of the Battle of Tours proved so terrifying that the Arabs never resumed the conquest of France again.

What is the significance of the Battle of Tours?

- 1/. It was a brilliant victory of the Christians over the Muslims, whose rule came to be confined to Spain. This victory gave the Christian powers a measure of selfconfidence and also established that the West would form the spiritual domain of Christ, and not Muhammad's. Not only that, the Christians would eventually carry on Crusades for four centuries to stem the tide of Islam. It could not have been possible without the consciousness engendered by the Battle of Tours.
- 2/. The sense of unity that the European Christians gained over centuries, is owed to their anti-Islamic attitudes, and a study of the Crusades testifies to this fact.
- 3/. The more important aspect of this Battle is cultural, which is better understood when we examine the history of Muslim Spain:

Of course, there was religious tolerance but not to the extent that it has been claimed. The Jews, who supported the Muslim rule, did well, but it was usually difficult for the Christians to secure high positions in the governmental hierarchy.

The Arab culture had deformed the European way of life in Spain. The Christian men had to be circumcised like the Muslims in the interest of national hygiene. The sacred Christian doctrine of monogamy was violated by the Christians themselves. They set up vast harems and also practiced pederasty on a large scale in the Arabian fashion. There was no dearth of Christian women, who observed purdah; the number of Christian converts to Islam were steadily rising all the time. In fact, people of Muslim Spain felt proud of emulating their Arab masters; thus, in manners and dress, they became more Asians and less Europeans.

It is not usually appreciated that the Western civilization is mostly an offshoot of the manners and etiquette that were developed in the French court. All European courts eagerly imitated them. This is what created Western culture.

Had Charles Martel lost to the Saracens, there would have been no French Court, and no Western Civilization. Instead, Europe would have become a cultural satellite of Arabia like all Muslim nations.

Here, I ought to add that what Rome or Constantinople offered and propagated was not the Western civilization in its modern sense. These two centers were custodians of the Middle Eastern tradition as handed to them in the form of Christianity. The Western civilization is represented by the spirit and elegance of the Magna Carta and the French Revolution: they both are indebted to the French Court for their initial development. Had the French lost the battle of Tours to the Saracens, there would have been no French Court with its chivalrous traditions, which lifted the status of the European women, lending color, taste and beauty to culture. This is the foundation of the Western aesthetics, fine arts and equality of sexes.

Finally, I should applaud the Arabic arts and sciences as they prevailed in Spain and Sicily. They were certainly much higher than what the Europeans practiced but they suffered from a serious disability: they were severely restricted by the puritanical faith imposed by the Koran, which treats woman as a sexual toy and forbids indulgence in fine arts such as painting, drama, music, dance and statuary. Still worse, the Islamic politics, as now, was dominated by the vehemence of faith, and the power of mind was not allowed to solve difficult situations. Everything had to be done the way the Prophet did centuries earlier. This fundamentalism acted as the bane of the Islamic cultural and scientific advancement, and the Muslim society became regressive all over the world.

The Muslim world is benefiting from the Western scientific advances, though cursing the West at the same time to lighten the burden of inferiority complex.

Had the Muslims won the Battle of Tours, entire Europe would have gradually become a part of the Arab political and cultural dominions. Exactly the same conditions

of ignorance, backwardness and intolerance would have prevailed in Europe as they do in the Islamic world today; the modern scientific revolution and international social enlightenment by way of human rights and civil liberties, could not have come into existence; civilization would have become regressive and stood at the same level as it did 1400 years ago during the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

Those who can imagine the socio-political conditions of the early 8th century Europe, will know that I have not resorted to exaggeration in analyzing the historical significance of the battle of Tours.

I salute the memory of Charles Martel and his brave French and German combatants, who paid a huge tribute of blood and bones to save and promote human civilization.

The Holy Koran P. 343, printed by Kutub Khana Ishaat-Ul-Islam, 3755, Churiwalan, Delhi, India.

1) *Story of Civilization* ("Age of Faith," Vol. 1. p. 161) by W. Durand

2) *The Clot: 1-3.*

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"The atomic bomb is another powerful weapon in the arsenal of righteousness" -- Harry S. Truman

"Perhaps it will take a cataclysmic event to shake the great majority of Americans out of their hubris and self-righteousness" -- Shintora Ishihara

The Big *Flash!*

This article was written by **Joseph Huang** in Australia a number of years ago, and proves almost prophetic in light of the events of September 11, 2001 and the horrendous possibilities that face us if unbridled Islamic terrorism is allowed to spread its evil machination around the world.

As the news helicopters flew over the scorched city below, recording the terrifying scene on live-telecast for an eager world to see, the images were mind-numbing. Just the day before an atomic bomb had devastated the city. Those on the outskirts saw a rising mushroom cloud, and then city streets with tall buildings on fire. People were running in the streets screaming, their clothes and hair on fire. When the bomb vaporized at a temperature of several million degrees centigrade, creating a fireball and radiating immense amounts of heat, all civilians within a five kilometer range of the hypocenter were doomed.

Heat, radiated by the bomb, burned every living soul more than three kilometers from the hypocenter. Instantaneous fires erupted over a wide area creating a firestorm that engulfed all major buildings around the city that had not succumbed to the blast the day before. All ten square kilometers of the city had already been burnt out, while some scattered fires were burning throughout the metropolitan areas. Chernobyl would pale in significance

Except for the humming of the numerous inquisitive helicopters in the sky, dead silence fell upon this once bustling metropolis. The winds did not clear out the radioactive smoke hovering above the city, restricting the helicopters' ability to record the destruction below. Those buildings that survived the blast were gutted by the subsequent fires. Dead bodies were scattered everywhere throughout the wreckage. Half-consumed human body parts could be seen among the smoking ruins where injured dogs had torn apart their masters and feasted on them.

Fallen houses and twisted commercial buildings turned this once thriving city into an unimaginable rubble. The whole world stood still -- shaken -- as it watched the unfolding horror on satellite TV. Three percent of the bomb's energy was released in invisible neutrons and gamma rays. These rays affected people during the ensuing days as they spread out through the air and water. Finally, the message sunk in -- the city was New York, that Great City! Nuclear terrorism had finally arrived! Some of you reading this article may think this scenario is far-fetched, but frightening indications and

the opinion of nuclear experts make this scenario highly probable. Authorities have stopped at least seven cases of nuclear components from being smuggled into the West from Russia. No one knows how many more have passed through undetected.

After the end of the Cold War and over half a century since the dropping of the first atomic bomb over Japan, the world is entering a new, potentially more dangerous era. The immediate threat of mutual nuclear annihilation may now be behind us, but before us is a brave new world whose troubling nuclear dimensions are only now beginning to be realized.

The material is weapons-usable plutonium, created in civilian reactors that generate electricity for cities rather than in military reactors that produce material for bombs. The problem is that although the intended use of these two types of reactors is different, the byproduct is the same -- plutonium -- an essential ingredient of nuclear weapons. Civilian power reactors are typically much larger than their counterpart military production reactors -- and therefore produce many times more plutonium. The year 2000 will mark the point in human history when more atomic bomb materials begin circulating in civilian commerce than exists in nuclear weapons.

“Even a handful of terrorists with biological weapons could cause horrifying casualties in big cities” -- James Dale Davidson.

A Harvard study released in March, 1996 warns of "nuclear anarchy" in the immediate future. The irony

overshadowing it all: the end of the Cold War removed the looming threat of mutual destruction, yet has ushered in a new and equally frightening one through nuclear terrorism. The end of more than four decades of armed confrontation, of the ceaseless production of ever more advanced weapons that went unused, has now left the former Soviet Union in utter shambles. The dangers of proliferation are threefold. Firstly, basic weapons -- tanks, planes, ships of all kind, submarines, missiles, rocket launchers, artillery, whole bases by the many thousands -- produced by the best and most brilliant scientists are now viewed as surplus. Secondly are the vast quantities of nuclear weapons, the reactors that produce the plutonium that goes with them, and the large quantities of the raw plutonium itself, that are kept in storage. And finally, the presence of thousands of nuclear scientists and technicians who designed, built and serviced these materials and equipment. All are now either unusable or superfluous in the former Soviet Union.

“Paradoxically, the collapse of the Soviet empire, which appears to remove the threat of great-power nuclear war, is driven by the same causes that are now making the use of nuclear weapons by small nations and terrorists more likely”
-- James Dale Davidson

The first shock to the Western world occurred in July, 1994, when German authorities expressed concern over their first discovery in the black market of weapons-grade plutonium from Russia. The substance, a powder in a red mercury solution that turned out to be plutonium 239, the material in the heart of the bomb that destroyed Nagasaki in

1945, was seized in Tengen-Weichs.¹ The plutonium was part of a growing pile of bomb-grade materials made available when the United States and Russia complied with their mutual arms-reduction treaties. Bernd Schmidbauer, the minister responsible for Germany's intelligence service, warned that nuclear smuggling had reached a dramatic turn in that Mafia-like organizations were becoming involved. Knowing that the West is entering a new era of nuclear terrorism from the former Soviet Union he warned on German television: "We have reached a spectacular new dimension... Perhaps the most dramatic thing about it is that this material came from Russia's nuclear weapons industry."²

After the Cold War, the nuclear superpowers dismantled some 30,000 warheads, thereby reducing the danger of a nuclear holocaust but, ironically, greatly increasing the opportunities for nuclear theft and, eventually, nuclear terrorism around the world. Even though the Russians have vowed that their nuclear safeguards are among the safest in the world, Western experts doubt very much that this is true. Nuclear analysts around the world are well aware that Russian morale has plummeted and working conditions have seriously deteriorated for the 100,000 people once employed in their nuclear-weapons complex. This presents the prospect that some would prefer to profit from it in order to improve their living conditions. With the potential black-market price of a bomb-size amount of plutonium in the region of hundreds of millions of dollars, it would not be surprising to find that some discontented and unpaid plant workers willing to steal some of this material.

As a result, nuclear contraband is moving down the same pipeline as used by Afghans to move guns, heroin and looted Buddha artifacts. As of July, 1994, Germany has registered 241 cases of attempted nuclear smuggling. What was revealing was that examination of the 6 grams of plutonium 239 discovered in Tengen-Weichs showed that it could traced back to one of Russia's three big nuclear installations. Nuclear experts consulted by Stuttgart public prosecutors were reported as saying that they suspect as much as 148 kg of weapons-grade plutonium is on the black market in Europe -- enough to make around 10 nuclear bombs.

The Path of Snakes

"It is not healthy when a nation lives within a nation, as coloured Americans are living inside America. A nation cannot live confident of its tomorrow, if its refugees are among its own citizens" -- Pearl S. Buck

Further investigations indicate that enriched uranium and other substances for making nuclear weapons are being smuggled out of the defunct Soviet Union and are for sale in clandestine arms bazaars outside of the former empire. One of these bazaars is in Peshawar, a Pakistani city next to the Khyber Pass, where nuclear material and the much sort after plutonium are actively traded.³ Strategic nuclear equipment, looted from high-security sites and military installations in the former Soviet Union, is being shipped down the smugglers' route to Peshawar through Turkmenistan and across Afghanistan's Hindu Kush mountains. Nuclear salesmen are offering to sell

such dangerous wares as enriched uranium, super-powerful magnets, catalysts and alloys for making the shells of thermo-nuclear weapons. Traders said there are Iranian colonels and majors, among other traders, walking around with Samsonite suitcases full of hundred dollar bills, who are shopping for this kind of material. The possibility of terrorists acquiring some nuclear weapons in Peshawar is real. Islamic extremists from many countries converged on Peshawar as early as 1979 to plan their *jihād* or holy war, first against the former Soviet Union and now their enemies abroad -- including the United States.

The alarms are ringing the loudest over Russia where there are tens of thousands of atomic weapons left over from the Cold War -- not to mention more than a thousand tons of highly enriched uranium and plutonium. "As you look at all of the possibilities out there now, I would conclude there's more chance that one or two or three weapons could be used perhaps with unconventional delivery systems that would kill literally tens of thousands of people," said US Senator Sam Nunn, the leading expert on the military in the American Senate Armed Services committee. The prospect of tactical nuclear weapons, or "loose nukes," as the phenomenon is called is the most sensational part of any discussion of the former Soviet Union. As many as 22,000 tactical weapons -- nuclear artillery shells and short-range rocket warheads -- are held in storage, most of which are not subject to international verification systems. These may be of far greater threat to Western security than any of the city-busting behemoths on Russia's ICBMs. While in Russia, a Greenpeace activist, Josh

Handle, described a gentleman in the taxi who said: "I know somebody in a nearby base, why don't you come and take a look at one of the major military pieces of hardware in the base?" So the activist and his companions casually crawled under a fence, over a fence, under a fence, and there they were -- easily in one of Russia's nuclear storage areas.

Many of these nuclear materials were subsequently smuggled out of the former Soviet Union. One Western diplomat in the Pakistan capital, Islamabad, said: "Many of these things being hawked around are radioactive. Not only is this dangerous to the individuals who are moving it around, but there's also the potential for a terrorist group buying up bits and pieces."

One Western art expert, expecting to see plundered antiquities from Afghanistan was instead shown a 1,200-kilogram stash of enriched uranium, enough for 100 nuclear bombs, hidden in a densely populated area of Peshawar. Led inside a well guarded house, he watched as the floorboards were lifted and metal boxes revealed. Packed inside each box were five-kilogram cylinders of uranium that he said looked like "medicine jars." He said: "I got the impression that these smugglers didn't know how to handle the stuff at all."⁴ A super-hard alloy known as moraging steel, used in making atomic submarine hulls and nuclear bomb casings, was also being peddled in Peshawar by a Russian engineer. The Russian claimed it had been brought down via Turkmenistan into northern Afghanistan along the old smuggling routes and carried across the pass of Parachinar into Pakistan's tribal territories.

Further up the smuggler's route, in the northern Afghanistan town of Mazar-e-Sharif, enriched uranium was also offered to a foreigner working for an aid agency. Even the Pakistan Interior Minister, General Naseerullah Babar, admitted that his government has been approached by smugglers with a nuclear shopping list.

The Nuclear Merchants

"I have regret and condemnation for the extermination of the Jewish people which was ordered by the German rulers, but I myself could not have done anything to prevent it. I was a tool in the hands of the strong and the powerful and in the hands of fate itself" -- Adolf Eichmann

The Russian abandonment of her six former Islamic republics has left a vast volatile region filled with people who now own some of the most sophisticated and deadliest weapons in the world. So far, Russia's atomic smugglers have been lone insiders, scientists and servicemen - - disaffected and underpaid. But this "disorganized" crime could easily turn to more lethal Russian Mafia types offering terrorists and profiteers a virtual nuclear supermarket. Within Russia, at a plutonium warehouse, windows were broken and boarded up. At a nuclear submarine base, one of the Russian navy's main storage areas for atomic fuel, anti-nuclear activists were able to take pictures from close range. "Russia itself is in many areas unstable, and the systems and materials aren't being protected anything like what we would like," Senator Nunn said.

U.S. investigators charged that Russian scientists are also for sale. A spokesman for a Hong Kong weapons company that posted brazen help-wanted advertisements in Russia said: "We have detailed files of hundreds of former Soviet Union experts in the field of rocket, missile and nuclear weapon[s]...These weapon experts are willing to work in a country which needs their skills and can offer reasonable pay." It is estimated that two thousand Russian nuclear scientists, who were disenchanted with the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, are now working for the Chinese, while a Russian consortium of nuclear companies was formed in 1990 to sell nuclear weapons to third world countries "for ecological purposes."

As more "outlaw" nations gain nuclear capacity in a more fractured and dangerous world, the risk increases dramatically that forces "beyond state control" are getting their hands on nuclear weapons. Many among fanatic Muslims believe that to die for a cause is to gain an immediate passage to paradise. They are an increasingly younger generation who have the education and sophistication to construct weapons their fathers would never have dreamed of.

The United States has long been a major terrorist target, but most of the assaults on Americans and their organizations have taken place overseas. Terrorist attacks inside the United States have been extremely rare, but it is changing. As the only remaining superpower, the United States already is the Great Satan to Islamic fundamentalists, the protector of Israel, supporter of the perceived infidel President Hosni Mubarak of

Egypt, and the prime enemy of theocratic Iran and Islam. The chief Iranian Islamic leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, called for a holy war against the West, saying -- "The struggle against American aggression, greed, plans and policies will counted as a *jihād*, and anybody who is killed on that path is a martyr."⁵

The spread of mass weapons, nuclear, chemical and biological -- and the means to deliver them -- is now out of control and is the single greatest threat facing the civilized world. In an investigative book entitled *Critical mass*, writers William Burrows and Robert Windrem propound the theory that third-world nations are using unconventional means to acquire nuclear capacity.

Islamic States

"Iran is rich enough to support revolution as an industry" -- Simon Peres

"Violence is the only way of ensuring a hearing for moderation"
-- William O'Brien

During the 1980s, the Soviet presence in Afghanistan propelled Pakistan into a nuclear weapons program that paved the way for the country to procure seven atomic bombs as early as 1994.⁶ Two Muslim nations -- Pakistan and Kazakhstan -- possess nuclear weapons.

Iran has been shopping for a ready-made nuclear bomb while, during the height of the Cold War, the United States and the former Soviet Union, as well as France and the United Kingdom, sold advanced weapons, technology and information to their puppets and proxies while showing

by example that nuclear weapons seem to guarantee sovereignty, power and a healthy economy.

"There are eleven things which are impure: urine, excrement, sperm, bones, blood, dogs, pigs, non-Muslim men and women, wine, beer and the sweat of the excrement-eating camel" -- Ayatollah Khomeini

The successor to Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, Ali Akhbar Rafsanjani, has good reason to believe that Iran is the leader of Islam by virtue of the nation's size, location, history and the purity of its religion. As early as 1991, Iran's Deputy President, Ataollah Mohajerani, called for an Islamic bomb: "Because Israel has nuclear facilities, the Muslim states, too, should be equipped with the same capacity. I am not talking about one Muslim country, but, rather, the entirety of Muslim states."⁷

While Libyan Colonel Qaddafi has a long standing offer to purchase a nuclear weapon, he, too, has been expanding his chemical weapons arsenal. Chemical weapons were considered a "poor man's atomic bomb" -- a substitute for a real atomic bomb. But Qaddafi recognizes that to stand up to the West, he knows that he will need a bomb that has a deterrent force capable of hitting the United States. Recalling the U.S. air strikes on Tripoli and Benghazi in April, 1986, Qaddafi told his citizens that only super weapons, or rather an Islamic bomb and Arab hegemony could hold the United States at bay. "Because if we had possessed a deterrent -- missiles that could reach New York -- we would have hit it with missiles and even nuclear

weapons. The world has a nuclear bomb, we should have a nuclear bomb.'⁸

Since 1982, Iranian backed Hezbollah, the radical Islamic fundamentalist group, has been seeking the destruction of Israel and the elimination of the entire American continent, if possible. Dedicated to a *jihād*, suicide bombers are only too pleased to fulfill their sacred mission to turn Israel into a "fiery hell" and are threatening suicide terrorist attacks around the world. In October 1983, the Hezbollah conducted a suicide truck bombing of the United States embassy and marine barracks in Beirut. In September 1984, they hijacked the TWA flight 847, and in March 1992, it was alleged, they car bombed Israel's embassy in Buenos Aires -- killing 29 people. Not content with that, they struck a Jewish community center in Argentina which killed a further 69 civilians.

In March 1996, Hezbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, in an unprecedented admission, told the London-based Arabic publication *Al-Wasat*: "We didn't hide Iranian support. There is no need to deny that we receive support from Iran. Syria supported us and facilitated arms supplies, a political core, moral support and field facilities since 1982." He went on to claim that Hezbollah would start attacking Jews and Israelis outside Israel." According to the United States and Israeli governments, Iran funds Hezbollah operations to the tune of \$70 million a year and trains young recruits at Iranian military installations.

"But Islamic militants, reared in poor economies and a different culture, are more willing to fight

and die for their faith" -- James Dale Davidson

But terrorism is not limited to any one known group. Nor is it restricted to groups of familiar names dedicated to the path of fire and brimstone. Since the early 1990s, freelance terrorists have taken up residence inside the Great Satan -- the United States. Hence, in the United States, there is an unknown number of shadowy groups lurking in the land with agendas of hate and destruction and a newfound taste for exotic weapons.

On February 26, 1993, a bomb detonated beneath New York's World Trade Center, shattering the notion that terrorism was only limited to the Middle East or Europe. The attack was only a wakeup call, alerting Americans that deadly violence is no longer an abstraction on the evening news. Arrested on February 7, 1995, was a man named Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, who arrived in New York on September 1, 1992 on an Iraqi passport. Teamed up with other Islamic fundamentalists, they followed the teachings of Sheik Rahman, who was alleged to have issued a *fatwa*, a sanctioned order, to assassinate Egypt's Hosni Mubarak.

"At what point, then, is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reaches us it must spring up among us; it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freedom we must live through all time, or die by suicide" -- Abraham Lincoln

Apart from plotting to kill the Egyptian President, *Time* magazine reported that they planned to bomb the U.N. headquarters, U.S. military armories, a bridge and two tunnels linking Manhattan to New Jersey. Ever determined, Yousef kept his plans focused on the Twin Towers. On the designated date, Yousef and his companion placed their bomb in a van and drove it to the basement of the World Trade Center. The eventual explosion killed six and injured more than 1,000 people. Terrorism had finally arrived in America -- and the World Trade Center was only the beginning. Of course, the appeal of nuclear weapons to terrorists is obvious: if destabilizing society or drawing attention to one's cause is the goal, a mushroom cloud outranks truck bombs. Indeed, the Yousef's of the future will have more -- not fewer -- options and opportunities at hand.

The Deadly Plutonium

“Men don't change. The only thing new in the world is the history you don't know” -- Harry S. Truman

“Idealism is fine, but as it approaches reality the cost becomes prohibitive” -- William F. Buckley Jr.

Though the United States does not reprocess spent fuel of power reactors at home, because of both economic and non-proliferation reasons, its government has not been prepared to enforce U.S. non-proliferation laws to restrain its European and Japanese allies' plutonium programs. Seventy-five per cent of the plutonium being extracted today in Europe and Japan came from

U.S.-supplied nuclear fuel. Instead of making sure that U.S. exports of nuclear fuel do not end up as weapons-useable plutonium in world commerce, the political interests of the United States gives clear precedence to its allies over and above its obvious security interests. As a result U.S. origin plutonium is now beginning to enter world commerce in frightening amounts.

Ever since plutonium, a man-made element, was first produced in gram quantities during World War II, more than 1,200 metric tons of it have been produced in reactors. Of this amount, about 260 tons have been produced for weapons; all the rest, nearly three times as much, has been produced in civilian nuclear power reactors. With the end of the superpowers' nuclear arms race, the amount of military plutonium is expected to stay essentially constant and then decline as plutonium from retired warheads is disposed of. But the amount of civilian plutonium produced in power reactors will grow very rapidly from about 650 tons in 1990 to 2,100 tons in the year 2010 -- more than eight times the amount of weapons plutonium. Considering the fact that less than 8 kilograms (about 18 pounds) of plutonium is enough for one Nagasaki-type bomb, the proliferation risk of all this potential weapons material is enormous.

Beyond the proliferation and terrorism risks of plutonium, there are also the safety and environmental hazards of transporting plutonium and the waste by-products of reprocessing. Plutonium is extraordinarily toxic. Microgram quantities imbedded in the lungs after inhalation, or in bone after ingestion can cause cancer. In 1987, Japan had to

cancel plans to transport its plutonium by air from Europe after failing to develop a crash-worthy shipping container. In 1992, some 40 nations protested Japan's first large-scale shipment of plutonium by sea after it became known that international standards for the shipping container were below the fire, collision and deep-immersion conditions experienced in severe accidents.

Proliferation of Plutonium

***"The inevitable never happens.
What happens is the unforeseen"*** --
John Maynard Keynes

***"I believe in Divine Providence. If I
did not I would go crazy"*** --
Woodrow Wilson

The potential for the proliferation of plutonium around the world is enormous. Borders are porous. Deadly weapons and enriched uranium could reach any shore via the same route that hard drugs take. Drugs from Afghanistan and surrounding areas have reached Europe and the United States via air or sea routes. Drugs from the Golden Triangle (Burma, Thailand and Laos), for example, have been transported to the United States through Thai or Cambodian airports by couriers or stuffed inside goods and transported by air or sea. Other methods of transport include concealment in containers, car parts, picture frames or gift parcels-- the options are endless. Some could be concealed on cargo ships, thrown overboard near the American coast and retrieved by small boats.

Drugs from South America reach the United States by ship and are smuggled

ashore in small boats. Also, some are smuggled in by yachts and small aircraft.¹⁰ Evidence of hard drugs in the streets of the US suggests that deadly weapons, too, could just as easily reach American shores in the same way that drugs do. US intelligence officials admit that a terrorist would have no more difficulty slipping a nuclear device into the US than a drug trafficker has bringing in bulk loads of cocaine.¹¹ Since 1992, there have been a string of nuclear smuggling seizures by the West-- including the following:

November 3, 1992 Flensburg
Plutonium 80kg
November 26, 1992 Germany Uranium
307kg
January 19, 1993 Franco-Swiss border
Cesium 133 4kg
March 7, 1993 Gydnia Uranium 238
6kg
April 1, 1993 Kalingrad Cesium 137
no amount given
April 30, 1993 Braniewo Cesium 137
25kg
October 6, 1993 Istanbul Enriched
Uranium 2.5kg
November 27, 1993 Bursa Uranium
4.5kg
May, 1994 Lake Constance Plutonium
239 6kg
July 22, 1994 Location unspecified
Uranium 10kg
August, 1994 Landstuhl Enriched
uranium 235 0.8kg
August 10, 1994 Munich Plutonium
239 100-300g

Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*¹²

Until now, the spectacle of the US government being blackmailed by nuclear terrorists has been the fascination of books and movies. A team

of former U.S. weapons designers have found that even terrorists would be capable of making an effective, first-generation nuclear weapon if they could obtain enough reactor-grade plutonium or highly enriched uranium. Nuclear proliferation and the closely connected threat of nuclear terrorism will become a principal danger of our time.

“Some Islamic sects have approved terrorism as a legitimate tactic. That well suits them to current circumstances, as terrorism is likely to be of growing military importance as the year 2000 approaches” -- James Dale Davidson

Finding a nuclear bomb in a city is "like looking for a needle in a haystack," one nuclear scientist admits. New York City has been identified by many experts as an appealing site for a terrorist attack. Firstly, it is the most centralized, densely populated metropolis in America and has an extremely vulnerable infrastructure.¹³ An atomic bomb, or even major radiation from radioactive materials in the city, would produce the most desired and effective outcome which terrorists seek. Secondly, it is the headquarters for many of the world's financial and banking institutions on which the world's commerce is based.

Among these headquarters is the much detested United Nations, which was responsible for the creation of the State of Israel in 1948; and in January 1991, the quickly assembled U.N. Force defeated Iraq -- an Arabic state. U.N. Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros-Ghali, an Egyptian regarded as a traitor by Islamic fundamentalists because he helped negotiate peace with Israel, is

also a major target. Thirdly, New York has a major concentration of Jews in the city, on whose political and financial support the State of Israel depended greatly during the 48 years of its existence. Without that support, Israel would be left on her own to face Islamic forces that could possibly destroy this last barrier against the forward march of Islam.

“Large cities rather than military targets will be at growing risk as effective weapons of destruction are dispersed ever more widely throughout the world” -- James Dale Davidson

"The destruction of any city in the world by nuclear terrorists would threaten all cities and nations," one nuclear scientist said. Though New York is an attractive target, other cities could well be on the list: Los Angeles, Chicago, New Orleans, Washington DC, London, Paris, Tel Aviv, Sydney. Of these Washington DC would be more vulnerable than others. Besides Congress and the White House being located there, the city and its nearby district is also the heart of all American overseas operations which include the FBI, the CIA and the Pentagon. Perhaps a statement by Louis Farrakhan, the US leader of the Nation of Islam, would give us a better understanding of the potential danger. Speaking in Teheran, he said: "You can quote me: God will destroy America at the hands of Muslims."

Fear of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of mad generals, warlords, terrorists and nations with fanatical foreign policies is now being realized among more and more people. Only after a big flash has occurred will the

world come to realize that there have been various forms of "Manhattan Projects" in the netherworld of our time.

"History teaches us that men and nations behave wisely once they have exhausted all other alternatives" -- Abba Eban

"Is life so dear, or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" -- Patrick Henry

1 James O. Jackson, "Nightmare in a Vial of Dust," *Time* (Australia), August 1, 1994, page 36.

2 Anna Tomforde, "For Sale: Russia's Deadliest Plutonium," *Sydney Morning Herald*, July 19, 1994.

3 Tim McGirk, "Terror for Sale at the Nuclear Bazaar," *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 26, 1996.

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5 Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993, page 23.

6 William E. Burrows and Robert Windren, *Critical Mass: The Dangerous Race for Superweapons in a Fragmenting World*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994, page 66.

7 William E. Burrows and Robert Windren, *Critical Mass: The Dangerous Race for Superweapons in a Fragmenting World*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994, page 342.

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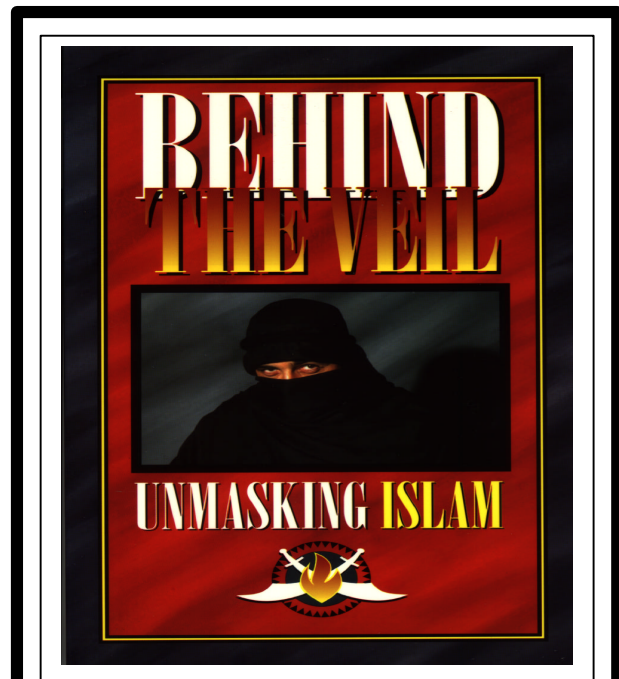
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The House of Israel



Ancient Site in Newfoundland Offers Clues to Vikings in America

L'ANSE AUX MEADOWS, Newfoundland, May 4 -- A spring snow fell all night and all day and buried the land down to water's edge. Drifts piled high against the walls of the sod houses. The mind's eye could see the place as it was 1,000 years ago when Vikings, led by Leif Ericson, first wintered here while exploring the coasts of a country they called Vinland.

Here, at the northern tip of Newfoundland, is what archaeologists agree is the first and still only authentic site of Viking settlement in North America, 500 years before the voyages of Columbus. The ruins of eight houses and workshops, some with their thick walls and pitched roofs meticulously restored, will be a focus for this year's millennial commemoration of all things Viking.

"This settlement has led us to Vinland, at last," said Dr. Birgitta Linderoth Wallace, an archaeologist with Parks Canada who has studied the site for years.

The excavations have not only confirmed elements of truth in the sagas of the seafaring adventurers from Norway and the rest of Scandinavia who crossed the North Atlantic and, for a brief time, tasted the berries and grapes in North America, their Vinland. They have also inspired new scholarship revising the legendary image of the Vikings.

Yes, they were feared warriors who plundered the coasts of Europe and the British Isles, especially between 750 and about 1050; the term Viking, strictly speaking, refers only to men who went on raids.

But they were also farmers and herders at home and no less sophisticated in arts and invention than other medieval Europeans.

They were successful ship builders who engaged in ever-widening trade, east to Russia and south to Rome and Baghdad. In their Iceland colony at the end of the 10th century, these people created the first democratic parliament. Their further western expansion brought about the first tenuous contact between the Old World and the New.

These new interpretations of the Vikings and their Norse descendants are illustrated in an exhibition, "Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga," which opened recently at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington and will run through Aug. 13. It will then move to the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan in October.

Recent research is described in detail in the exhibition's elaborate companion book, published by the Smithsonian Press, and a new translation of the Norse sagas has been issued, appropriately, by Viking Press.

Dr. William W. Fitzhugh, the exhibition's principal curator, said that as travelers and traders the Vikings were "catalysts that transformed European societies," and as explorers they took the first steps to "reconnect human populations into a single global system." They were presumably the first Europeans to lay eyes on descendants of the people who had long before migrated into the Americas, where one branch of humanity had lived unknown to the other.

Sometime at the end of the 10th century, halfway between today and the birth of Christ and Rome's heyday, Ericson set out from the Greenland colony in a sturdy longboat with a soaring prow and a large square sail. Another seafarer, drifting

off course, had sighted land to the west, and Ericson went to see for himself.

According to the sagas, Ericson's party first headed northwest across Baffin Bay and came upon a rocky coast they called Helluland, present-day Baffin Island. Then they sailed south, hugging the shore, to the wooded place they named Markland, probably Labrador. Finally, they entered a shallow bay and waited for high tide to bring them ashore to a green meadow. Here at L'Anse aux Meadows, they established a base camp, their beachhead in Vinland.

"Some people think this site is Vinland itself," said Tamara Ricks, acting supervisor of the National Historic Park here. "But it really was the gateway to Vinland. Over a period of about 10 years, we think, several Viking parties probably spent three to five years in total here, wintering over, hunting and fishing and repairing their boats."

Vinland proper, scholars conclude, lay to the south along the coasts around the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Of Vinland, Adam of Bremen wrote in 1070, "There grow wild grapes." Climate studies suggest that grapes never grew in Newfoundland, but probably did grow in Nova Scotia.

If there was any doubt that Vikings traveled to these southern coasts, it was dispelled when archaeologists found butternuts, a white walnut, buried in the ruins here. The closest place where butternuts grow is New Brunswick.

And until the discovery of this site, the very fact of a Viking presence anywhere in North America was questioned as possibly little more than a myth, like trolls and elves. Then along came Helge Ingstad and his wife, Dr. Anne Stine Ingstad, an archaeologist.

An Arctic explorer in the Norse tradition, Mr. Ingstad followed a hunch and an Icelandic map from the 1670's, which identified a place on the north coast of Newfoundland as "Promontorium Winlandiae." After scouting out other coasts, he arrived at the small fishing village here in 1960. He asked a fisherman, George Decker, if there were any strange ruins in the vicinity. In an interview in Washington, where he attended the opening of the Viking exhibition, the 100-year-

old Mr. Ingstad of Oslo, still keen of mind, recalled the moment.

"Yes, follow me," he said Mr. Decker told him.

"Decker took me west of the village to a beautiful place with lots of grass and a small creek and some mounds in the tall grass," Mr. Ingstad remembered. "It was very clear that this was a very, very old site. There were remains of sod walls. Fishermen assumed it was an old Indian site. But Indians didn't use that kind of buildings, sod houses."

For the next eight summers, Mr. Ingstad and his wife, now deceased, and an international team of archaeologists excavated the site.

Their first reports of discovery were not believed. Then they came upon remains of a blacksmith shop, he said, "one of our most important finds." In the middle was a huge flat stone for the anvil, with charcoal and lumps of iron scattered about. A few of the pieces had been forged into nails. This was the earliest evidence of iron processing in North America.



The Ingstads uncovered the outlines of eight houses, three of which were where the people lived, perhaps 25 to 35 in each long dwelling. Built in the style of Icelandic houses, the walls were six feet thick, two layers of sod between a layer of gravel for drainage. The roofs were made of turf laid over a timber frame. Radiocarbon analysis dated the artifacts at between 980 and 1020 -- the time of Ericson's and subsequent expeditions.

The Ingstads' work "proved that Norsemen, Vikings if you will, actually were in America 500 years before Columbus," Dr. Fitzhugh said.

In later excavations, Dr. Wallace, of Parks Canada, uncovered even more artifacts confirming the site's Viking origins. Geochemical analysis of pieces of jasper, used to make sparks for starting fires, revealed trace elements found only in Greenland or Iceland. In the ground outside one of the houses was a bronze pin with a ring head, in a Norse style and probably made in Britain. The Vikings used such pins as fasteners for their cloaks.

Among the 800 artifacts archaeologists also found soapstone oil lamps, a bone needle and more iron nails. Some of the smaller houses appeared to be workshops for carpenters and weavers. A spindle whorl attested to work with textiles, and since Vikings considered this women's work, at least some of the expeditions must have included women.

The absence of evidence of any barns, Dr. Wallace said, indicated that this was not a farming settlement, but a base camp for the Vikings as they surveyed the region for likely places for more permanent occupation.

In an essay for the exhibition's companion book, Dr. Wallace wrote, "The silent ruins of the L'Anse aux Meadows site tell a fascinating story of the people who built them, when they were there, what they did and why they were there."

This week's heavy snow on the restored houses evoked a vision of the Vikings' first winter here: Labrador, their Markland, is barely visible across the strait leading from the Atlantic Ocean into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. A small fishing boat rests on a wooden stand. Fish hang drying on a rack. Firewood is stacked near the entrance to the long house. Smoke, rising through a roof hatch, is swept away in the stiff wind.

Inside, people lounge on benches facing a fire for warmth and cooking. They sharpen knives and axes, carve pieces of wood and mend clothing, garments of wool from home and animal skins from their travels. By the light of a soapstone lamp in a corner, someone fingers the ring head of the bronze pin, calling up memories of Europe.

All the while, they spin stories of seas they have sailed and places they have found, stepping stones of land across the North Atlantic, first the Faeroe Islands northwest of Scotland, then Iceland and Greenland, now here at the gateway to Vinland. Someday their tales would be written down as the Norse sagas. The ones about Vinland would scarcely be believed, at least not until the discovery of these ruins.

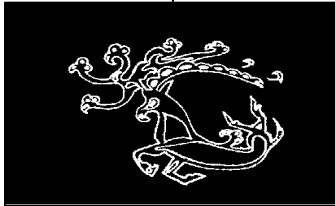
Serious Viking exploration of Vinland probably lasted little more than a decade. After Ericson's single expedition, his role as Vinland explorer was assumed by Thorfinn Karlsefni, who once

led a party of 160 men and women in three ships. They stayed three years, and his wife, Gudrid, gave birth to a boy, Snorri, presumably the first European born in America.

One of the advantages of the L'Anse aux Meadows camp, scholars say, was its safe distance from native Indians. But at other settlements, the Vikings had several bloody encounters with the Indians, whom they called Skraelings, a derogatory Old Norse word meaning wretch. In a time before gunpowder, the Vikings with spears and axes held no arms advantage over the Indians with bows and arrows, and the Indians outnumbered them.

"Internal conflicts as well as attack from the natives eventually led to their departure," concluded Dr. Gisli Sigurdsson, a Norse scholar at the Arni Magnusson Institute in Reykjavik, Iceland.

"We have been to the Moon, but we haven't yet established bases there," Dr. Wallace said. "The same was the case for the Norse and Vinland."



Long afterward, though, Vikings from Greenland repeatedly visited the shores of Labrador for timber and food. Archaeologists have found Norse artifacts, including spun yarn, there and on northern Baffin Island. Since neither the early Eskimos nor their immediate Inuit successors spun yarn or worked wood by sawing, nailing and mortising, Dr. Patricia Sutherland of the Archaeological Survey of Canada said, the artifacts pointed to extensive contacts with the Greenland Norse for several centuries. Beginning this summer, Dr. Sutherland will conduct new studies of these artifacts and search for more in the Canadian Arctic.

But archaeologists hold out little hope of finding another Viking camp like L'Anse aux Meadows. Some previous finds have turned out to be misleading or bogus. A Norse penny minted in the late 11th century turned up at an Indian site in Maine, but it is generally thought to have gotten there by trade. A stone tower in Newport, R.I., once hailed as Viking, was actually built in the 17th century. Both Minnesota's Kensington Stone, bearing Norse writing, and Yale's Vinland Map are now widely judged to be modern fakes.

By the early 15th century, the Norse also had to abandon Greenland. After centuries of relative warmth, which had favored North Atlantic travels, the global climate took a frigid turn, and the colony's trade with Norway declined sharply.

The era of Viking marauding had long since passed. To some scholars the Norman invasion of England in 1066 was the last great Viking raid; many Normans were descended from helmeted Vikings who had earlier seized their land. And now the era of Viking western expansion had also ended. All that was left were the sagas, and ruins of some sod houses on a bleak Canadian coast.

Writing of the Vikings who had to give up their Vinland dreams, Dr. Sigurdsson said, "You spend the rest of your life boasting of the great time you had with your mates when you spent the summers sailing across the seven seas and finding new and previously unheard of lands, just like the Icelandic sagas tell us."

-- By John Noble Wilford

Algonquians and the Vikings

William Commanda was born on November 11, 1912 on the Manawaki Algonquian Reserve in Quebec, Canada and has lived there all his life. His Algonquian name is *Ojigwano*, which refers to the planet Venus (known to us as the Dawn Star).



Ojigwano is a Keeper of the Lore and is thus designated to care for and protect numerous items, such as wampum belts and other artifacts, for the Algonquian Confederacy. One very important item is called the *Primstaven*, a wooden staff carved by Vikings who arrived in Algonquian country around 11-- A.D.

He explains that the runic inscriptions on the staff tell us basically that the Vikings and the Algonquians, though of different races, are Keepers of the Truth and Understanding. There's more to this than meets the eye, so I'll explain what I was taught about this connection.

Viking warriors were called "Berserkers," a word which derives from Old Norse and literally means "Bear Shirt." The Vikings were a shamanic culture who believed in magic and a pantheon. Berserkers believed they could transform themselves to become as ferocious as a bear when doing battle. They wore these bearskin tunics as a symbol of their ferocity. This is why berserkers were depicted as being in a frenzy, or a rage, almost invulnerable.

The Algonquians held to similar beliefs known as Bearwalkers. The ability to shape shift is well known in many Native American tribes; the Algonquians attribute this ability to our culture-hero, Gluscap. In one Algonquian dialect of the northeast, the following saying (part of a legend) still survives today: "*Qeni yaliyat skitkomig mecimiw kisi mili acehlosu*," which means: "when he started to roam the earth, he could change himself into many forms."

So, as the Vikings and Algonquians learned to communicate with each other, they realized they were brothers of the Bear Clan. They also realized that the Algonquians' two major clans were the Wolf Clan and Bear Clan. The wolf also played an integral part in Viking lore. Algonquians have a curing ceremony known as the Bear Sweat Lodge; tales of Bears raising human children, teaching them to live as bears. In the Northern Algonquian tribes such as the Cree, Wolf is the one who creates earth.

The biggest star in the Big Dipper is called *Maskwa* -- the Great Bear -- and one Algonquian Tribe has a society which enacts a ritual each year "when the Great Bear in the Sky comes down to Earth." The Milky Way is also known as the Wolf Road to Algonquians, the trail of souls which leads to our "happy hunting grounds,"

where warriors who die fighting dwell. This is very similar to the concept of Valhalla.

Some of these things the Algonquians already understood. But as the Vikings and the Algonquian women intermarried, we have become known as the light-skinned nation in the northeast.

-- **Iron Thunderhorse**

Researchers Find Evidence for 6th Century Welsh Prince in Ohio

James Michael is the head of the Ancient Kentucky Historical Association, headquartered in La Grange. He and his fellow Associates, many of them medical doctors, professors and other professionals, have uncovered implements left behind in the Ohio Valley by 6th Century Britons, who arrived in America shortly after 567 A.D. He and his medical members report matching blood factors of a group of people known as the Melungeons in eastern Tennessee to those of the inhabitants of Wales and the Iberian Peninsula.

Their findings were first published in 1990's *Tennessee*

Anthropologist. Since then, additional, supportive evidence has come to light in the form of several artifacts emblazoned with Maltese and Celtic crosses, together with smelted bracelets carbon-dated to the 6th Century and literally hundreds of non-Indian burial crypts resembling types used in early Britain throughout the Ohio Valley.

One of the A.K.H.A. members, Dr. Ray Hayes, discovered that 13th and 14th Century explorers, including Vasco Da Gama and Sir Walter Raleigh, reported that some of the Native American Indians, who, supposedly, had never seen white men before, were already practicing Christians.

No armchair explorer, Michael has traveled to Wales and London's British Museum to research old manuscripts and other evidence he hopes can further substantiate connections between the Ohio Valley and the "legendary" King Arthur. His A.K.H.A. has worked through the Smithsonian Institute for permission to use DNA

testing in comparing skeletal materials recovered from Ohio and presently warehoused by the Smithsonian, with human remains from Welsh tombs.

The thrust of their research appears to verify the arrival, some 1,400 years ago, of the Welsh prince known as Modoc. The group claims to have uncovered "his coat-of-arm, national flag, epitaph, secret symbol for God, circle-cross with coat-of-arms, a 'dead' alphabet, bracelets, jaw bone and 6th Century eulogy," according to Michael. "Epix Film Company of London is in the process of raising \$1 million for the production of a 6-hour documentary on this subject. The material shown in this program will be the basis of the American portion of this production. The companion book to this film is now ready and currently entitled, *Ancient Kentucky Inscriptions and Mummies*"

Modoc's presence in the New World has been suspected since at least the early 19th Century, when the famous Western portrait painter, George Catlin, visited the Mandan Indians.

James Michael and his colleagues at the Ancient Kentucky Historical Association are the first, however, to offer intriguing evidence that Prince Modoc and his Welsh followers actually did arrive in North America, nearly a thousand

years before Columbus.

-- **Wayne May**

John Norden, Topographer

John Norden was one of the founders of British topography. Born of a genteel family in 1548, he came to the favour of Queen Elizabeth I and her great minister, Lord Burghley. In 1593, he was authorized by the Queen to travel through England and Wales to make "more perfect descriptions, charts and maps." It is not known how far he travelled, though in 1595 he undertook an extended journey through Middlesex, Essex, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands. He conceived the grand design of a topography of Britain, county by county.

Although he lived some thirty years after the start of his project, Norden only published two parts of his *Speculum Britanniae*, Middlesex



(1593) and Hertfordshire (1598). His notes on Northamptonshire were published long after his death, and he is said also to have prepared work on Kent and Surrey. Several of his county maps, however, were published by Camden and Speed. Even so, he made an important contribution to topography and inspired others to follow in his footsteps -- the great *Victoria County History* is in a sense the fulfillment of his design.

Among what he published, two things may be of special interest to readers. One is the royal coat of arms printed in his survey of Hertfordshire. From Edward III to Elizabeth I the royal arms displayed the English leopards quartering the French lilies. This forms only the first quarter of Norden's shield. The second quarter displays the arms attributed to four Saxon kings -- Edward the Confessor, Edmund of East Anglia, Egbert the Great and Edward the Elder, with an escutcheon for the Danish kings. The third quarter has a bend inscribed SPQR to represent the Romano-British kings (Cole, Constantine, etc.) The fourth quarter displays arms attributed to early British kings -- Brutus, Belinus, Arthur and Arviragus -- the last being the St. George's Cross said to have been granted to the British kings by Joseph of Arimathea. At the foot of the shield is the Irish harp, and over all an escutcheon of the English leopards quartering the Welsh lion.

English heraldry, under the control of the College of Arms since the reign of Richard III (1484) tends strongly in the direction of simplification, preferring not to display more than four quarterings. The purpose of the Norden coat of arms was clearly to show Elizabeth I as the heir to the whole of British history. This accorded with the mood of the late sixteenth century when the influence of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History* was at its height. Although not the official coat of arms for the Queen, representations similar to or identical with the Norden coat are not uncommon at the time.

More remarkable, perhaps, is the dedication, reproduced in the original arrangement and spelling:

TO THE HIGH
AND MOST MIGHTY
EMPRES, ELIZABETH, BY THE

DIVINE PROVIDENCE, QUEENE OF
ENGLAND, FRAUNCE, AND
IRELAND, POWERFUL PROTEC-
TOR OF THE FAITH, AND UNDOU-
TED RELIGION OF THE MES-
SIAH, THE MOST COMFORTABLE
NURSING MOTHER OF THE
ISRAEL OF GOD, IN
THE BRITISH
ISLES.
HER HIGHNES LOYALL SUBJECT
JOHN NORDEN, IN ALL HU-
MILITIE, CONSECRATETH
HIS SPECULUM
BRITANNIAE.

"Nursing Mother," a phrase derived from *Isaiah* 49:23, was one commonly applied to Queen Elizabeth by the Protestant Reformers. The reference to "the Israel of God in the British Isles" is more unusual, and is striking evidence of how many Englishmen thought of themselves in the Reformation epoch.

The Norden coat of arms shows no claim to Judahite descent. As readers will be aware, this claim comes principally to our royal house through Elizabeth I's successor, James VI & I. Nevertheless, the claim was already there in Elizabeth I through

at least two strands: through Matilda, daughter of Malcolm Canmore and Queen of Henry I, from whom all our sovereigns from Henry II are descended; also through Ednyved Vychan, ancestor of the House of Tudor as of many old Welsh families (including that of the present writer). Ednyved Vychan claimed descent from Judah through Joseph of Arimathea. Both of these were claims in cadet branches. Even that through Queen Matilda could not rival the claims of the Kings of Scots, but these claims are important evidence of the traditions regarding the origins of the British royal houses.

-- Barry Williams



God Incarnate *Nullifies* Faith

John M. Bland

Another error caused by the theology of Jesus being "God incarnate" is captured with the question, was Jesus a man of faith? If Jesus preexisted before his birth as a member of the Godhead, then he was simply implementing his own scheme while on earth. If this is the case, he certainly could not be what he often challenged his followers to be -- a person of faith. "Oh you of little faith" was uttered several times to those he taught.

Jesus' words and actions, however, were a constant tribute to his personal faith. As has been before proven, Jesus (after his anointing) practiced miraculous signs by the power of God's holy spirit. He also continually alluded to what he taught as words that came from the Father and not from himself. In this, he affirmed that he was acting according to the same faith that other prophets of God had acted upon. It was necessary that he follow the message received by him through "inspiration" and do accordingly. After his anointing, he was led into the wilderness by the spirit to undergo special temptation. Jesus answered the Adversary by faith, i.e., he quoted scripture. In this way, Jesus demonstrated the same method of resistance that all believers are called upon to use (see Ephesians 6:10ff). How did Jesus know that there were 12 legions of angels at his disposal? If Jesus did not act by faith, why the intense anguish and tears in the garden?

The fact that Jesus was 100% man makes his life and ministry even more compelling. He had to accept "by faith" that he had no earthly father. He had to accept "by faith" that he was the Messiah. He had to accept "by faith" the redemption plan and the necessity of dying the death of the cursed on a tree. When you couple his actions of "faith" with the tremendous love of humanity resident in him you can understand why the apostle Paul had trouble comprehending the "love of the Anointed which surpasses knowledge."

Reader, try contemplating Jesus from the view that he was not God incarnate for just a moment as you meditate on the following scriptures:

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, so that he would give to you, according to the wealth of his glory, to be strengthened with strength through his breath in the inner man, that the Anointed One may dwell in your hearts through trust; so that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the width and length and depth and height -- to know the love of Christ

which surpasses knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:14-19, emphasis mine).

Yes indeed, reader, it is one thing to be God incarnate-- knowing all things and acting according to what you had previously planned and decided-- occupying a human body; spending a few years on earth and removing your true essence from the physical body at death. Doing all this while knowing full well-- by sight and not by faith -- that death was not really the end. It is another thing entirely to live a sinless life under law: accept the Messianic mission of life and cruel death "by faith" when death was not required of oneself; press on and die the death of redemption and humility; and to accept "by faith" that death was not really the end while trusting in the promises of an unseen God to resurrect you.

You see, reader, Jesus faced death like every God-trusting mortal and on the same terms with those of us that embrace his promise of resurrection and immortality. We believe it because we read of it in the scriptures. We trust in it because of the historical testimony that Jesus was raised from the dead. Jesus believed it because he trusted the Old Testament scripture concerning the Messiah that said,

You will not abandon my soul to Hades nor will you allow your godly one to see decay.

Yes, God loved humanity to the point that He was willing to give us His only begotten son; the only one in the history of the world that was flawless in his life and obedience. If we, as sinners, are precious to our Creator just think of how dear Jesus must have been to the Father.

Now, try to grasp the love of this man Jesus who accepted his lot in life and faced the cruel, redemptive death of the tree that all believers might share in his inheritance. Yes, indeed, this is the love that surpasses knowledge. This is the view of the unique man Jesus and NOT God incarnate.

Non-Israelite Jewry

For generations the Jewish people and their affairs have been constantly in the news. How strange, then, that most people either know next to nothing about their origin or even worse, have a completely wrong impression on the subject. Still more remarkable is the fact that "Christians" generally seem farthest from the truth. It appears to be taken for granted that all Jewish people are Israelites and that there are no Israelites in the world except the Jews. This mistaken view is all the more difficult to understand in that the religious leaders of modern Jewry know, and frankly admit, that their community contains small remnants of only two of Israel's clans and that the great mass of their people are not Israelites at all, in a racial sense.

Kevin Brook's recent book, *The Jews of Khazaria* reviews the evidence now available. His timely exposition clearly shows that all Jews are not Israelites, and that the vast majority are descended from converts to Judaism from other races.

The Pearls of Memory

Be Still and Listen

What did you leave when you went from me?
 You left me the pearls of memory –
 Strung on the thread of the passing years –
 of love and of laughter, of joys and tears...
 Pearls of more worth than the jewelers sell –
 My life they enrich and my grief dispel.
 No-one can steal them or tear apart –
 these pearls that are hidden within my heart.

Beautiful pearls on a golden string –
 Fondly I keep them – remembering...
 Lonely or lost I could never be –
 counting my pearls of memory.
 How can He come to an unquiet mind?
 How show His face to the inwardly blind?
 How can a sense of His presence be caught –
 in the confusion of turbulent thought?

If you would savour the calm of that peace –
 Stop, wait and listen. Let questioning cease.
 Sit in the silence. Be still and believe –
 that you at His hands a great gift will receive –
 of healing and blessing...Doubt not He will come –
 As once to the lame and the deaf and the dumb –
 He came with new life – to revive and restore.
 Make ready your heart for He stands at the door.

-- PATIENCE STRONG

בֵּית יְהוָה