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**G.I.F.T.E.D., Inc.**

**Life Is**



**Global Initiative Fostering Thoughtful Environmental Design**

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## **Answer to why this work was written**

Our American culture has for several generations been entertained by the antics of the Scarecrow in the musical movie version of 'The Wizard of Oz'. The prize most cherished by this animated bag of straw; was to possess the organ that would enable him to make use of the cognitive skills that produce truth and enlightenment as well as nonsense and merriment. Can we fault Dorothy's new friend for his assumption that the possession of knowledge would be without merit if it were void of joy and happiness? A question well worth contemplating and we are indeed fortunate as a species to have acquired the ability to reason about such emotional implications.

In general, our more noble thoughts are commonly presumed to be the result of positive inspiration from a divine source that wields enlightenment and understanding; while our more ignoble thoughts are assumed to be the result of negative selfish and destructive motivations instilled into us by the forces of darkness. These lines of thought have made the human mind a reservoir for a never-ending battle of good versus evil. If we continue to accept these concepts with a complete lack of evidence for the veracity of their claims; a true Age of Reason that humanity is in dire need of, will always remain beyond our reach.

The time to separate from cultural superstition and to begin using logic and reason to guide us into a future that deserves to be free of the insanities that currently plague humanity on a global scale is long overdue. When we accept that a limited finite mind may never be able to fully comprehend the mystery of an infinite being and then stop trying to explain such an entity in human terms; we will be one step closer to achieving a goal in intellectual progress. The physical sciences have not yet been able to determine whether or not a supernatural being truly exists, which is understandable if we consider that the scientific method is designed to conduct experiments using measurable data in the physical and material realm. Our sensory capabilities and other instruments invented by science are the basic methods that we use to discover the parameters of the physical elements in our natural surroundings to form conclusions based on verifiable evidence. The crux of our problem begins with the fact that thinking can produce abstract thoughts, which are generated from a wide range of emotional concepts that have no physical shape or form.

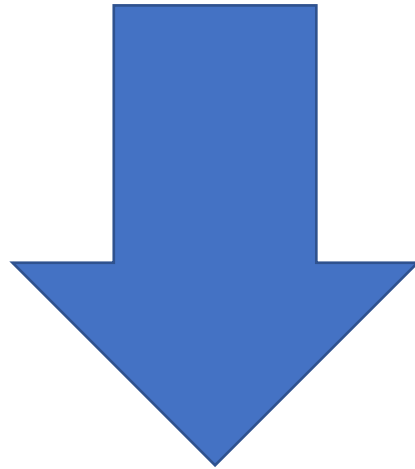
The effort to create a unified code of ethics or an equitable standard of morality has been severely hampered by traditional points of view that favor spiritual

revelation and superstition and neglect or refuse to make use of the scientific evidence that contradicts their dogma. The extreme lack of tolerance and prejudicial contempt between sects of the world's religions; who can only accept their own religious views or philosophical line of thought as the only viable solution, has generated far more problems than their claims that they are the one true source of enlightenment or salvation. Humanity could well benefit from a case of the blind leading the blind if we look to Helen Adams Keller. "The highest result of education is tolerance. Long ago men fought and died for their faith, but it took ages to teach them the other kind of courage, — the courage to recognize the faiths of their brethren and their rights of conscience. Tolerance is the first principal of community; it is the spirit which conserves the best that all men think." Her sight in the physical realm of reality may have been a blur of darkness, but her vision in abstract conceptual thought far exceeded many of the sighted sages of her time as well as those throughout history.

The accepted aphorism 'that as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.' is an overrated conceptual opinion that does little justice to the body part that performs the task. Indeed, the heart is an incredibly significant and well-designed muscle that regulates our circulatory system, but it is the electronic and chemical transmissions which flow through the synapses of our brain and onto the neural network of our nervous system that produce actions. Whether they are premeditated and deliberately executed or acted out spontaneously, most of our actions all originate in the seeds of thought that are spawned during our conscious or unconscious state. Human behavior is a product we procure from the logical use of reason or from indulging in irrational uncontrolled impulses and desires. The character of an individual is the sum of all the thoughts he or she continuously acts upon and the way he or she chooses to do it. Therefore, trekking through the awareness of our existence should not be taken lightly and most certainly should not be a wasted venture.

Life is a difficult journey every member of humanity must embark upon; and it is filled with many choices that must be made, and it is the hope of many that positive consequences will occur. The purpose of this literary composition is an attempt to aid gifted minds in a manner that will enable them to make more right choices than wrong choices. Humanity needs a science of thinkology that embraces harmony and unity in a mutually shared environment and is designed to promote peaceful co-existence in a productive atmosphere; where the ideals of freedom, justice, and

equality can be a way of life. It will undoubtedly pale in comparison with Hiltons' utopian Shangri-La and fall short of the splendor of a Garden of Eden, but I honestly believe that the intelligence that humanity possesses, whether it has somehow miraculously evolved or even if a benevolent Creator miraculously endowed it, we could overcome the ignorance of hate, greed, destruction, and the hunger for power.



**ENJOY**

## PREFACE

The bulk of this work is non-fiction and is meant to be taken seriously but be warned that the style of writing does not conform to any guidelines that non-fiction publications may or may not require. The goal is merely to open channels that might lead to constructive growth in areas that could produce peace and harmony in a mutually shared environment. The planet we call Earth, referred to by some as the third rock from the sun, is the only orb in our solar system, to my knowledge, which is teeming with a plethora of organic life forms. More than ten million species have been labeled with a binomial nomenclature, ever since Carl Linnaeus helped that process get started, and that is only the ones that we have discovered so far. If you are expecting the Who, What, When, Where, and Why of it all, then I am afraid you will be extremely disappointed. The mysterious miracle that we call life has been a topic for debate ever since our species gained the ability to reason and communicate our thoughts through symbolism.

While I do not claim to have any definitive answers, I feel safe in stating that if something was created; that there was a Creator. At some point in time, hydrocarbon base units began developing as organizational genetic masses capable of independent motion to assimilate inorganic as well as organic material for the sake of reproduction and extending the longevity of their existence. How did this lengthy process of evolutionary change come about without a principle of first cause to guide it? Acknowledging that life is a product of intelligent design does not prohibit or prevent any individual from participating in or rejecting any conceived notion that they have concerning this enigmatic puzzle. Why should we plod through a jungle of darkness and confusion in the hope of finding light and understanding? The pursuit of truth and wisdom to alleviate the unnecessary suffering our awareness is conscious of is the one thing humanity cannot afford to abandon.

Let us strengthen our resolve to make use of the attribute of free will that humankind has been endowed with; to make right choices in life. The chaotic pitfalls of our global dilemmas often lie in the fact that too many wrong choices have been made and continue to be made; simply because ignorance is more profitable than peace and harmony. If we continue to submit to the mechanisms of corruption, inequality, and injustice; we will always be longing for true freedom and a world that is void of self-inflicted misery. I hope you will keep an open mind and not allow

personal bias to keep you from going on. Every free-thinking individual has political and religious viewpoints based on environmental influences that began in their early stage of childhood, which continue to develop as we interact with our peers and mentors. Both subjects are highly volatile in nature and can rarely be discussed in a social setting without one side or both becoming vociferous. The art of agreeing to disagree may prevent momentary mayhem, but future interaction will always have to contend with walls of separation that hinder the finding of a common ground that leads to unity.

## INTRODUCTION

"There is only one war worth fighting; and that is the War on Ignorance."

*Kerney Paul Dupuis*

Hello, my name is Kerney Paul Dupuis. (cur. knee pawl do. pwee) This is the label that was decided upon for me at birth. My mother, more than likely, was responsible for the first and middle part, and of course my father gets all the credit for my surname. I do not believe we should fault our parents for the label they produced; after all, we do enter this world with a very limited vocabulary and since they played a major role in the production process; they are the logical choice to provide us with our specific nomenclature.

Of course, if later in life you are not fond of your label, not a problem. Find the nearest courthouse, convince a magistrate that your motive is within the legal confines of the law, pay the legal fees that will procure for you the proper documentation, and now you are the same person with a different label. However, I think that most of us adapt and choose to keep our original label; otherwise, America might have missed groovy labels like Picabo Street, Moon Zappa, or Spiro Agnew. Okay, enough with this label stuff, let us get to the point.

We exist! I exist as the author of this literary composition, and you exist as the victim of some fanatic who has written something for you to read. At some point in time, we were introduced to symbolic scribbles known to us as the alphabet. Then with the proper guidance we were shown how to assemble these symbols in a certain order. The primary objective being to increase our ability to communicate with each

other. From the earliest cuneiforms and hieroglyphics to all the modern-day alphabets humankind has not rested from one of its greatest endeavors. Not a single day goes by without someone trying to extend his or her mortality beyond the grave by imposing their self-indulgent views or sage like wisdom unto others; believing that they have made the world a better place to live in. Can you honestly say that you have not read the immortal words of at least one of these great individuals who have graced this planet with their existence?

When I first contemplated taking on a project like this in the fall of 2005, I was bothered by the level of arrogance it would take to submit to the world that you understand something that they do not. Inspiration came to me in poetic form which I call 'An Ode to Hubris'.

I am; therefore, I think.  
I must survive above instinct,  
But all I have seen thus far.  
Is that most men think before they are.

This is not an attempt to malign the grand theory that was espoused by Monsieur Rene Descartes. His statement "I think, therefore I am.", to me, is a bit like putting the cart before the horse. There is nothing wrong with the phrase "I think, therefore I am." It is the ultimate proof that our awareness of being is the gateway to reality. In other words. It is the ability to know that everything that is not anything; must be something. (For the philosophically minded who wish to debate whether nothing exists; you need only meditate about the space between your ears.) My side of the argument lies in the fact that we did not think ourselves into existence, but that we think because we exist in the first place. While the father of modern philosophy and I don't see eye to eye on this point, I still admire the tremendous amount of effort he put forth in trying to persuade mankind that the greatest goal we can have is the pursuit of truth, And certainly above all else, I believe that truth is something every individual should try to attain. Our disagreement stems from my belief that the ability to think is not a prerequisite for anyone or anything to exist.



My task now is to convince you that what I perceive as truth is worth your time and consideration. I will endeavor to be honest in the sharing of my thoughts with you. If honesty exists; there is trust and if truth exists; there is hope. However, the vision that keeps popping into my brain is that of Jack Nicholson in his scene from the movie, 'A Few Good Men'. After being pressed hard by Tom Cruise for the truth; he dramatically blurts out, "YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH!". Can an already overly neurotic society cope with the fact that all their religious beliefs and political philosophies are totally the product of human misconception? In anticipation that the so-called intellectual elite will be overly critical of this work; I urge you to read every page and make a judgment of it for yourself. Free thinking should not be swayed by critics, who are nothing more than egotistical scholars, who revel in the fact that they get paid to do your thinking for you.

## CHAPTER I: Freedom

After struggling for some time as to where to begin, I decided to consult my 'Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language'. Looking at the first definition (1 of 17) "1. the state of being free or at liberty rather than in confinement or under physical restraint." threw me for a loop. The force of gravity, reliance on an oxygenated atmosphere, and the need to steadily supply my body with water and nutrients; appears to indicate that humanity, along with all the other life forms, is in a constant state of captivity. The primary means of escape being the one thing the cognitive mind fears most, death. Humanity cannot ignore that the passion that urges everyone to embrace the vicissitudes of their existence is of a finite nature.

The second definition "2. exemption from external control, interference, regulation, etc." turns out to be another bummer. In the 'Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language', just prior to the page of 'Contents', in small print, there is a warning that states, "No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical including photocopying, recording, or by any storage and retrieval system, without permission from the publisher." This causes me to ponder as to how many successful authors or even young and struggling writers have actually petitioned Random House and procured a document that allows them to use the words in the dictionaries that they have published? If they truly did not want their words to be used; why did they bother defining them and explaining how they should be used in a sentence in the first place?

For those of you unfamiliar with sarcasm, I am fully aware that my views are not the standard for correctness and that sometimes they border on the ridiculous. The true reason that this warning statement exists is that within the human social structure there are morally bankrupt individuals who prefer personal gain over honesty and integrity. They steal the creative arts of others either because they themselves are incapable of creating or they are too lazy to produce any work of their own. I can only hope that someday my work will be considered theft worthy, but since I am dealing with truth rather than fiction; I am currently having a tough time giving it away. Okay. Let us move on.

Knowing that our chance at life is temporary and sometimes fleeting makes the next definition of freedom, "3. the power to determine action without restraint.", an

exceptionally good reason to have an excellent source of inspiration to guide us in aspects of a moral nature. When we allow morality to be neglected in the name of liberty; then freedom ceases to be a positive concept and humanity is reduced to the status of barbaric beings, whose sole ambition in life is to pursue their own selfish gratifications. "Eat, drink, and be merry; for tomorrow you will die." That may sound good to some of you, but the consequences leave much to be desired.

The fourth definition, "4. political or national independence." Unfortunately, replacing an unjust king with an unjust government does not make anyone have more freedom. Instead of being subject to just one tyrant, it is possible to be subjected to three incompetently run branches of a constitutional republic that pretends to be democratic. The original idea was to have an executive, legislative, and judicial branch that would serve the needs of the people; who entrusted them to conduct the business of government and national affairs in a manner that would be beneficial to the commonwealth that elected them. At present we have a body that caters to special interest groups, large corporate organizations, and power mad congresspeople with political agendas that are out of touch with their constituents. Case in point; ninety percent of Americans believe there should be universal background checks for gun owners; to prevent criminals and mentally incompetent individuals from purchasing guns. This amendment would not prohibit law abiding citizens from their second amendment right to own a gun and yet a bunch of brain-dead elected officials let themselves be bullied by the NRA that caters to gun manufacturers. When we tolerate a free enterprise system that forbids the loss of any profits for the sake of the loss of innocent victims, young and old and the grief it brings to families; we make a mockery of human rights and the thing which we call justice is not served.

Jumping on down to definition fifteen, "15. the right to enjoy all the privileges or special rights of citizenship, membership, etc., in a community or the like." We can no longer ignore the need for a code of ethics for any group formed; with goals of producing harmonious interactive relationships. The founding fathers of our great nation held these truths to be self-evident; "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." Unfortunately, there are only two instances of equality that hold true, we all come into this world naked and clueless and one day we will have to depart willingly or unwillingly. Everything else in-between is a constant struggle with inequality. They also appear to acknowledge

that humankind is the result of a beneficent Creator responsible for our existence and that we possess a free will to make choices that will contribute to our well-being and emotional state of Happiness. This is not evidence that a Creator exists, but it does indicate a deep seeded conviction amongst men past and present; that we are inclined to believe that there is something greater than ourselves.

Looks like freedom just might be what a popular song says, "just another word for nothing left to lose." A true state of freedom is impossible to attain merely from the way we define it. The ideal of freedom will only be reached by a unified humanity that is willing to tear down the walls of injustice and inequality and realize that we are all children of the same Creator. We can no longer be like the six blind men from Indostan to learning much inclined and continue to prate about an elephant not one of us has seen.



## THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

John Godfrey Saxe's (1816-1887) version of the famous Indian legend,

It was six men of Indostan to learning much inclined, who went to see the Elephant (Though all of them were blind), That each by observation Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant, and happening to fall Against his broad and sturdy side, at once began to bawl: "God bless me! but the Elephant Is very like a wall!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk, Cried, -"Ho! what have we here So very round and smooth and sharp? To me 'tis mighty clear This wonder of an Elephant Is very like a spear!"

The Third approached the animal, and happening to take the squirming trunk within his hands, thus boldly up and spake: "I see," quoth he, "the Elephant Is very like a snake!"

The Fourth reached out his eager hand, and felt about the knee. "What most this wondrous beast is like Is mighty plain," quoth he, "'Tis clear enough the Elephant Is very like a tree!"

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear, said: "E'en the blindest man Can tell what this resembles most; Deny the fact who can, this marvel of an Elephant Is very like a fan!"

The Sixth no sooner had begun About the beast to grope, Then, seizing on the swinging tail That fell within his scope, "I see," quoth he, "the Elephant Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan Disputed loud and long, each in his own opinion Exceeding stiff and strong, though each was partly in the right, and all were in the wrong!

### MORAL.

So oft in theologic wars, the disputants, I ween, Rail on in utter ignorance of what each other mean, and prate about an Elephant Not one of them has seen!

## CHAPTER II: The Knowledge of Good and Evil

We of the scientific nomenclature, Homo sapiens sapiens (the improved version of Homo sapiens neanderthalis) have attained the status of 'top of the food chain' on this planet. Blessed with five adequate input systems and a CPU that can assimilate, process, and store information; along with the cool trait of having an opposable thumb, has given humankind the capacity to learn, invent, and discover. Humankind alone has acquired the capacity for rational thought, inference, and the art of discrimination in choosing our likes and dislikes. Having achieved the ability to reason, we alone can be held accountable for our actions and are the sole possessors of the burden of responsibility.



The fact is that we do possess this pearl of great price and it has indeed put us at the 'top of the food chain'. Unfortunately, when we evaluate how we have used or should I say misused this gift, you are better able to understand the last two lines of my poetic verse. Instead of becoming the guardians of a magnificently structured eco-system that thrives on mutual cooperation and a high regard for the sanctity of all created life, we have in our arrogance become the main source of all the destruction and imbalance that exists in our world today. We have endured century after century of endless wars and insurrections, and as social structures we have instituted governments; in order to maintain power and control over the security of material needs and the proliferation of our masses.

While I do believe that there are some people capable of living a life of selfless ambition, otherwise it would be pointless to be writing any of this, we are all programmed by our present culture to look out for number one. The exercise of raising our status on the hierarchical ladder of success is the predominant path that most of us choose to take. The key word here being choice. Our earliest choices are strongly influenced or even made by our parents (or whoever oversees our care and upbringing) and these set the tone for the choices we will make in our future. Whether we choose to agree or be rebellious of their desires, we eventually become the mapmakers of our dreams and the architects of our own destiny. Our fate as well as the fate of those who share with us the mystery of life on this planet, are affected by the choices that we make.

Beginning at birth; our journey down the road of life is continuously bombarded with sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and the ability to touch and feel our environment. Initially, we can do truly little with all the sensations that overwhelm our early existence. Our physical and emotional development must increase before we can begin to make use of all this valuable input. It takes a year before we can walk in an upright position and we are dependent on a hopefully responsible individual or individuals, who are willing to take care of even our most disgusting needs. The most ideal situation we can hope for is that the two people responsible for bringing us into this world; have been equipped with the skills needed to assemble a package that comes to them with absolutely no instructions whatsoever. There are plenty of good 'how to books' on care and maintenance, but very few give a clear picture of how to get a miracle in progress to begin using all the wonderful input they are receiving. An uneducated child needs to learn to become educated and educated parents must be willing to learn to know how to teach.

Compared to the rest of most of the animal kingdom, humans mature at a much slower rate and require a great deal more supervision. Observation shows that puppies become dogs, kittens become cats, and colts and calves soon become horses and cattle; all of which happen within a span of the first two years of our lifetime. A stage in which we frequently hear an adult in charge vocalizing one particularly familiar sound, "No"... Sometimes fired off in rapid succession, "No, No, no, no, no!"... As we seek to broaden our horizons, we are forced to concede that in the initial stages of our development, we are completely ignorant of the consequences of our actions. A well-informed parent will not let their child place their hand on a

hot surface, or allow them to ingest harmful chemicals or poisons, or let them manage sharp objects, or do anything that would endanger their welfare. We all start out lacking the knowledge that would prevent us from causing harm to ourselves. As one favorite comic strip character named Pogo once put it, "We have met the enemy and they is us."

The good news is that through interaction and bonding, we eventually establish our first links to the ability to comprehend things. Our eyes already perceive light and darkness, our ears can hear loud noises or soft whispers, our nose can smell an aromatic fragrance or a horrible stench, our taste buds aid us to distinguish between sweet and sour consumptions, and our tactile abilities open the realms of pain and pleasure. Early bonding involves numerous attempts by our guardians to provide us with verbal links concerning the physical sensations that we experience in our environment. It is when we reach the ability to comprehend these links that we enter the world of understanding. With our new-found ability to understand; we are now ready to enter the new and exciting world of decision making.

Thinking is merely the art of assimilating all the knowledge that we can perceive and using it to make choices. Our brain eventually develops the ability to record information it has received and store it for future use. Since we can recall previously recorded knowledge from our memory bank, we can take actions based on perceptions from our past experiences. If we feel pain and discomfort when we place our hand on or near a hot stove, it is easy to conclude that we should avoid placing our hand on or near a hot stove. When an event causes us to experience elation, we have no problem in choosing to participate in that event if it should happen to occur again. Our early cognitive perceptions are based mostly on positive and negative reinforcements that we experience in the physical world.

The problem with our new-found skill is that it does not remain only in the realm of physical experience. We are quickly introduced into concepts that are abstract. If an intense amount of affection was poured out upon us; we must come to grips with the concept of love. And those devoted to our welfare might also attempt to instill in us the virtues of truth and justice. Our decisions are no longer just a matter of picking one thing over another, but we must also contemplate whether the action we will take is right or wrong. The duality that exists in nature also exists in the abstract universe. Everything in our future will now depend on what we do with our knowledge of good and evil.





Christians, in general, are convinced that all the suffering that goes on in the world today; is the direct result of two individuals who were not able to follow one simple instruction: a basic edict that would have guaranteed them an immortal life in their little utopia like garden of paradise. They were given the command, by their Lord and Maker, not to eat the fruit of a certain tree that He placed right amid their little Garden of Eden. This was an experiment devised by their Creator to see whether His creation would obey Him. An action that would have been totally void of significance; had He not blessed the newlyweds with the wonderful gift of free will.

They would be the caretakers of all the plants and lower animals, which more than likely were created for that particular purpose since He gave them dominion over all His creation. He also indicated that they should have a tremendous amount of respect for His first law, for no penalty other than death would suffice in order to justify its violation. The two innocents involved did not know what He meant when He said they would surely die, but that was probably of little or no consequence to them. There was an abundant amount of fruit growing on other trees in the garden that would satisfy their appetites without having to risk the loss of something they did not comprehend.

Adam, the label given to the first man, was created whole from the dust of the ground, and as soon as the Creator caused him to draw his first breath, the rush of

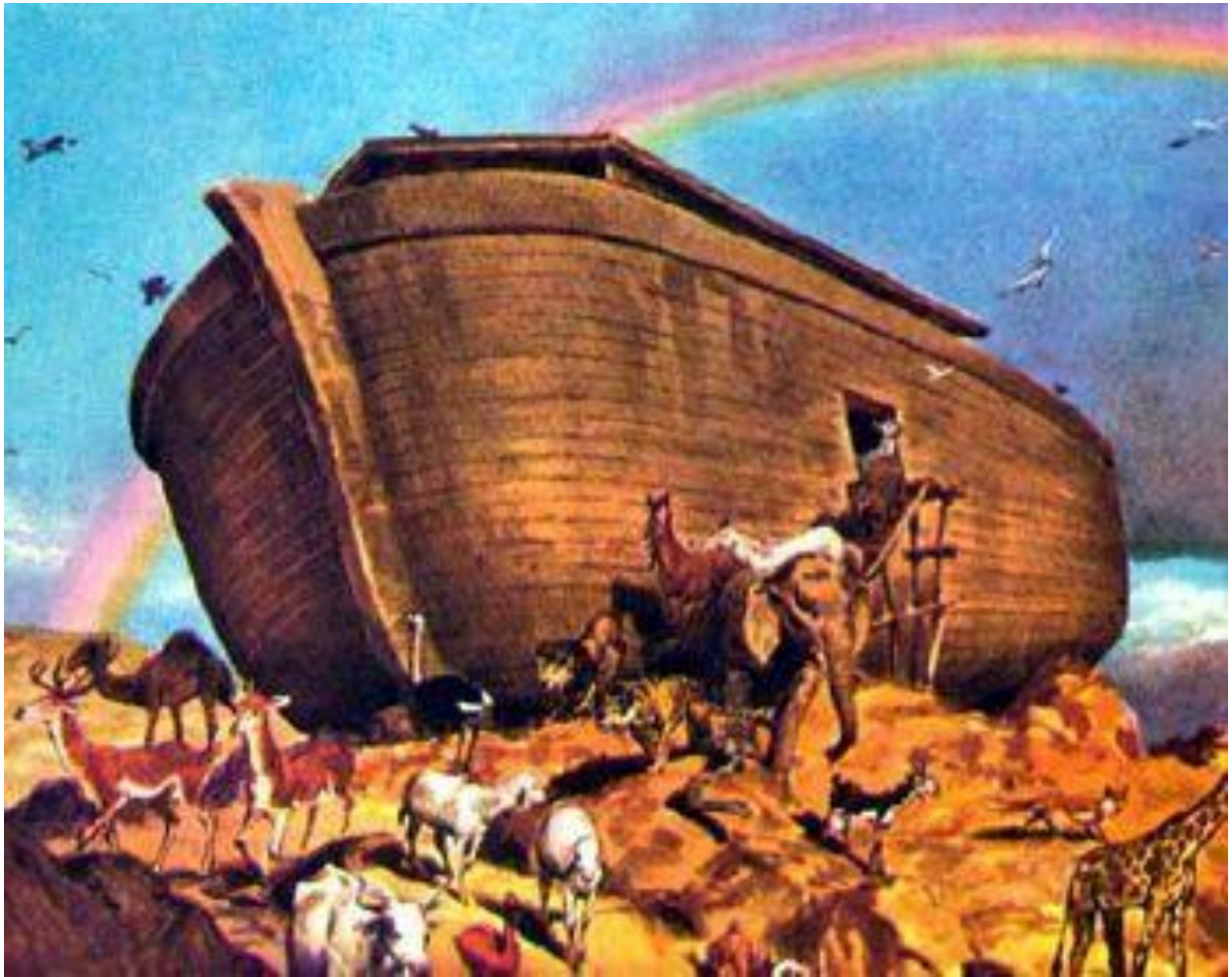
oxygen into his lungs kicked off a circulatory system that would keep on trucking for nine hundred and thirty years. His only defect being that the father of all humankind had no belly button. The Creator then came to the realization that His overall plan would not work unless the new creation had a helpmate. After applying the first anesthetic procedure in order to facilitate the removal of one of his ribs, He made several major modifications and cloned a fully grown version of Adam's counterpart: 'woman', for she was taken out of man. You have guessed it. The mother of all living had no belly button. A characteristic quite often overlooked by artists who attempt to portray the first couple, before or after they make their first big mistake.

Everything may well have continued running smoothly in eternally blissful perfection, had He not decided to throw in a ringer. The Great Creator placed in the garden a talking reptile gifted in the art of persuasion. Later believed by some to be a punishment inflicted on an angelic being; who had fallen from His grace by having the audacity to insinuate that it had developed powers and attributes equal to that of Him, the one true source of everything that is, was, or ever will be. Engaging in conversation with the woman, it was able to convince her that the ban on the tree in question was merely a ploy of the Creator to keep the first couple from attaining true enlightenment.

Eve, the label given to her by Adam, was trapped in what can only be viewed as the earliest recorded Catch 22. For her to know that what the sneaky snake was telling her was wrong; she would have to have eaten from the tree already. Unable to truthfully discern the validity of the serpent's remarks, she plowed ahead into making the very first dumb mistake ever made by a human. Amazingly, reasoning set in right away, "Oops! What have I done?... no more paradise... I am going to die... dang if I will hang for this alone... Hey! Adam". He was probably close by; intrigued by the strangeness of his helpmate talking to a creature and swayed by the lack of anything drastic happening to her after she took her bite, he threw away eternal bliss and propelled mankind into the realm of insanity.

Two people who had never worn a stitch of clothing; suddenly they acquired a moral sense and realized that they were both naked. Surely none of the other creatures in the garden minded them being in the buff; considering that some of them would have to be executed to cover up their embarrassment. Although none of them, the exception being the mutant reptile, were participants in the first couple's indiscretion; did not spare them from being exiled with the criminal element into the cradle of civilization. They would then begin to transform a world that was

unregulated by any governmental law, into a world that would thrive on violence and bloodshed. Not happy with the results, the Creator would realize that His experiment was a failure and decide to put an end to it. An excellent idea and worthy of commendation; had He been able to see it through to the end. Instead, He produced a plan to salvage eight individuals and two of every kind of creature in the animal kingdom.



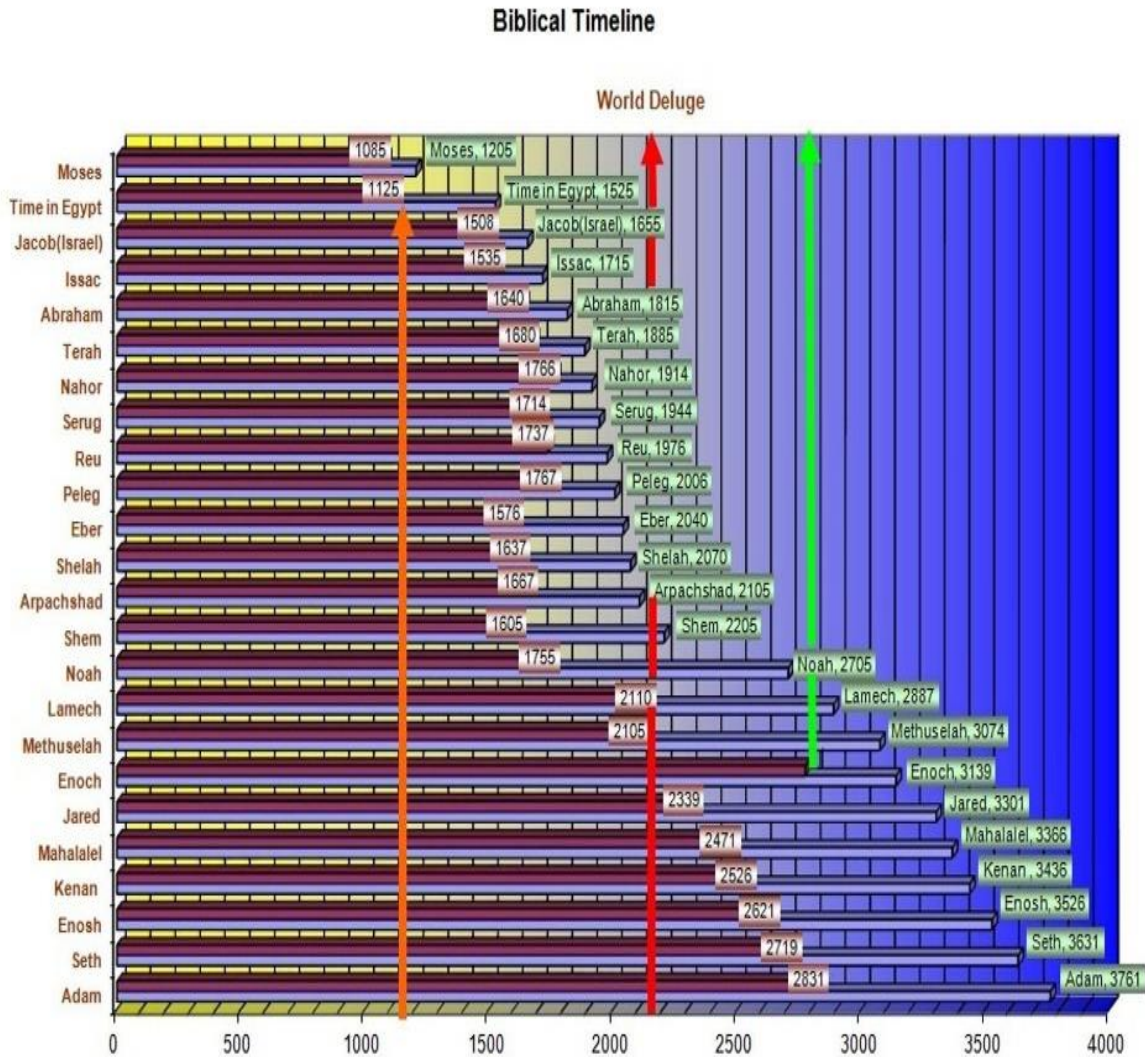
### **CHAPTER III: The Deluge**

Just in case you are interested; I am aware of my cynicism and that there is no limit to the amount of absurdity that I will resort to in order to illustrate a point, but bear in mind that I hold no animosity toward anyone because of what they choose to believe in. All religions, Judeo-Christian, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etcetera, have tenets that seek to bring peace and harmony to humanity. The problem is that they get caught up in my God is better than your God game, and fail to realize that their intolerances for each other are a major contribution to the chaotic state of the world we live in. Religious beliefs are based on the concept that there is some invisible unknown supernatural force or entity that is responsible for our existence and our wellbeing. Knowing that the shell that houses our mentality will not last forever; it is understandable that we would seek to know that which is unknowable. I do not profess to be an atheist; for I cannot prove that there is no Creator, any more than I can prove that there is a Creator, but this does not dictate that I must accept a Creator that is based on mythical fiction or legends.

The deluge that occurs in chapter seven of Genesis, the first book of the Bible, has long been promoted as an event of actual history; even though there is no sound basis or evidence that such an event in the manner that it is described; actually happened. We are asked to believe that one man, labeled Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives, and mated pairs of every kind of creature in the animal kingdom were destined to be the only survivors of a world deluge. There is no point in discussing the first homicide and the genealogical begats of prior chapters, since every man, woman, and child of that final generation are about to be eliminated from their existence.

Moving on with the story, Noah was a righteous man and was blameless in his age. After five hundred years of farming, the revelation to build a huge ark out of gopher wood would be viewed as a welcomed change of pace. That is right, a huge boat, one and a half times the length of a football field, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high. The explanation of what type of tree produced this type of wood is lost in translation and the region of the world that Noah lived in is not specified. If you are not lacking in credulity, you would place him near a forest that contained trees with resin producing capabilities or somewhere near the La Brea Tar Pits. He is given an entire century to complete the project and would have no qualms about asking his sons to pitch in, once they were able to. What loving son would not want

to help Pop build a massive rudderless wooden ship on dry land. This is what the Biblical Timeline will look like if we accept that the traditional Jewish Calendar



provided to them in the 4th century A.D. by Hillel II is correct. There are some scholars who have chosen to reduce the 400-year period of slavery imposed on the descendants of Abram to 210 years; to keep the period of judges from overlapping with the reign of royalty that was to come. That would push the Exodus (orange line) further back to 1315 B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) This problem would later be resolved in the 16th and 17th centuries by the custodians of the Christian sect that had come into being largely because The Chosen People decided that it was in their best interest to crucify the Creator. They simply pushed the time of Creation back to on or near 4000 B.C. (Before Christ)

There is almost no end to the number of objections that rational thinkers can put forth when asked to examine the veracity of this epic tale. This has also given rise to many Christian apologists who unabashedly resort to distorting scientific principles and creating pseudo-scientific theories to demonstrate the feasibility of their scenarios. All of this to convince people, who already believe that some men lived nine hundred plus years and the Creator had assembled our little blue marble in the cosmic universe in just six days, that this narrative is a verifiable source of truth. A culture overwhelmingly disgusted by Lance Armstrong for lying to them about his doping for ten years, have never called out a single man of the pulpit for claiming Sunday after Sunday; that the book he is waving is a work of truth, and that the divine Creator wrote it.

Even when flawless mathematical arguments are made; the staunchest believers will not fail to evoke their rule of faith, reducing its meaning to, "being able to believe anything even when they know it isn't true." One million, five hundred eighteen thousand, and seven hundred and fifty cubic feet of space (450 x 75 x 45) may seem like allot to some people, assuming the ark was a rectangular matchbox, but storing just a little over a year worth of food and fresh water to accommodate eight humans and two (in some cases fourteen) of every kind of animal known to man, is an engineering nightmare. The source of ventilation and light through an eighteen-inch gap near the roof would only provide the upper of three levels with any type of livable conditions. Getting all the carnivores to adapt to a vegetarian diet still would not keep them or any other beast from producing excrement and their reproductive instincts would have to be put on hold. And is it crazy to ponder; which crew member would venture down to the lower levels with a lighted torch if they understood the properties of methane gas?

To top it all off, the craft would have to be structurally sound enough to withstand the worst meteorological storm ever imagined by anyone; providing the weight of the passengers and cargo did not prevent it from attaining enough buoyancy to stay afloat. To cover Mt. Everest (elevation: 29,000 feet) with twenty-two feet of water, again assuming the omnipotent Creator knew that the Himalayas existed, a forty-day storm would have to produce eight thousand seven hundred inches of rain per day. The defenders of the faith will quickly point out that some of the water sprang up from the ground and that earlier; the Creator had separated the water under the expanse from the water above the expanse, making it just a matter of opening up the floodgates.

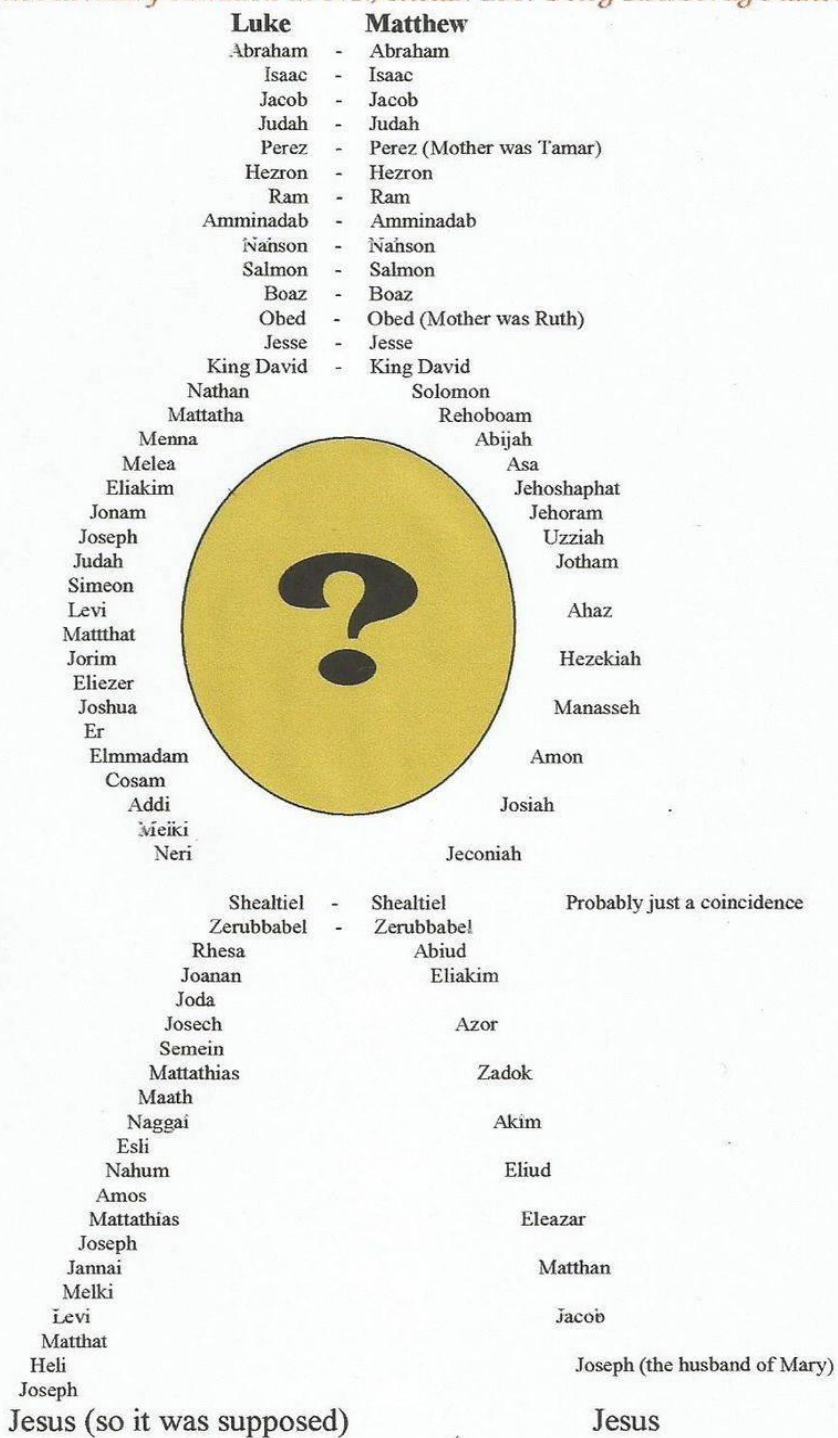


The three hundred trillion gallons of water that was dumped over the northeastern United States during the storm 'Sandy' would be less than a thimble full in comparison to the global rising of water at the alarming rate of six inches every minute. There is no credible archaeological or scientific evidence that would have been left behind if such a cataclysmic event had truly occurred. The true reason men and women of this faith cannot succumb to logic and reason is because the gospel of Luke traces the ancestry of the Redeemer all the way back to the eight survivors of the flood and beyond. The father of lies (humankind itself) has found the perfect way to discredit the true Creator as well as the one man who utterly understood the will of that Creator. It does not take rocket science to understand that peace and harmony can only be achieved if we choose to treat other individuals with the same dignity and respect that we would expect them to have for ourselves.

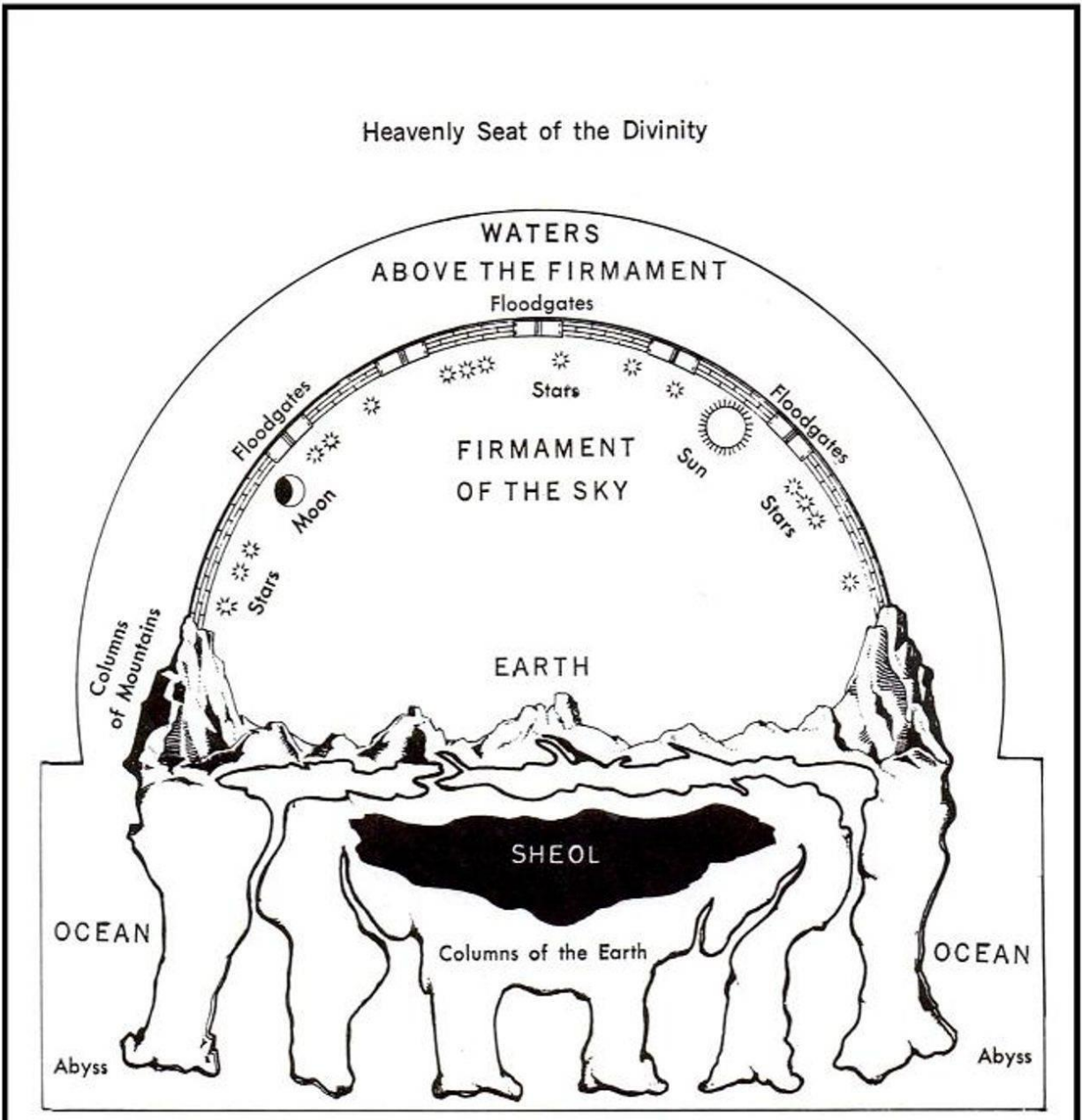
## Genealogy

*God (Only in Luke)*

*Adam-Seth-Enosh-Kenan-Mahalalel-Jared-Enoch-Methuselah-Lamech-Noah-Shem (Pre-flood)  
Arphaxad-Cainan (not actually included in O.T.)-Shelah-Eber-Peleg-Reu-Serug-Nahor-Terah*







## THE WORLD OF THE HEBREWS

**THE WORLD OF THE HEBREWS** — Graphic representation of the Hebrew conception of the world. God's heavenly seat rests above the superior waters. Below these waters lies the firmament or sky which resembles an overturned bowl and is supported by columns. Through the openings (floodgates) in its vault the superior waters fall down upon the earth in the form of rain or snow. The earth is a platform resting on columns and surrounded by waters, the seas. Underneath the columns lie the inferior waters. In the depths of the earth is Sheol, the home of the dead (also called the nether world). This was the same prescientific concept of the universe as that held by the Hebrews' pagan neighbors.

After just a little over a full year; the water that had miraculously inundated the world, has also miraculously abated. One of the first things Noah does after disembarkation is to build an altar; the purpose being to sacrifice some of the creatures that he had gone to such great lengths to save from a horrific deluge. The Creator has a fetish for the scent of burnt animal carcasses and then vows to Himself, "Never again will I doom the earth because of man, since the devising's of man's mind are evil from his youth, nor will I ever again destroy every living being, as I have done." While this may be a major source of comfort to some, He is not obligated to intervene if His creatures ignore global climate change of their own making or decide to create a nuclear winter with weapons of mass destruction. We are free to create our own extinction without Him ever having to lift a finger.

Okay! Moving on. The Creator blessed Noah and his sons and gave His "be fruitful and multiply" speech and further stated, "that the fear and dread of man would be upon all the beasts, birds, and fish."; mainly because now they were all on the menu. The one stipulation being that the meat had to be kosher. Why did He make this radical change in the diet of His creation? Maybe He figured that if humankind spent more time developing ways to kill, slaughter, and devour lower life forms; they would be less prone to killing each other. Next, He gives His support for the death penalty and throws in another quick reminder to be fertile and increase.

Now comes the icing on the cake, a pact is made with every living creature that He will never destroy all flesh with a flood. The story then alludes to the creation of the rainbow; to function as a reminder not to destroy every living creature with a flood. What type of omnipotent being needs a string around his finger to remind Him not to obliterate His creation? Was everything in black and white before He placed this spectral aura that emanates from our nearest star, Sol? Has anybody even noticed that if they are looking at a rainbow that the sun is directly behind their back and that certain atmospheric conditions can produce reflections? Are we bound to continue accepting myths (fantastic lies) created by men to explain truths that were unknown to them?

Despite the fact that the sun has never risen or set during its entire existence and that we have known this for several centuries; it has not changed our resolve to quantify the start of a new day as sunrise and its end as sunset. Even though many civilizations gave credit to some type of deity for transporting this ball of fire from horizon to horizon; they are now all regarded as myths. It is utterly amazing that

fundamentalist thinkers can believe that the Creator would stop the rotation of the earth and make the moon stand still at the request of one of His creatures (Joshua 10:13) for him to take revenge upon his enemies. There is also a tale (II Kings 20:11) that claims the rotation of the earth was reversed for a brief time to make a shadow go back ten steps. Believing that either of these events occurred without the cataclysmic destruction of the planet is like me hoping that Scotty will beam me up if I can prove intelligent life no longer exist on earth.

Now let us examine what Noah, a known tiller of the soil, did while he was busy repopulating the earth. He was the first to plant a vineyard and it becomes evident that he was familiar with the art of fermenting grape-juice to convert a portion of the liquid into ethyl alcohol. The righteous man, who had been delivered from the deluge, drank the wine, got drunk, and lost enough of his inhibitions to want to be naked in his tent. Why did his youngest son, Ham, see his nakedness and then feel compelled to inform the other two brothers who were outside of the tent? To me it is just another classic example of any author of a biblical book; not wanting to bog down the reader of their sacred scripture with details that would clarify a situation.

When the two older brothers, Shem, and Japheth, heard what Ham had to say: they backed into the tent with a cloth and covered Noah's nakedness without ever looking at him. Ham had to have done more than just accidentally walking into his fathers' tent and catching a mere glimpse of him in his drunken stupor. Otherwise, when he learned of the incident, why would Noah curse his grandson, Canaan, and make him a slave to the other two sons who had shown him respect. Justice does not appear to have been perfected yet; if it is okay to transfer punishment onto an innocent descendant, who had nothing to do with the original crime. But then again; Noah was created in the image of the Creator, who has a penchant for punishing the sins of the father from one generation to the next. (Exodus 34:7)

Chapter eleven of Genesis begins by stating that everyone had the same language and the same words; and as they migrated from the east, they settled in a fertile valley known as the plains of Shinar. That is the area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers just below what is present day Baghdad. Whoa! Houston! We have a problem! Mount Ararat is north of the area that they had traveled to from the east. If we read the verse correctly (Genesis 8:4); "...the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat." The use of the plural "mountains" could mean that it rested on any one of the peaks in the range of mountains that has Ararat as one of its peaks. Any group that is spending time and effort petitioning the Turkish government officials to let

them examine Ararat; might also want to consider petitioning Iran to explore Mount Damavand (Just slightly north of Tehran). If you are going to look for a fictitious ark, you might as well look for it where the fictitious literature says it is.



Regardless of how they got there; they decided that building a great city with a tower that would reach into the sky, would help them from being scattered all over the world: as well as make a name for themselves. This did not sit well with the Creator; the fact that nothing would be impossible for a race with the same language and a common goal. With the other beings that cohabited with Him in heaven, He

proceeded in having them assist Him in confounding their speech. The Tower of Babel would never be completed, and humankind would be scattered all over the earth with severe language barriers. Again, the supreme wisdom of this Creator, eludes me completely.

The rest of Genesis eleven lists the begats that trace Abram, the future Abraham, to Shem. When Abram was born his great great great great great great great grandfather, Noah, was still alive and his great great great great grandfather, Eber, outlived Abraham by eighty-eight years. We are also supplied with the knowledge that some, if not all their clan, had settled in Ur of the Chaldeans. They had not roamed extremely far; In 1743 B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) they were still in Mesopotamia when Terah and his sons began the migration to Canaan, but they only went up as far as Haran. It would be another five years before Abram, Sarai his wife, his nephew Lot, and all his servants and possessions would begin their trek to the land of Canaan.

Before we go to the next chapter, please remember that none of the dates that I have used should be considered accurate or authoritative. They are only precise if we acknowledge that at the time I am writing these words; it is the five thousand seven hundred and eighty second year (5782) of the Jewish calendar and that the divinely inspired authors are providing us with accurate numerical statistics. Everyone is free to accept whatever historical revisionist scheme they so desire and ignore the Chosen Ones who wrote the darn thing. Their timeline wipes out one thousand years of Egyptian civilization and that does not even include the prehistory that led to the establishment of royal dynasties that ruled in Egypt for more than three millenniums. When you factor in how long it would take for four couples to repopulate Mesopotamia, the coastal Middle East, and the Northwest corner of Africa, you would have a rather sizable gap in time when Egypt would have been without a dynasty. The descendants of Noah who migrated there would have to instantly decipher the hieroglyphics that were not destroyed by the deluge, because they were etched in stone; and immediately begin worshiping the new deities about whom they had just learned. Now all they would need is someone with enough chutzpah to become a Pharaoh and have the skill to doctor the list of kings so no one would know that there was a break in the Royal Blood line.

## CHAPTER IV: The Flashback

Let us think of this chapter as if we were watching a movie and one of the characters mentally goes back in time; to enlighten us as to why we are currently involved in his or her present dilemma. A myth is a fantastic lie, but it is still an effort on the part of the composer to explain a reality he or she can perceive without necessarily having a comprehension of the truth. It is only those who apply logic and reason; and then seek verification from others who can confirm and verify a stated fact; that a conclusion can be drawn that transcends the realm of improbability. To engage in an effective War on Ignorance; the portion of humanity that claims the Creator has given them sacred books that are a source of truth and guidance, must be willing to concede that they belong in the fictional branch of literature. They are still free to embrace these works as a spiritual comfort zone that improves their quality of life and embrace the hope of a better state of consciousness beyond the grave.

Three quarters of the United States population claim to be members of the Christian faith. Well over seventy million belong to the Catholic church and one hundred and sixty million prefer a Protestant affiliation. While Protestants appear greater in number, they are impaired by the fact that they have produced a minimum of two hundred diverse ways to misinterpret the same book. Pretty strange that at least two or three denominations can spring forth every year from teachings that proclaim a house divided against itself cannot stand. We need not worry that they will ever be inclined to form the First United Christian Kingdom. The acronym alone would be very debilitating to their cause. The pastors would be FUCK heads whose mission in life would be to recruit more FUCKers. The ladies' auxiliary meals on wheels would be run by mother FUCKers. It would even produce social changes; no self-respecting graffiti writer would ever consider defacing public property with letters that could be misconstrued with a goody two shoes group. Eh! It will never happen. Those four letters will always be associated with the Fornicating Under Carnal Knowledge syndrome, which makes it a dirty word. Since my wife exists, I must put in the disclaimer that I do not advocate the use of the F word in front of children. Also, my deepest apologies if I have offended your sensibilities.

Regardless of which doctrines, traditions, or teachings that have caused them to diversify, they all rely on the same book as their primary source of instruction. Even though there are several different versions, such as The King James, The New

International Version, Revised American Standard, etc., not much of the plot or storyline show any significant changes. I am still waiting for The Redacted Feminist Version; where they black out all the verses that say women should be subservient to men. The way things are going; I may not have long to wait. Anyhow, this is the manual they all choose to believe will assist them in attaining their ultimate reward, everlasting life in the Kingdom of Heaven. The motivation not to fail is that for doing evil; upon your demise you will be cast into a Lake of Fire or be sent to a place of darkness where you will weep and gnash your teeth. Considering the severity of the penalty for being a nonconformist; it is understandable that someone would choose to supplant logic with faith. Fundamentalist theology demands that we accept the creation story, without question, as the divinely inspired truth of the Creator.

In the sixteenth century A.D., May 24, 1543 to be precise, the earthly life of Nicolaus Copernicus came to an end, but not before his *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres) was published. He produced this crazy notion of a heliocentric model that places the sun at the center of our solar system. His death at age seventy deprived the Catholic Church of convicting him of heresy; the best they could do was to ban his work. They would; however, fare better in the seventeenth century, July 22, 1633, when they were able to place Galileo Galilei under house arrest for being vehemently suspected of heresy; after publishing *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*. This insanity of condemning one of this world's greatest scientific minds finally ended three hundred and fifty-nine years later, in 1992, when Pope John Paul II finally expressed regret for the trial result during a session of the Pontifical Council for Culture, which is fine if you do not mind giving Pope Urban VIII a mulligan on papal infallibility.

Once the protectors of the faith realized that labeling these two great men of science as heretics would not make the problem go away, the theological community was forced to concede that chapter one of Genesis was not a scientific treatise. The Creator wanted His Chosen Ones to have a poetic version of creation, which was just another way of assessing their resolve. Chapters two and three do not appear to help the situation; the theme is not a lesson in Anthropology but is to be viewed as an allegory. A mystical explanation of how sin banished humankind from a paradise of eternal bliss into a world filled with suffering and death. The notion that the Creator would claim authorship of such a literary work; that is equivalent to a signed confession, admitting to being a jealous, wrathful, merciless, and cruel dispenser of

genocide, incest, and injustice to a race of beings that were created by Him is a concept that boggles the mind.

The account of the six days of creation followed by a seventh day of rest also leaves much to be desired. Even if the Creator had a set of vocal cords that could utter, "Let there be light", the equivalent of a magician's 'abracadabra', it is still hard to imagine how it would travel across an empty void; and then be audibly recognized by an ether that would obligingly comply, and then begin emanating electromagnetic radiation without a source. The new day which was produced by the light would disappear in the evening and be replaced by darkness which would be called night until the next morning. Our beloved storyteller is aware that time exists but does not have a clue as to why. In the light of the next day the Creator observed that the void was not exactly empty; it contained water (I assume this; because there is no command, "Let there be water.") His next command was, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water...", and presto; we have sky. And there was morning and there was evening, a second day.

The next day was reserved for gathering the water that was under the sky unto one place; for dry land to appear. This action is necessary for the Creator to command the production of plant life, and the evening and the morning were the third day. On the fourth day comes the stroke of genius; the determination that the electromagnetic radiation created on the first day should have a source; a greater light, the sun, to rule the day and a lesser light, the moon, to rule the night; along with the stars that would serve as signs; to mark seasons, days, and years. Time was officially created to keep everything from happening all at once. The fact that it would take four and a half years before the first star would become visible to the naked eye, another fifty years for the count to exceed double digits, followed by billions of years before the magnitude of the universe could be appreciated, the writer does not hesitate to stipulate, "and there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. Did this Creator not anticipate that His creation would discover that they have been spinning and hurling through space at an outlandish rate of speed for several billion years? Does the fundamentalist genuinely believe that this information does not detract from their belief; that our little blue marble has only been around for a little less than six thousand years?

Moving on. Day five has been set aside to produce the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Then on the sixth we get the crowning point of the divine achievement. "Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature, creeping



things, and wild beasts of every kind." And it was so. Followed by, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." This use of the plural is a rare occurrence and quickly reverts to the singular in the very next verse; sharing the credit is not one of His strong suits. Not to worry, a well-trained Doctor of Divinity will attribute it to the Divine Mystery: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all the same entity, and that the heavenly kingdom is filled with a myriad of angelic beings. Many of these defenders of the faith will contend that I am taking the meaning of sacred scriptures out of context by gleaning only the passages that suit my purpose. It would serve them well to remember that many ministers have their congregations hopping from book to book throughout their sermon with the same intent. "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone."

One more point of clarification before I continue. I honestly believe in the concept that a human being should not participate in any activity that he perceives would be an injustice to himself if he were the recipient of its consequences. The Golden Rule do unto others as you would have them do unto you; is not the property of just one select group. It is the one sane ideal that will keep the whole of humanity from obliterating itself. Until we stop polluting the newborn with the ignorance of fear, hate, greed, and falsehoods; civilization will always be standing on the brink of disaster. We need to develop a science of thinkology that progressively instructs us in the art of making good choices. The term thinkology is not a new term that I am attempting to coin. Heartsoft Educational Software already markets computer programs with that name; that aids and encourages kindergarten and lower elementary school children to begin making use of the gift of making choices. I applaud their initiative, but currently only those who can afford to pay for the technology have access to their valuable tool.

However, a Thinkology that uses cartoon characters to urge young children to begin using their thinking processes is not the science I have in mind. This science should be comparable to the other major categories: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, etc. These are not the work of any one individual, but a compilation of humanities greatest minds working together to make the world we live in a little more understandable. Only a generation with well-defined sets of moral and ethical principles can meet the challenge to embrace alternative green (clean environmentally safe energy) and prepare to survive in and repair or even possibly escape from a planet that has received irreversible damage. The fate of humanity currently lies in the hands of corporate greed; they lack the wisdom to end our plight,

simply because ignorance is more profitable for them. Today I will be viewed as a gloomy prophet of doom, but in the distant future I will be remembered as a man who had a vision. I do not truly feel that I am alone on this; the academy award winning documentary 'An Inconvenient Truth' featuring Al Gore, demonstrates that not all have been deceived.

The purpose behind all this rhetoric has nothing to do with personal gain. The Global Initiative Fostering Thoughtful Environmental Design, Inc. will be a non-profit organization dedicated to humanity and the preservation of life on the planet we all live on. If you have not heard of it yet; the reason is that as of the moment, it is only a tiny mustard seed that has been planted in my brain and as the Good Book says, "even the tiniest mustard seed grows up to be a tree that birds can build their nests in." I have no reason to believe that any devout Christian will have read up to this part (they tend to burn or ignore anything they believe comes from Satan), but reason and logic does not hinder me from respecting the right to their belief. If following the ideal of their convictions makes them a better member of humanity; and that their happiness and joy does not infringe on anyone's right to have a different perspective, then the view that we are all beings of the one Creator, regardless of how we perceive Him, should be of no consequence toward producing emotional acts that lead to enmity. This applies to every religion ever created by man.

## **CHAPTER V: The Patriarchs, the Beginning**

End of flashback. The patriarchal characters and the events that evolve from the biblical story will have a direct effect on every individual of Semitic heritage and give rise to traditions and beliefs that continue to define them as the Chosen People of God; even unto this day. (A phrase frequently used in the Old Testament; indicating the writer is not an eyewitness but is recording what he deems is historical knowledge of something he heard or read someplace else.) The story that originated during the time of Moses would have to have been orally transmitted for at least eight centuries before the fifth and fourth century B.C.E. scribes began their meticulous transcribing and re-transcribing of the scrolls that would finally make up the Tanakh. Around 450 B.C.E., tradition has it that the Great Assembly (Anshei K'nesset HaGedolah), a group of 120 scribes, sages, and prophets whose task once

they completed it; would lead to the eventual canonization of the Hebrew Bible. It consists of twenty-four books that are further broken down into three sections: the Torah ("Teaching" or the five books of Moses), the Nevi'im ("Prophets"), and the Ketuvim ("Writings"). The Christian sect will later divide the same work into thirty-nine books when they make it part of their canon.

Chapter twelve of Genesis begins with the Lord telling Abram that He will bless him and make him a great nation. There is no indication that Abram is near a burning bush, having a dream, hearing an audible voice coming unexpectedly, or that the Lord can appear in physical form to anyone He wants to. The result of this news is that the seventy-five-year-old Abram, his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his servants and possessions depart to go to the land of Canaan. Upon arriving in the land of Canaan, the Lord appears to Abram (transliterated version of the Hebrew, ra'ah, meaning something that was seen or perceived) to tell him, a man who has not yet produced any offspring with his beautiful baron wife (only ten years younger than himself), that his descendants were going to inherit this land that he had faithfully consented to migrate to. Unhindered by the knowledge of his lack of offspring; he proceeds to build an altar. Being a direct descendant of Noah; providing the Creator with the aroma of burnt animal carcass would have been the natural thing to do. Unless he built the altar just for show; the writer of sacred scripture again demonstrates that clarification of a situation is never a requirement. Future commentators will be blessed with the gift of reading between the lines.

The land of milk and honey has not been perfected yet and famine drives our sojourners further south to the land of Egypt. The beauty of Sarai is such that Abram is convinced that his life will be in peril if they knew he was married to her. He convinces her that they should tell everyone that she is his sister, and in that way, they would preserve his longevity. It was not long before Pharaoh (sacred scripture never refers to which one he is) took Sarai into his palace to be his wife. We now get another glimpse of divine justice. The Lord inflicted plagues on Pharaoh and his entire household because Sarai and Abram had not been forthright about their marital status. The future couple of the Chosen Ones tell a lie and the ones who believe them get punished. The king of Egypt was very irritated with Abram, but he was unwilling to venture finding out what sort of cataclysmic event the God of Abram would put him through if he exacted revenge. His solution was to send Abram and his wife, along with all the wealth he had accumulated, back to where they came

from; hoping that it would be sufficient enough to keep him and his clan from ever coming back to Egypt.

When Abram, along with Lot, return to the place where he first built an altar and began calling upon the name of the Lord; they realized that all the extra flocks and herds they returned with would make it difficult for them if they both tried to dwell at the same location. Abram gave Lot first dibs, and he immediately chose the greener plain of Jordan. Deciding to pitch his tent near Sodom will prove later; not to have been an excellent choice. After the departure of his nephew, the Lord reminds the childless Abram that all the land as far as his eyes could see in every direction would one day belong to an innumerable number of his descendants. Before all of this can happen; one of the earliest, if not the first Middle East conflict must take place. Qualifications for being king must have been lax at that time, and any decent Risk player will tell you that if you do not want to be eliminated early; you need to form alliances. King Chedorlaomer and three more of his king buddies; were attacking everyone in their neighborhood until the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah united with three of their king buddies. The stage was set for the battle of four kings versus the five kings. The four kings were able to rout the five kings who chose to make their line of defense in the Valley of Siddim. Pretty hard to make a hasty retreat when the area to your rear is filled with tarpits.

Turns out that the invaders were simply out on a 'loot and plunder' mission; they proceeded to seize all the wealth and possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then they were on their way to kingdoms that they came from. However, two huge unforeseeable errors had just occurred, the nephew, Lot, had been taken captive and one of the fugitives had escaped and reported the incident to Uncle Abe. Being a man of great wealth, Abram had three hundred and eighteen men of his household who were trained for just such an occasion. They were able to overtake the marauders one hundred and twenty miles north of Hebron. Skilled in night maneuvers; they had the enemy fleeing at daylight and continued the pursuit another forty miles; until all that was taken was recovered.

Upon his return from defeating the four kings; the king of Sodom greeted him in the Valley of Shaveh, which is the Valley of the King. We then learn of the mysterious King Melchizedek of Salem, who acts as host and supplies the bread and the wine. Most Jewish commentators agree that Salem and Jerusalem are one in the same. The leader of the city which means 'peace' just happens to be the priest of the God Most High. He issues a blessing on Abram and on the God Most High for

delivering the foes into their hands. This service led Abram to contribute one tenth of the booty to him. There are very few ministers who overlook this passage when instructing the flock on the significance of contributing to the ministry. Now is a suitable time to point out that the material that I will be severely chastised for deriding; is considered by many of the faithful to be the work of Moses. Which is like considering that Bilbo Baggins wrote 'The Hobbit' as a prequel to J.R.R. Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings'.

The beginning of the fifteenth chapter of Genesis; use of the Hebrew word 'machazeh' (vision [in the ecstatic state]), is our first indication that communication between man and Deity may have been of a hallucinatory nature. When a man of faith experiences this effect it is called a vision. When someone without faith experiences this effect; he is either tripping on LSD, shrooming on psilocybin mushrooms, ingested some peyote, or freaking out on a chemical concoction that is designed to produce ecstasy. They all produce the same result, but the man of faith has the advantage of not leaving any forensic evidence that would indicate his condition was self-induced. Anyhow, after the usual prescribed animalistic ritual, Abram is informed that his offspring shall be strangers in a land, not theirs, and they shall be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years, but in the end they shall go free; with great wealth. Their return will be in the fourth generation, when the Amorites will have finished completing their quota of iniquities. The chapter ends with the promise that Abram's descendants would inherit a great amount of land; regardless of whoever was living there when they arrived. As Tonto might have remarked to the Lone Ranger, "Sound familiar, Kemo-Sah-Bee?"

Now Abram seemed content to let nature run its course, but Sarai, his wife, was concerned with the fact that she had turned seventy and was still barren. She produced the idea that Abram should take her Egyptian maidservant, Hagar, as his concubine. I doubt that it took very much coaxing to get eighty-five-year-old Abram to do what every married man dreams of, and the ensuing cohabitation produced a conception. Sarai then institutes the tradition of a woman's prerogative to change her mind. She perceives that she has been lowered in esteem from her maidservant and blamed Abram for the wrong that was being done to her. Proof that the illusion of marital bliss has been with us for more than four thousand years. Abram kept his cool and told Sarai that Hagar was her maidservant and that she could do whatever it was she thought best. She treated the woman harshly and she fled. However, this scenario was not at all part of the plan for human misery. An angel of the Lord found

Hagar at a spring on the road to Shur and inquired about where she came from and where she was going. After admitting that she was running away from her mistress Sarai, who was mistreating her, the angel told her to go back and to submit to her harsh treatment. In return was the promise of numerous offspring and the knowledge that she would bare a son, to be labeled Ishmael, which is enough of an incentive for her to comply.

When Abram is eighty-six years old, Hagar bore Ishmael. Thirteen years later at the age of ninety-nine, El Shaddai (God Almighty) appears to Abram and changes his label to Abraham, understood as "father of a multitude". A covenant is made between God and Abraham and all his offspring to follow; every male among them would have to circumcise the flesh of their foreskin. Abraham, Ishmael at age thirteen. and every male in the household, including his servants were all circumcised on the same day and every male child born in generations to come would be circumcised at the age of eight days. Anyone failing to adhere to this covenant would be cut off from his kin. The Creator then tells Abraham that Sarai should be relabeled Sarah and that even though she was ninety; she would bare him a son, and that they should label him Isaac. As for Ishmael, he would be the father of twelve chieftains and his descendants would become a great nation, but the covenant would remain with the yet unborn Isaac. Very few people understand that the unsolvable problem of peace between Israel and Palestine is the direct result of accepting this legendary nonsense as historical fact. Even though the Koran would not surface for another millennium, the enlightened Mohammed would still make references to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses, and even include the unwed Mary who gave birth to a gifted son. Many Christians, who have not made any effort to read the Koran, think it is a distorted version of their one true God.

Another strange piece of the puzzle is that the Jewish community has never reproached the new Christian sect, on behalf of the Creator, for copyright infringement. The first thirty-nine books of most Christian bibles were written for Jews and by Jewish scribes or prophets who were inspired by the Creator. I am guessing they are tired of being the only culture plagued with an overwhelming sense of guilt. Our government does not support Israel because they think that they are more entitled than the Palestinians; they support Israel because one hundred and eighty million Judeo-Christian constituents out number four and a half million Muslim constituents. Not the only reason, but the incompetence of our political system is a topic I will get to later.

The Lord next appeared to Abraham along with two other men. It turned out that they were on a mission to deal with the depravity of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. After being refreshed by the hospitality of Abraham; they told him that his wife Sarah would conceive a son. Sarah: who was close enough to hear the conversation, laughed at the thought of a woman who had already gone through menopause; would again share in the pleasure of sexual reproduction and receive a restored womb capable of bringing forth a male infant. Then one of the men, who we are led to believe is the Lord, asks Abraham why his wife Sarah laughed when she heard that she would conceive a child in her old age. "Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?" Fear overcame Sarah; who had wondered into the vicinity, and quickly she lied and said she did not laugh; but he replied, "You did laugh." The label, Isaac, is a play on the Hebrew word for laugh. Is this divine humor or divine irony?

When the three men were starting their departure, the Lord pondered as to whether He should inform Abraham about His mission. He did and when Abraham perceived what might happen to his nephew Lot; he began pleading with the Lord as to whether He would destroy everyone if He found fifty innocent people among them. The Lord said He was cool with that and would not destroy them for the sake of fifty. Then in a very annoying manner, Abraham gets Him to reduce it down to ten innocents. I once sat through a sermon given by a Pentecostal minister who implied that it was the intent of Abraham to Jew the Lord down to a number that would protect Lot and his family. The gentile congregation present found the offensive remark humorous and even mustered up a few nonobligatory 'Amen's'.

That evening the two angels arrived at the gate of Sodom where Lot invited them to spend the night at his house. The Lord had gone off to whip up a batch of sulfurous fire. He knew that even if He had been Jewed down to five; He would still get to rain down His wrath and destruction. That night all the men of Sodom, young and old, came over to Lot's house to have an orgy with the two strangers. Lot, not wanting to offend his two guests, offered them his two remaining virgin daughters for their amusement, but they were not satisfied with that transaction. Fortunately, the angels intervened with a blinding light that disabled all of them and kept them from finding the door. After the angels informed Lot of what they were really there to do, he attempted to warn his in-laws or future in-laws, various translations make it unclear, that they should flee from the place because the wrath of the Lord was imminent. They of course thought he was joking.

The next morning Lot, his wife (the scriptures do not give her a label, but I am willing to bet if it did; it would have been Melach, the Hebrew word for salt), and of course his two virgin daughters were urged to depart. Lot was still uncertain about the situation and he and his family had to be seized by the hands and pulled outside the city by the two men. They were instructed to flee and not look back. Lot was concerned that he would not be able to escape the disaster if he had to go through the hill country and asked that he be allowed to flee to a little place that was not too far away. The angels were accommodating and allowed Lot and his family to flee to Zoar; which would be protected from the devastation. Zoar, in case you have not guessed, is a play on the Hebrew word for little place. When they reached Zoar, the rain of sulfurous fire began destroying the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the entire greener looking Plain that Lot had chosen to move to. But Lot's wife was unable to contain her curiosity and when she turned back to look; she was turned into a pillar of salt. Do do do dah! Do do do dah! (imagine Twilight Zone music) If this is not the recipe for the first episode of a Rod Serling classic, then I do not know what is. We can only imagine the tiny little voices of the three remaining escapees saying repeatedly, "Don't look back, don't look back, don't look back...", as they fled from the sound of burning sulfur that was pelting down on everything for miles around. Probably was not until the next day that they came out of hiding to find out that Mom had done the no no and had been turned into a sodium chloride sculpture.

Lot was not content to live in Zoar for he was overcome by fear; therefore, he decided to move to the hill country to dwell in isolation with his two still virgin daughters in a cave. The eldest daughter, who thought she was the brighter of the two, convinced the younger one that if they were going to have babies; they needed to get Poppa passed out drunk and then have intercourse with him while he was unconscious. On two consecutive nights these two women would get their cherries popped on the erectile member of their own father, who would have no recollection of the incidents. Even more remarkable is the fact that nine months later; both would have sons who would produce the Moabite and Ammonite people. We now have two more tribes that the descendants of Abraham would be able to terrorize when they would start their ethnic cleansing phase. These whoppers are not tales I am making up as I go along. To the faithful they are the inspired words of their Creator.

Chapter twenty is a replay of the 'She is my sister' routine that they pulled in Egypt. Only this time Abraham has pitched his tent near Gerar, and King Abimelech is warned by God in a dream that he will die because he had taken this married



woman. Abimelech successfully argued that he was blameless in the matter since Abraham had told him she was his sister. God explained to him that He already knew that and that He had kept him from touching her. He is ordered to return the man's wife to him because he is a prophet and that he will prayerfully intervene for him and spare his life. The other option is death to him and all his family. When Abimelech confronted Abraham as to why he had done this to him, Abraham gave the standard 'you are a Godless people, and I was afraid for my life' reply. Then we are given the shocking revelation that he was married to his half-sister, so technically he was not really lying. Even if we choose to accept that twenty-five years earlier at age sixty-five, she was still a hot ticket that the Egyptians would kill for, it's hard to imagine that a ninety year old woman, who was amused at learning she was destined for motherhood in her old age, would still be emitting an aura of beauty that would pose a threat to the life of Abraham. The result remained the same; Abraham got his wife back with an increase of property and wealth.

The time finally comes when the promise is fulfilled. Sarah gives birth to Isaac, and she asks Abraham to cast out Hagar, the slave-woman, and her son, Ishmael. Abraham is a bit distressed at the idea of sending away one of his sons, but God told him to listen to Sarah because it was through Isaac that his offspring would continue. He was also reassured that Ishmael would still also become a great nation. He became a great bowman and lived in the wilderness of Paran and his mother got him a wife from the land of Egypt. The link to the three monotheistic belief systems that will one day instigate bloody carnage on each other in the name of their Creator all come from the same fictional gene pool. Taking every written word literally in sacred scripture by Judeo, Christian, and Muslim religions usually opens a whole new can of worms. The Tanakh, the Christian Bible, and the Koran all claim to be the work of the same Creator whether it is Jehovah, Jesus, or Allah.

After residing in the land of the Philistines for a long time, God put Abraham to the test. He was asked to sacrifice his favorite son, Isaac, as a burnt offering. The Koran has a similar story about Abraham; the only difference being, Ishmael replaces Isaac as the sacrifice. In both instances the Creator or Allah sends an angel to inform Abraham that his resolve not to withhold his favorite loved one was sufficient proof of his fear of God and that he need not conduct the deed to the end. And amazingly, a foolish ram had gotten his horns caught in a nearby thicket, and Abraham was able to supply the Lord with His favorite aromatic treat, burnt animal.

## The Cave of Machpelah Tomb of the Patriarchs



### **Chapter VI: The Patriarchs, the End**

Sarah lived another thirty-seven years before her death in Kiriath-arba, known now as Hebron, in the land of Canaan and since Abraham was an alien who was born in a distant land; he deemed it necessary to purchase a burial site. The Hittite man he paid four hundred silver shekels to was content to let him have it as a gift, but Abraham insisted on paying the full price of what it was worth. Someone in the theological field proposed the notion that this was the normal way business transactions were accomplished in those times. Sarah was buried in a cave in the field of Machpelah facing Hebron and this would have occurred in 1676 B.C.E., providing her Jewish ancestry is correct in their estimation of when creation began.

The site in the illustration at the end of the last chapter claims that several years ago beneath the massive building; they uncovered a double cave, revealing artifacts from the Early Israelite Period (some 30 centuries ago). The structure; however. was built two thousand years ago by Herod, King of Judea. He probably intended for it to be a place for gatherings and Jewish prayer, but over the centuries, invaders have used it according to their own religious orientation. The Byzantines and Crusaders turned it into a church and the Muslims converted it into a mosque. No mention is made as to whether any archaeological or forensic methods have been used to determine whether bodies, three male and three females, are actually buried there. The problem might also be that there are too many remains of other descendants buried there to make any kind of valid assessment. What, it still attracts over three hundred thousand visitors annually.

Moving on, Abraham was now old and one of his concerns for his son Isaac was that he should not have the daughter of a Canaanite for a wife. According to the story, he made the head of his household swear that he would go to the land of his kindred, Haran, and bring back a wife for his son. The servant was not sure that a woman would consent to return with him and asked if should bring Isaac there if that were the case. Abraham objected strongly to that idea, and he told his servant that an angel or messenger would be sent ahead to smooth the way and that if he failed he would be released from his oath, but for no reason whatsoever was he to take his son back there. Why? Who knows? Isaac is the forty-year-old son of a very wealthy father and is still waiting for Dad to provide him with a helpmate.

The servant makes his way to the city of Nahor, please forgive me for making an exceptionally long part of the story short, but the result was that he returned with a beautiful young virgin, whose label was Rebekah. Isaac brought her to the tent of his mother, who had passed away three years earlier, and thus was comforted by the love of his cousin. Just because a man chooses to remain single for twenty-five years after reaching puberty, does not mean that something unusual is going on. Later, Abraham took another wife, Keturah, and continued to produce offspring with her and other concubines, but Isaac was the only heir to all that he possessed. All his other sons received gifts and then were sent away to live someplace else. Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years before he died and was buried at Machpelah with his wife Sarah. Ishmael would live one hundred and thirty-seven and produce twelve tribes as promised. Even though they were not destined to inherit the land of milk and honey; I cannot help but wonder that if today, they mind

being stuck in the land of oil and money. Isaac took Rebekah as his wife at the age of forty and even though she possessed the "10" status of a Bo Derek; she was barren. He then pleads with the Lord to have this condition removed and at the age of sixty He is blessed with a set of twins, Esau, and Jacob. Esau is a hairy red head who becomes a skillful hunter and Jacob is a mild man who likes to hang around the camp. I am not certain what Esau's birthright was, but he was willing to sell it for a plate of red lentil stew. Esau had returned from the open country in a famished state and the only source of nourishment was a pot of red bean stew that just coincidentally happened to have been prepared by Jacob.

Famine appears to be a frequent occurrence, and Isaac moved his tent to the area of Gerar where King Abimelech of the Philistines dwelt. The Lord appeared to Isaac and bid him not to go down into Egypt, but to remain where he was. The same promise was made to him about his heirs being as numerous as the stars in heaven; because Abraham had obeyed Him and kept His charge, His commandments, and His teachings. Evidently, the Divine One is only willing to share His sacred purposes with one man and his closest male relative. Now comes 'She is My Sister, Act III'; like father, like son. This time it is an outright lie, but Abimelech does not fall for it; since there is no indication that he or his household suffered any consequences. He does catch Isaac fondling Rebekah from his window and confronts him about his deception. The only people allowed to fondle in those days had to be spouses. Instead of being charged with molestation of his sister, an edict was issued, "Anyone who molests this man, or his wife shall be put to death."

Isaac begins to prosper. He grows rich and wealthy, his livestock and household are enlarged, and that irritated the Philistines to the point of envy. They plugged his water wells with dirt and asked him to go away. He moves his encampment and digs a new well, but there is contention with the herders of Gerar who claim it is their water. He digs another well. same scenario, which urges him to move his encampment even further. He digs another well, no one complains, so he moves to Beersheba. There is an appearance at night from the Big Guy to remind him one more time that he will be blessed and that his descendants will increase for the sake of his father Abraham. Another well is dug just before Abimelech and a couple of his envoys show up, and Isaac wants to know what the men who had driven him away were up to. They had realized that the Lord was with Isaac, and all they wanted was a treaty for peace. An oath was sworn and for one brief shining moment there

is peace in the Middle East. If that does not convince anyone that this literary piece is a work of fiction ...

When Esau was forty and realized his father did not approve of Canaanite women, he got himself a couple of wives from the Hittites. Apparently, the monogamous institution of marriage had not been perfected yet. What did kick in right away was the fact that new in-laws were a constant source of grief for Isaac and Rebekah. Which brings us to the point where a mother and her son plot to take advantage of a dim sighted dying old man in order to secure a blessing for the wrong sibling. Rebekah overheard Isaac telling his son Esau to go out and kill some game and prepare it as a meal for him, so that he could give him his blessing before he died. She then tells Jacob to bring two choice young goats from the flock and that she would prepare them just the way his father liked them. Jacob was quick to point out that he was not hairy like Esau and that the trickery would backfire, and he would more than likely receive a curse rather than a blessing. Not to worry she says and covers his hands and the smooth part of his neck with goatskins and has Jacob put on the best clothing of Esau.

Isaac is able to detect that the voice that is speaking with him sounds more like that of Jacob than that of Esau and he is suspicious of the short amount of time it took him to accomplish his task. We are led to believe that the goatskin texture on his hands and the fragrance from the fields on the borrowed garments were enough to convince him that the pretender was his son Esau; so he issued the blessing. Shortly after Jacob had used his mothers' guile to procure the blessing from his father, Esau comes back with his kill and prepares a meal with it, but little does he know that his dizygotic brother who came out of the womb hanging on to his heel; has just pulled another fast one on him. Here we go again folks, Jacob is a play on the Hebrew word for supplants or he deceives.

Apparently, a blessing that has been wined and dined over is irrevocable, whether you obtained it honestly or dishonestly. Isaac trembled violently, which was probably just his way of saying something smelled fishy; he just could not quite put his finger on it. Esau, the eldest son, being first out of the womb by just a few seconds; had now been jilted out of his birthright and his blessing. Very bitter at having received a blessing lesser than he deserved, he mumbled his intent to kill his brother as soon as the period of mourning is over for his soon to be dead father. However, Rebekah gets wind of his plan and concocted a scheme of her own to have

Jacob go and visit Uncle Laban for a while. She nags Isaac about how insufferable Hittite women are and he proceeds to send his blessed younger son to Padan-aram to get his future wife. The Patriarchs appear to be giving a whole new meaning to the term "kissing cousins."

Isaac is now stuck in a twenty to forty-year death-bed limbo; a point which never seems to bother Christians who read the story, while his younger son goes off to obtain a suitable helpmate. Esau, seeing that Canaanite women displeased his father, took the easy route, and went and got another wife from Uncle Ishmael. Jacob then takes off for Haran and one night while he is journeying; he has a dream. In it he sees a stairway to heaven with angels going up and down on it and the Lord is suddenly standing next to him. He makes His 'all the land that you see' speech and your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth' speech. This time: however, He offers a no worry clause, as He will be his unseen bodyguard, who will make sure that his mission will be fulfilled. See what sleeping out in the wilderness using a stone for a pillow can do for you. Jacob then vows that if all of his dreams come through, he will set aside a tithe for Him. Hmmm...?

When Jacob arrives, he enters a fourteen-year labor contract with his Uncle Laban; that should have been seven years in length, but he was living in a culture that valued tradition more than it did honor. He did wind up with two wives out of the deal, the eldest, Leah, because of her seniority and the good looking one, Rachael, which he wanted in the first place. Because Jacob loved Rachael more than he did Leah, the Lord put her fertility rights on hold. Leah produced four sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; then her fertility is put on hold. Rachael is envious of her sister and tells Jacob to give her a child or she will die. Jacob, angered by her attitude, retorts, "Look woman, I'm not God." (Note: the quote is my own modern-day paraphrase, but it is still comparable to the one given in sacred texts.)

Rachel then produces the brilliant, though not original idea, that she can have children through her maidservant Bilhah. The ensuing cohabitation produces Dan and Naphtali. Leah, who had been taken off the production line, counters by giving her maidservant Zilpah, and she conceives Gad and Asher. We then run across the mandrake story. A mandrake is a narcotic plant whose root resembles the human form and was probably considered an aphrodisiac. Reuben, a son of Leah, came across some mandrakes in a field and brought them to his mother. Rachael who was aware of the exotic influence that one could obtain from such a wondrous find, asked Leah if she could have some. In the end, Rachel traded a night in the sack for

a plant that would improve her ecstasy in her barren state. The Big Guy took note of this transaction; and Leah who informed Jacob that he was a paid for male prostitute, conceived a fifth and sixth sons, Issachar, and Zebulun, and finally at last; an X chromosome won the battle, and a daughter was born; her label was Dinah.

The Lord finally remembers that Rachael has a major part to play in His plan for His creation. He opens up her womb and her disgrace is taken away. Joseph, the divinatory decipherer of dreams who will one day become the Vice-Pharaoh of Egypt, is added to the clan. Jacob has now served his time and is now ready to pack it in and head for home, but somehow, he gets talked into conducting genetic experimentation with livestock. I do not know if the scientific community has ever attempted to duplicate his work, but it is my guess that the results were stacked in his favor by the Divine One. Laban was getting fed up with his son-in-law because no matter how much he changed the rules, Jacob came out on top. The Lord gives Jacob the green light to return to his homeland. He calls Rachael and Leah into the field to inform them that their father is not a happy camper; since he had managed to acquire most of his wealth; which was measured in number of livestock at the time. They quickly rationalized that they and their children were entitled to the wealth of their father and if it now belonged to Jacob; the safe bet would be to leave with him. The whole kit and caboodle proceeded to sneak away without saying anything to Laban who is away somewhere shearing sheep. Unknown to Jacob, Rachael took advantage of the absence of her father and ripped off his household idol. They were very soon across the Euphrates River and headed for the hill country of Gilead.

Laban discovers three days later that they have fled, and he pursues them for seven days before catching up to them in the hill country of Gilead. The Lord has no problem invading the dreams of those who are not chosen; to warn them not to mess with the ones He has chosen. Laban expresses his discontent with Jacob kidnapping his daughters and claims that he would have gladly thrown a big going away party had he been upfront with him about his need to return to his homeland. He also believes he has the power to harm Jacob but is also aware of the rumors of what the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob can do to heathens who worship idols. He wisely chose not to act but was curious as to why Jacob had stolen his household idol.

Jacob admitted that he left secretly for fear that Laban would try to keep his daughters by force, but if he found anyone in his camp with his idol; they were dead meat. A careful search was made of the tents of Leah and Rachael, but the culprit had cleverly hidden it in a camel cushion, and she courteously asked her father not to make her rise because it was the time of her menstrual cycle. When no idol is produced, Jacob gives a self-righteous speech about his twenty years of faithful service and insinuates that if it were not for the fear of the God of Abraham, Laban would have sent him away with nothing. Laban still believes that his daughters and all their possessions are his, but concedes he is powerless to do anything about it. He demands that they make a pact before God; that Jacob will never mistreat his daughters or take any other wives besides his daughters. A truce is made, and Jacob offers up a sacrifice. Early the next morning, Laban bids farewell to his daughters and Jacob must continue to confront the reason for his departure in the first place, Esau.

Jacob sends messengers to Edom to let his brother know that he has returned and that he has acquired cattle, asses, sheep, and male and female slaves. His messengers return and inform him that Esau is coming and that he has four hundred men with him. Anxious about the outcome, he contemplates dividing his camp in two; thinking, that if his brother attacked one first the other might escape. However, after sleeping on it, he decided to send gifts of different livestock that he possessed. He sent them in droves so that as Esau approached him; he would be reminded at regular intervals that his very slightly younger brother wanted to bestow him with gifts.

That night he arose and took his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children (some translations say sons, but in both cases, they appear to leave out his twelfth child, Dinah) across a stream. He also sends all his possessions and livestock and remains there alone. Which brings us to one of the greatest wrestling matches of all time; an event that pits him in a match with a man, that lasted all the way to daybreak. The man pulls off some sort of maneuver that wrenches the hip of Jacob at the socket, but old Jake still has him in a headlock or basket hold that he cannot get out of. If the man who only liked to wrestle at night wanted up; he would have to bless Jacob. Suddenly, they are engaged in a casual conversation. "What is your name?" The reply: "Jacob" Response: "Your label shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with divine beings and humans have prevailed." Jacob asks: "Please, tell me your label." The reply: "You must not ask my label." End of conversation and Jacob (Israel) gets his blessing.



Jacob labels the place Peniel, meaning the face of God, for he has mistakenly believed that he had seen the face of God, and is overjoyed by the fact that he is still breathing. Any theologian worth his salt will tell you that no one has ever seen the face of God and lived to tell about it. No matter, Jacob (now Israel) was able to limp away and start another tradition that would be passed down from generation to generation. Even though it is hard for me to imagine sheep hips or chicken hips, they must have some muscle tendons connecting their femurs to their pelvic bones that kosher Jews will not eat.

It turns out that twenty years of separation had calmed Esau down and he greeted his brother Jacob with open arms. Coming out to meet his brother with four hundred men in arms was probably just a silly prankish ploy that he knew would make Jacob anxious. After introducing his family to Esau, Jacob urges him to keep the gifts that he had sent ahead of him. They part their separate ways and Jacob goes to Succoth to build himself a house and some stalls to keep his livestock in. He finally ended up in the city of Shechem, where he purchased some property for a hundred pieces of silver. He must have spent a good bit of time there, because Dinah was now an attractive maiden, and the son of the man who sold him the land; decided to have sex with her by force.

In desperation, he tries to convince her that it was an act of true love and pleads with his father to get her for his wife. As in most small towns the news that his daughter had been defiled came to Jacob rather quickly and even though he keeps it to himself, it is not long before her brothers know the story too. They pay Hamor a visit and he suggested that a marriage would be beneficial and that his son, Shechem, was offering to pay as large a dowry as they could name. Now the gift of beguilement was not wasted on the sons of Jacob. They agreed to it on the condition that every male in the town be circumcised. Shechem wanted Dinah so badly that he did not even hesitate before putting his foreskin to the knife and he convinced every male in the town to do the same. Three days later when their groin areas were still sore, Simeon and Levi were able to dispatch all of them by the sword. The other sons came to free their sister Dinah, who had been defiled, and proceeded to plunder the flocks and herds, asses, the wealth of their houses, their children, their wives, and everything they took as captives and booty. The first moral outrage in Israel was now complete. Jacob was upset with Simeon and Levi because he was short on manpower, and they might not be able to withstand a reprisal from neighboring

villages, who might be disturbed about the incident. To which they replied, "Should our sister be treated like a whore?"

Jacob decides to depart for Bethel, and the God of Love and Peace keeps anyone from pursuing them by instilling them with fear and terror. Deborah, whose only character development is that she is a nurse to Rebekah, dies and is buried. Jacob is reminded that his label is now Israel, and he receives the same promises that were made to his father and grandfather. They left from Bethel, and when they drew close to Ephrath, Rachael dies giving birth to the twelfth and final son of Israel, Benjamin. A pillar is set up over the grave of Rachael who was buried on the road to Ephrath, which is now known in modern times as Bethlehem (a fact that has never been corroborated by anyone other than Biblical scholars). We now have the complete cast of those who are destined to wind up in Egypt and have their future generations become the slaves of cruel taskmasters.

At the age of seventeen, Joseph has become quite a source of irritation to his older brothers. They despise him for being the favorite of their father and he has told them of a dream that he had. One day he will be in a position of high rank and that they will all bow down to him. While his brothers are out tending the flocks, Israel sends Joseph out to find them and then bring him back a report. When they see the young dreamer coming; they hatch a plot to kill him. Reuben, who is already in hot water for sleeping with one of his fathers' concubines, talks them into throwing him into a pit instead; with the intention of rescuing him later. That plan fails when the other ten spot a caravan of Ishmaelites and they decide to sell him for twenty pieces of silver. They retain an ornamental robe that his father had given him and drench it with animal blood. The report Israel receives is that Joseph was attacked by a ferocious animal and torn to pieces.

This turn of events brings much grief to Israel. He laments that he will mourn until he joins his son in the depths of Sheol. It appears that there was an awareness of the nether world long before anyone would be given the option of going up or down. Salvation would not be available until the Divine One would come to earth as His Son in the form of human flesh to become 'The Martyr' of all who have ever been martyred. However, that is another story and a subject we can deal with later. Where were we? Oh, yes! Joseph was about to be hauled off to Egypt where his dream interpreting skills would make him a prototype of the future savior of humanity. He recognized his fate was a Divine plan to rescue his family from the perils of a famine. I am sure it was not to give the sagging career of Donnie Osmond

a boost on Broadway. Please indulge me in my sense of humor; it is my way of making this book report type rendition of the Bible a little more interesting.

The inspired writer never seems to recall the label of a Pharaoh, but the courtier and his chief steward is Potiphar. Joseph is a successful slave who prospers at everything he puts his hand to and soon he is running the whole household. His only drawback was that he was well built and handsome. A facet the wife of Potiphar took note of and she proceeded to make a move on him. As much as she pleaded, Joseph would always resist her offer out of respect for his master. One day in the attempt to accomplish her mission she grabbed the garment Joseph was wearing, but he split and left her holding his garment in her hand. This is probably where the expression 'Nothing vengeful like a woman scorned' originated. She went to her hubby and told him that Joseph had tried to dally with her, but when she cried out; he took off leaving his garment behind.

The furious husband believed the story presented to him and threw his innocent slave into prison. Joseph of course made the best of a bad situation and in no time, he was running the joint. Later, the cupbearer and the chief baker teed off the king of Egypt and they were placed in the same confinement as Joseph. They both had dreams, which just happened to warrant the use of Joseph and his special skill. The cupbearer was informed that he would be released in three days and resume his post as cupbearer. The baker was told that he would also be released in three days, but his head would be chopped off and impaled on a pole. Despite of the request that Joseph had made of the cupbearer to mention him to Pharaoh and inform him of his wrongful incarceration, the joy of freedom overwhelmed, and he forgot.

It was not until a couple of years later that Pharaoh had a couple of strange dreams and the cupbearer finally remembered the amazing skill of Joseph. The interpretation of seven years of plenty and seven years of famine made perfect sense to Pharaoh, and he elevated Joseph to second in command over all Egypt. Seriously, I am not making any of this stuff up. At the age of thirty Joseph had risen as high as he could get, and Pharaoh gave him a wife whose label was Asenath. During the seven years of plenty when he oversaw storing all the surplus grain; he sired two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. The seven years of famine came just as he predicted, and Joseph was now in the position to redeem his family.

Meanwhile back at the ranch, the famine was taking its toll on Jacob, now known as Israel, and the brothers of Joseph. The ten oldest were instructed by their father to go down to the land of Egypt to purchase some of the rationed grain. He would

not allow the youngest, Benjamin, to go with them; the loss of his last son that came from the womb of Rachael would have been unbearable. The ten were off to see the wizard, oops, I mean the vizier. Upon their arrival, Joseph recognized them immediately, but he pretended not to and accused them of espionage. They denied the accusation and stated that their sole purpose for being there was to buy some grub. Joseph then tells them that if they wanted to prove that they were not spies; they would have to bring their youngest brother to him. He kept Simeon as a hostage and sent them away with grain and all the money they had brought to purchase it with. Israel was terribly upset over the fact that his sons had disclosed so much personal information about their family to a total stranger. Judah steps up and says that he would take responsibility for the youngest son and that he himself would be held accountable if anything bad happened to him.

They loaded their camels with balm and some honey, gum, laudanum, pistachio nuts, almonds, and they took double the amount of money they had brought before to ensure that it was not a setup. With a heavy heart, Israel bids them farewell, and it is back to Egypt with Benjamin. The ransom for Simeon had been met and he was released. Joseph invites them to dine at his palace, but anti-Semitism was already in play, and it would have been abhorrent for an Egyptian to dine at the same table as a Hebrew. Joseph did make sure that they all received adequate portions from his table and his full brother Benjamin received several times as much. They all ate and drank their fill with him.

Still feeling the need to instruct the brothers who had sold him into captivity a lesson; he had his house steward stick his personal silver goblet in the sack of the youngest brother. They departed at the first light of mourning and had not gotten extremely far before they were overtaken by an Egyptian posse. Naturally, the search for the stolen good produced the ritual tearing of their garments; because the item was found in the sack of the one whom they had sworn to protect. Judah pleads desperately with Joseph and begs him to take him as a slave instead; for he believed Benjamin was innocent and that the servants of Joseph were the perpetrators of the treachery. The game had finally gone on long enough; Joseph breaks down and reveals to his brothers that they have been punked. No harm done; the whole thing had been set up by God to ensure the survival of the children of Israel. Cecil B. DeMille would have been extremely disappointed if this mission had failed. At the age of one hundred and thirty; Israel and all his clan went to live in the land of Goshen, in Egypt. After seventeen years there, he dies and is brought back to the

land of Canaan to be buried with Abraham and Isaac as he requested. The rest return to Egypt and continue to increase and prosper until the death of Joseph at one hundred and ten years of age.



## **CHAPTER VII: THE EXODUS**

The time of a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph was inevitable. It would not be long before new leadership would take note of the fact that the Israelite population was increasing at an alarming pace that would make them hard to reckon with. They placed taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor and yet the more they were oppressed; the more they would increase. An edict was issued to the Hebrew midwives to kill every male child that was born and if it was female; let it

live. This sounds kind of whacked to me; if they wanted a decrease in population, they were drowning the wrong end of the production line. Anyhow, a man from the house of Levi and a Levite woman conceived a son and kept him hidden for three months before putting him into a wicker basket and setting it in the Nile.

The sister of the infant tracked this little mini ark in order to see what would happen to it. The daughter of Pharaoh just happened to be in the neighborhood and while taking her bath in the Nile; she discovered the basket. She had pity on it even though she knew it was a Hebrew child. The sister popped out of the reeds and asked her if she wanted him to be taken to a Hebrew woman, who would nurse him for her. The mother of the boy was paid wages to nurse her own son and when that was accomplished, he was taken back to Pharaoh's daughter, who labeled him Moses saying, "I drew him out of the water."

Some of you may have seen the movie 'The Ten Commandments' that I have already alluded to at the end of the last chapter. Just before the start of his epic adventure, the director himself (Cecil B.) comes out from behind a huge panoramic curtain to tell his audience that the movie they are about to see is not the product of one literary composition, but rather a collage of numerous historical works; that would make his three hour and fifty-nine minute film (with an intermission) a box office success. The true measure of a good Hollywood movie is not in that it represents a factual truth, but rests on how much it can gross after all the production costs are met.

At the beginning of the movie the Egyptian priests and seers are discussing the fact that it has been foretold that a man would arise from among the Hebrews who would be their deliverer. The event was eighty years away from happening, but their prediction will turn out to be right on the money. A few scenes later, when the daughter of the Pharaoh opens the basket, the baby boy is wrapped in a blanket that only a Hebrew weaver could produce, and we are led to believe that it played a significant role in the way Moses discovers his true identity. The screenwriters appear to have no qualms about straying from actual Biblical text and our hero is portrayed as a master architect who was reared as if he were one of the Pharaoh's own. He is highly favored until he reaches the age of forty and then the inevitable revelation of his true lineage comes to pass. While he is attempting to reunite with his roots; he kills an Egyptian who was beating one of his new-found brethren, which forces him to go into exile in the land of Midian as a fugitive. Hero saves

damsel, the father gives her to him as a bride, and after forty years of married life and shepherding; he sees a strange light on one of the mountains in the area where he was herding his sheep. As he approaches it; a voice from inside the bush tells him to remove his sandals, for the area in which he was now standing was holy ground. He was about to be engaged in conversation with the great "I Am".

The time for the great deliverer to go to Pharaoh and say, "Let my people go." was at hand. He is instructed on how to use a staff that would give Harry Potters' wand a run for its money. Our hero is reluctant to take the job because he feels he lacks the eloquence of speech to pull it off. The irate bush then tells him he can use his brother Aaron as his spokesperson. He packs up the wife and kids and heads on back to Egypt. The statute of limitations has run out and there is a new Pharaoh in town. In the cinematic marvel, Yul Brynner takes over as Pharaoh and even though his character knew about the transgression of Moses; the screenplay does not make an issue of it. Since not all ten plagues are covered in the movie; I need to rely on actual scripture to talk about them. Please forgive any confusion that this may cause, but it is not my intention to change anything that really did not happen in the movie.

Moses and Aaron make their initial visit to Pharaoh, and he proclaims that he does not know their God and he will not let the people of Israel go. Instead, he tries to discredit the upstart deliverer by not furnishing straw for them to make bricks with and demands that they still produce their normal quota. Their work becomes harder, and morale is low, but God reveals to the two prophets His sadistic plan to inflict horrendous plagues on the Egyptians, and that He would harden Pharaoh's heart to ensure that they got the maximum drift of what happens to people who mess with His Chosen Ones.

They return to Pharaoh and start off by letting the staff become a snake. Two Egyptian sorcerers produce the same effect with their staffs, but Aaron's staff snake swallows them up. As impressive as this may seem to be the heart of Pharaoh remained hard. The next morning Moses performs the first of the ten horrific plagues by dipping the end of the staff into the Nile and the water is turned into blood killing all the fish. For extra measure, every bucket and stone jar that had water in them was also turned to blood. Pharaoh was unimpressed and claimed that his magicians could do the same with their secret arts; the heart of Pharaoh remained hard. For seven days the Egyptians had to dig for water along the Nile; for the water in it was undrinkable. One down, nine to go.

The staff is stretched out again and the land becomes inundated with frogs. The magicians of Pharaoh, who do not like to be outdone, create even more frogs in a land that is already overpopulated with them. Moses says, "When can we leave?" Pharaoh says, "Tomorrow.", but when all the frogs die and are placed in smelly frog heaps, and he sees that relief will come; the heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Two down, eight to go.

Next the mighty staff struck the ground, and every particle of dust became vermin. Some translations say lice while others say gnats; take your pick, whichever you think is worse. Fortunately for the Egyptians, their magicians were stumped. The annoying little boogers could only be produced by God. The heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Three down, seven to go.

Swarms of insects or flies, it is another multiple choice, came next. This time Pharaoh offers to strike a plea bargain. He is willing to let them perform their sacrifices to their God right there in the land. Moses responded with the fact that the Egyptian people would find the burning of perfectly good livestock offensive. Pharaoh agrees to let them go a little way out into the desert and Moses sends the insects away. But you guessed it; the heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Four down, six to go.

Moses tells Pharaoh that all the Egyptian livestock: the horse, the asses, the sheep, and the goats would be struck with pestilence and die. Adding insult to injury, only the livestock that belonged to the oppressed Israelites would survive. After all of the livestock of Egypt dies, he sends an envoy to see if the Hebrew livestock is still standing. They were, but the heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Five down, five to go.

It is now time to throw some soot from a kiln into the sky: in order that it may become a fine dust and inflict man and beast with inflammation and boils. The Egyptians magicians were not able to respond to this; for they were bedridden with inflammation and boils. The heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Six down, four to go.

The Lord tells Moses to inform Pharaoh that the plagues could have been much worse and that He could easily wipe them off the face of the earth, but they were being spared to let the world know of His power and His fame. Tomorrow He will rain down a heavy hail that the world has not seen before; therefore, they were instructed to hide themselves and any beast they wanted to remain alive indoors. The hail combined with fire would destroy all who would not heed and remained outdoors. Only around the land of Goshen would Captain Kirk have Scotty set up a



force field to protect the children of the Federation. Whoops! Sorry, wrong fiction. The Egyptian flax and barley crops were ruined, but not the wheat: for it was not yet the season. The heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Seven down, three to go.

Since there were still trees and other vegetation left; the next plague was locusts. Greedy little grasshoppers were blown in by an east wind and they devoured every leaf of green that was in sight. Pharaoh cries uncle one more time and a west wind blows the locusts into the Red Sea. Just like before, when the problem goes away, the heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Eight down, two to go.

You really must stretch your imagination for this next one. We are led to believe that darkness has a sort of physical attribute that can be spread over an area and that it possesses a quality of thickness that can be felt. Light is incapable of penetrating this blanket of darkness and for three days the Egyptians are forced to stay put; they are not even able to see their hands in front of their faces. The Hebrews of course had light in their dwellings. Now it seems to me; that if you are able to make it through three days of light deprivation and still have any sanity left, you are going to want to do something about this idiot Pharaoh who is making your trek here on earth a living hell. Just wishful thinking: that does not happen, the heart of Pharaoh remained hard. Nine down, one to go.

The final plague, thank God, is the revelation of what is behind the purpose for all this tragedy. The greatest tradition of all Hebrew traditions is about to unfold, the Passover. The firstborn male of every household in Egypt and the firstborn male of every beast of the field are going to die. The Angel of Death descends at midnight and only the houses that have been sprinkled with the blood of a lamb on its door posts are spared the loss of a loved one. The son of Pharaoh died and that is the straw that broke the camel's back. Moses and his elite (six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men from the twelve tribes of Israel, women and children not included in the count) depart with the wealth of Egypt and are headed to the Promised Land.

One last obstacle to overcome; Pharaoh decides to pursue them with his chariots, and it appears that they are pinned down against the Red Sea. The Man of God stretches out his staff and an extraordinarily strong wind from the east opens the sea. A pillar of fire temporarily halts the enemy progress and Israel escapes on the dry sea bottom. Fiery pillar disappears, chariots follow, and the enemy is drowned. Moses is given the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai and they wander

in the wilderness for forty years eating manna (magic bread that falls from the sky six days a week) and a population of quail that can regenerate itself every day to feed over a million people for that length of time. This is the end of my assault on the part of the Sacred Scriptures known as the Tanakh to Judaism and the Old Testament to Christianity.

No matter how masterfully written and poetically aesthetic they appear to those who believe that these are the works of Divine origin; the literal interpretation of the contents, in my opinion, cannot be construed as being based on factual events that actually occurred in the timeline of true historical human development. This in no way takes away from the allegorical intent of the authors to inspire mankind in the realm of a spiritual nature. What fundamentalist need to understand is that there are some people in the world who do not want biblical creationism shoved down their throats any more than they want to accept the theory of evolution as a viable alternative explanation. Neither of which can fully or adequately explain how or why we are here.

## CHAPTER VIII: THE NEW DEAL

Now it is time to examine the New Testament; that portion of the Sacred works that has led the gentile nations to embrace a Deity who formerly only did business with His Chosen Ones. This brings us to the most controversial argumentative topic of all time. Did the Creator impregnate a young maiden who had never had relations with a male counterpart? Every story that predates this one with similar claims has come to be viewed as a myth or a legend of questionable veracity in western society. Christians are compelled and attempt to compel others to believe that the union of God and a woman produced an offspring that walked upon this earth in human fleshly form. They do not make an extraordinarily compelling case for themselves when two of their gospels have conflicting genealogies breaking off at King David. Even more confusing is that they both end with Joseph who we are told had nothing to do with his conception. The prophetic saying in Isaiah 11:10 cannot be fulfilled in Romans 15:12; when they try to link the coming of the messiah to the root of Jesse, if Joseph is not the true father; regardless of which genealogy is correct. Then there is the fact that lineage of Joseph is traced back to the to eight people who supposedly survived a world deluge on an ark with two of every kind of animal.

Enough said. Let us go with benefit of the doubt and accept that someone who was known to be from the tribe of Judah (a non-Levite) could somehow become a Jewish rabbi (you might want to substitute the word teacher here) whose label was Yahshua (Yeshua preferred by messianic Jews).

## Transliteration of Yahshua into Jesus



Somehow through transliteration from Hebrew all the way into English, a soft vowel sound turns into a hard consonant "jay" sound (that did not receive recognition until about five to six hundred years ago); therefore, Jesus. I am guessing it turned out that way to facilitate swearing. Example: Hit your thumb with a hammer and yell "Yeshua the Messiah". Then smack it again and belt out you best "GEEZ-US-CRYST". See what I mean?

Let us assume Yeshua was able to acquire knowledge and wisdom from the Torah and other Sacred works that came down to Him through the oral tradition. He would probably possess the peculiar insight into the fact that his generation was incapable of adhering to the six hundred and thirteen commandments in the Law and that the

present priesthood of Pharisees and Sadducees were taking advantage of that situation and using it corruptly to benefit their own self-interest. He would have been able to see that a deep love for a one true God and the ability to treat all of mankind with love; could only be accomplished by ridding themselves of all hatred for any past offenses. This would be the only way the content of the law could be fulfilled. It would also be feasible to believe that He possessed a charismatic aura and that He would make a career of teaching large crowds on the perils of having a vengeful nature. There would also have been many who could embrace His teaching about the benefits of sharing the essentials of life in a collective manner. This message would pose a serious threat to the amount of sin offerings that the priesthood of the temple was accustomed to receiving to supplement their livelihoods. Setting Him up to have the Roman occupiers crucify him, a practice they were particularly good at, would have been an absolute necessity.

There is no physical evidence or historically verifiable evidence that such a person ever existed. The faithful point to historians such as Josephus, who wrote 'Antiquities of the Jews' (A.D. 93?) They neglect to say he was born four years after the death of a Yeshua and that six decades had passed before his work came into existence. Making any passage concerning Yeshua merely hearsay, and not an eyewitness account. There are also some who suspect that the passages are the work of some Christian forgery.

*At that time lived Jesus, a holy man, if he may  
be called, for he performed wonderful works, and  
taught men, and joyfully received truth. And  
he was followed by many Jews and many Greeks.  
He was the Messiah (xviii, 3)*

The very fact that this historical bit of information is not recorded until sixty years after Yeshua and His disciples were in the Holy Land; leaves room for speculation. A myth: however, regardless of how unbelievable the circumstances and events maybe, is still an attempt by the author to convey a message based on truth. The message of brotherly love and salvation could not flourish as the product of an ordinary man who was unjustly crucified by the Romans simply because of His keen insight to the truth. Only a descendant from the line of King David who possessed miraculous abilities to heal the sick and restore life to the dead could accomplish this mission. It would be at least three decades before anyone ever decided to give a written account of events that they themselves may not have been a witness to. In

order to make the events a Divine fulfillment of the prophetic coming of the long-awaited messiah of the Chosen Ones; they would have to link it to the events in the Tanakh, the Divine instruction manual that the New Testament Yeshua was very well-versed in.

The founding fathers of the Christian Religion were without a doubt born in a Jewish community, but the faith they aspire to resembles more the teachings of the Essene sect rather than the two sects that were still into temple worship. The Yeshua of that time might have been a renegade member of this sect who did not believe that a monastic and ascetic life was a necessity in man's effort to restore a relationship with the Divine Father of Light. Perfection of the soul could be attained by living a life without sin simply by letting love govern every action that you take. The Essene sect was also noted for their healing skills and if Yeshua had spent any length of time within their community; He might have learned remedies for illnesses that might have appeared miraculous to a population that had not been exposed to the same kind of education. Modern science has produced many cures for various diseases, but there are very few doctors that will readily admit to being able to duplicate some of the miracles attributed to Yeshua.

It is also likely that He would take as many as twelve men from different walks of life and attempt to instruct them the art of reaching the perfection He had already attained. He would have honestly believed that he was the Son of the Cosmic Creator and that anyone who followed Him; would also gain access to the heavenly realm, that every loyal and obedient son is entitled to. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me." (John chapter 14 verse 6) While there may have been a limited amount of success in communal living after His departure, it never actually rooted itself into a lasting tradition. What resulted instead was an organizational structure that became so proficient at reporting and twisting what He did into meaningless rituals; that they forgot that all He wanted was for them to emulate His humble and serving nature.

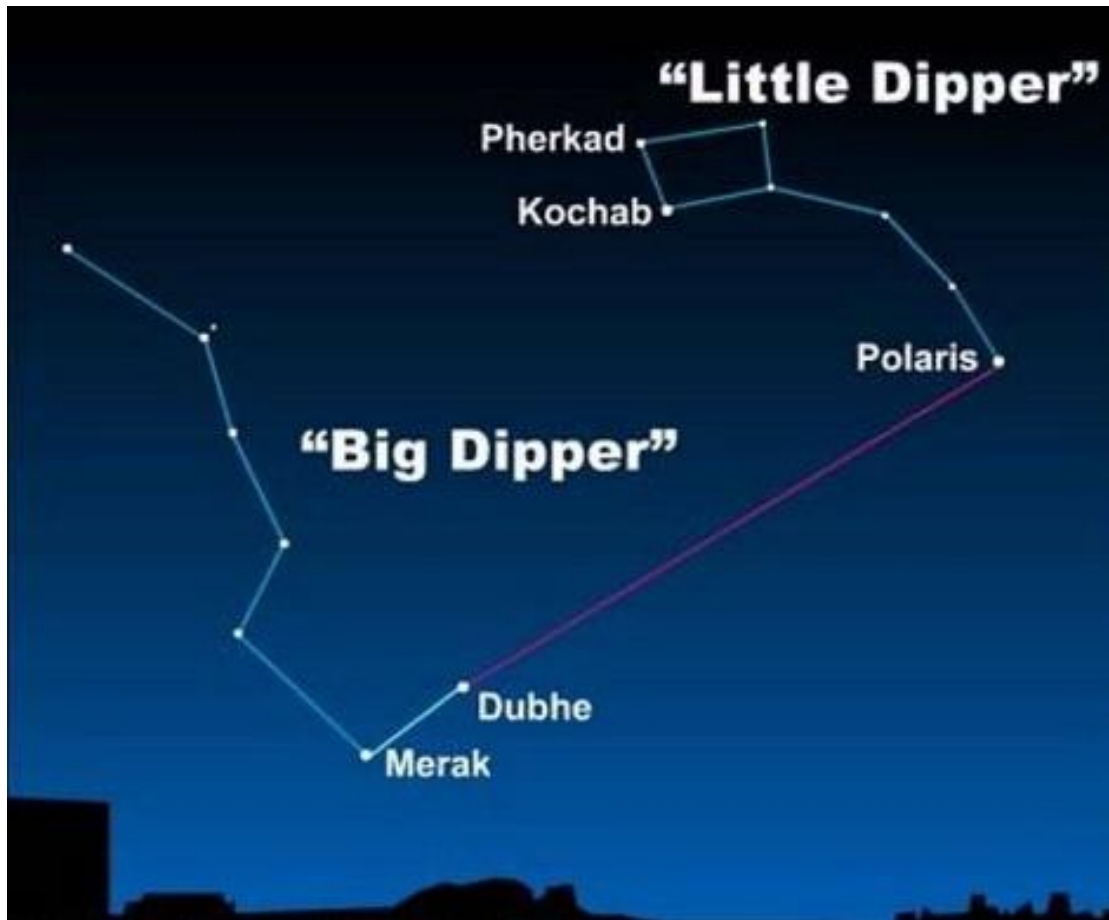
The largest and most dominant sect is the Roman Catholic Church that has its own Vatican City (The Holy See) located in Rome, Italy. An organizational conglomeration that has so much wealth and recognition; that it is listed in 'The World Almanac' as a nation. The head of this nation is the Supreme Pontiff or in the vernacular of the average layperson, the Pope. At the time that I was writing this portion of rhetoric; the world had been thrown into a state of mourning at the loss of Pope John Paul II, a man whose biography indicates that he worked diligently to

preserve human rights and to bridge the gap that separates mankind over spiritual differences. A tough sell when your dogma clearly claims that the only means of salvation is if you believe the way that they do.

For a faith that professes not to be able to serve both God and mammon, they have chosen to build huge extravagant cathedrals for grown men to parade around in wearing fancy robes and pointed hats; to ceremoniously remind mankind, year after year, of the tragic and torturous death of their Savior and they have the nerve to call it 'Good Friday'. They do; however, resurrect Him in a couple of days and after a brief stay, send him to His heavenly realm where he does not have to put up with any of their nonsense. Instead, the shrouded message of truth remains hidden in their Sacred Canon. I use the term shrouded because the total veracity of the four gospels can only be accepted by those who abandon logic and claim by faith; that Divine wisdom and understanding are beyond what the feeble human mind can achieve.

Let us examine the New Testament story about Herod the great, who supposedly learned about the birth of the King of the Jews from three Magi who lived in the East (An event only reported on in the book of Matthew). They claim to have spotted His star from their land in the East and felt obligated to come to Jerusalem; assuming their expertise at star gazing was adequate for them to pinpoint the coordinates over the Middle East region of Judea. Star gazing and astronomy may not have been perfected sciences, but surely a fixed star phenomenon hovering over the small town of Bethlehem would have been noted by someone and recorded somewhere for other future star gazers. The best Christian apologist have produced is that around five B.C. the Chinese report the sighting of a comet which has absolutely no significant property that makes it comparable to a star. It does; however, support their claim that little Yeshua was born around that time, since actual history records the death of Herod as occurring in four B.C.; leaving us bewildered as to why Anno Domini has a six-year delay to it.

Being a native of the northern hemisphere; there is only one fixed star that I am aware of, Polaris, and to be fair; it really is not particularly fixed, but at the present time it is less than three quarters of a degree off from the North Celestial Pole (NCP). Also, contrary to popular opinion, it is not the brightest star in the night sky, but on a clear night it is still visible to the naked eye. Most viewers locate it by extending an imaginary line using the two stars that form the outside edge of the Big Dipper, which points to a star that is located at the tail end of the Little Dipper.



Those constellations are also known as Ursa Major and Ursa Minor (the Big Bear and the Little Bear). Here is a bit of irony for you. The closest thing to a fixed star is one that is directly above the North Pole, which any red-blooded American child will tell you is the place where Santa Claus lives. A robust and pleasingly plump old gentlemen with a white beard, who wears a red suit, and he possesses the omniscient skill of knowing whether you have been naughty or nice. Parents have been indoctrinating their children with this falsehood for generations. They might as well tell them that the North Pole is also where Jesus was born; then at least the connection between Old Saint Nick and Little Baby Jesus would share a common thread. Do not get me wrong; I am not against Christmas, but why is it that we can't be generous and giving every day of the year instead of waiting three hundred and sixty-four days to do it just once?

Even more bazaar is that after being instructed by Herod the Great to find this child and report His whereabouts back to him; the star moved and stopped directly over the house (somehow, they received an upgrade from manger status) in Bethlehem where Mary, Joseph, and little Yeshua were staying. The Divine One has changed the rotational spin of the earth so that three wise men from the East can deliver gold, frankincense, and myrrh to His Son. The event occurred well after the manger scenario in the gospel of Luke, but that does not prevent Christians who are inept at reading and understanding their Divine truth; from displaying them in their miniature or sometimes life-size Nativity scenes.

Of course, the Magi shirked their responsibility to Herod the Great, after being warned in a dream; leaving him no other choice than to kill every male born in Bethlehem within two years and younger of the time that the event was foretold. Pretty strange action when you consider that they delivered Yeshua to the Romans because their culture supposedly had no law that could condemn a grown man to death, but it was okay to slaughter hundreds of innocent children simply because one of them could pose a potential future threat. Even when Yeshua was just beginning to preach His good news; Herod Antipas (one of the many Herod's of the Herodian Dynasty) orders the head of John the Baptist on a platter in order to fulfill a promise he had made to an attractive dancing girl.

Another point of the updated version of the Divine Manual that pushes the limits of credulity is that everyone born of the seed of man has the original sin. If your mother was not a virgin when she conceived you; the unpardonable crime of Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit is part of your resume. The Savior of all mankind would have to be asexually reproduced. A single ovum would have to somehow create its own second set of twenty-three chromosomes; including the all-important Y chromosome, needed to ensure that a circumcision would take place. The faithful view this event as the fulfillment of a prophesy from Isaiah chapter seven, verse fourteen. "Look, the young woman is with child and about to give birth to a son. Let her name him Immanuel." (Immanuel is a Hebrew word meaning "With us is God") This is how this verse is translated in the Tanakh which attempts to remain faithful to the original Hebrew text.

The King James version and most of the other diversified translations go with, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." The angel who delivered the news to Mary of her immaculate



conception was not familiar with this passage and told her to label Him Yeshua, meaning Jehovah is salvation.

The ambiguity of whether a young woman with child is or is not a virgin is not conclusive evidence that someone is tampering with prophecy. For that we need to go to Matthew chapter two verse twenty-three, "So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene." Anyone familiar with studying the Bible; knows that you cannot cross reference the word Nazarene with anything in the Old Testament, it is just not there. The closest thing is Nazarite, and most members of the pulpit will not touch that one with a ten-foot pole, unless they pad it with the phrase 'He was a spiritual Nazarite'; for they all know that one of the things He was faulted for was eating and drinking with sinners and tax collectors, And last; but not least, it is reported that at a marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, He was responsible for transmuting water into one of the finest vintages ever tasted at the request of His mother, Mary.

That marked the beginning of numerous reports that He possessed attributes that defy the physical laws of science. He walked on water, calmed the storm, healed the crippled, gave sight to the blind, cured the lepers, fed the multitudes, and probably His most amazing feat; raised Lazarus from the dead after he had been entombed for four days. Even more remarkable; is that it took three decades or more before any of these miracles were written about. Mark and Luke are secondhand accounts and Matthew and John, who may have been eyewitnesses, decided to wait a couple of decades or more before they were inspired to give their versions. None of this matters to the Christian thinker; they are indoctrinated into believing that every author of their Sacred Book is under the influence of the Divine Muse. I have no problem acknowledging that a man of Jewish decent was crucified by the Romans and I respect the rights of Christians to worship Him in whatever manner they see fit, but until one of them comes forth and performs even greater deeds than the ones of the Master; which He said they would, I reserve the right to remain a little skeptical about some of the things that were written about Him.

Many of my critics, and I am quite certain there will be many, will say that not all scripture should be taken literally. They are the ones that have come to view scripture, especially the Old Testament stuff, as an allegorical presentation; put into story form by divinely inspired scribes; that contains deep mystical revelations about a Supernatural Being. Biblical scholar is a term that I believe should be placed in the same oxymoronic category as military intelligence. It is largely due to the efforts

of those members of humanity, who were drawn into the realm of theological academics, that we owe for the pollution of intelligent minds with the definition of God as an omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent being. For those unfamiliar with the three Omni's: what we have here is an all-knowing, all-powerful entity, who occupies every area of space in the universe and is in total control of all things.

My objection to their definition of a Higher Power is that it severely hampers the ability of mankind to operate with the status of free will. Obedience born from fear of perdition can never be regarded as true freedom. The ideal of freedom can only be attained if it is exempt from external control. Every man, woman, and child should be educated in the art of making good choices that are based on human knowledge and experiences. History has shown us that poor choices and mistakes only contribute to the negative and unwanted turmoil that make the world a living hell. A civilized society cannot endure if it continues to allow the abuse of knowledge in the name of liberty.

## **CHAPTER IX: Democracy and Politics**

Shifting over to the political side of things; the liberty that we desire should be free of actions that cause harm to others or that threaten the natural environment that sustains all life. To obtain this kind of liberty; mankind must be willing to submit to the rule of law, but not just any law. There must be guidelines that uphold and preserve the rights of all humanity: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; as well as guaranteed equality and justice for all. The sole function of a democratic government should be to make and enforce laws that will protect these ideals and any machinery that goes beyond this function; is not acting in the best interest of the people who created it.

The founding fathers of this country understood this, but only in part at that period in history. The native Americans, whose land we stole, the Afro-Americans, who were brought here against their will, and women were all excluded from the status of equality that the white male population had full access to. We must give them credit; however, for having the wisdom to understand that the use of amendable statutes was a necessity; to accommodate social change and the inventive spirit that exists in man. It was a long and painful process, but eventually the Afro-Americans

were emancipated, the women were finally given the right to vote, and native Americans can now operate lucrative gambling casinos on their reservations.

In his work 'Civil Disobedience', Henry David Thoreau, gave his approval to the motto, "That government is best which governs least" and that if it was carried out; it would amount to this, "That government is best which governs not at all." However, I do not believe he envisioned the partisan gridlock system that our two-party establishment has produced to make that wish come true. They go through the motions of being a legislative body, but neither side will let one side of the aisle pass any meaningful legislation; out of fear that they will lose the base of their constituency around election time. When they are at their bi-partisan best; they give us things like the USA PATRIOT Act. Legislation that went through so fast; that hardly anyone knew what was in it, largely because many of them found it too cumbersome to read three hundred and sixty-three pages of an act that was being worked on long before 9/11 ever happened. The administration in power used this horrific act of terror to push through this legislation as a means of combating the Global War on Terrorism. More than a dozen years have passed, and they are still trying to figure how to untangle the gigantic mess they have made of our constitutional rights.

This is only one example of the complicated machinery that our nation must endure, but there are very few of us who enjoy being imposed upon by men and women who act in the best interest of their wallets rather than in the best interest of their country. Are Americans naive enough to believe that the millions of dollars that somehow get into their campaign coffers simply comes to them with no strings attached? We have grown accustomed to being a capitalistic culture and no one seems to care that one percent of the population is more than likely in control of everything. Elected officials are merely an illusion to make us believe that we are still a free and democratic society. Of course, this is all merely conjecture on my part. A good conspiracy theory never hurts any piece of literature, but if anyone ever finds any evidence that proves this to be true and lives to talk about it; I will be considered a genius.

Most of our elected officials probably go to our Nation's Capital with every intention of fulfilling all the campaign promises that got them elected in the first place. They just are not prepared to enter a zone even more mysterious than the Bermuda Triangle; they are trapped in what I label, the D.C. Circle. Every ounce of common sense and all the ethical values they may have had, mysteriously vanish

into thin air. They still have a vague recollection of what got them there, but they are soon indoctrinated into the fact that if they do not get into the right committee; they will be pretty much powerless to do anything. The only time they truly recall the promises that got them elected is when they leave the Circle and go home to get re-elected, but by now they have learned political speak and they are able to reassure their constituents that they are making progress for their causes.

It has been a long time since the word honest and the label of a politician have appeared in the same sentence. Abraham Lincoln had that word associated with his name, 'Honest Abe'; which probably originated from stories or legends of a period in his life when he was the manager of a country store. This included various reports indicating that whenever he discovered a discrepancy that shorted a customer of what they were due; that he would actually, on occasion, shut down the store and walk an exceedingly long distance to give a totally surprised individual recompense for his oversight. It is within the limits of possibility that such occurrences did take place, but it was also reported to me in my early education; that George Washington could never tell a lie. He dutifully reported to his parents that he was the culprit who chopped down the cherry tree. The tale was included in a biography written by Parson Weems ten years after his death and is attributed to an old neighbor who claims to have known him as a boy. Despite the lack of credibility for the story, many members of the teaching profession, with meaningful intentions, decided to use it to instill the virtues of truthfulness and integrity on the young minds of those that have been placed in their charge. At least that is the way it was half a century ago when I was receiving my primary education.

The invention of the internet may have put an end to some of the misinformation that I was exposed to; but then again, it is an unregulated entity that allows anyone to place information on it; whether it is based on truth or falsehood. Sifting through it for factual information can turn out to be very risky business; which is why I urge everyone to exercise caution and seek other sources of confirmation; before declaring with certainty, that they have gotten it right. One fact very few red-blooded Americans will deny; is that two hundred and forty-six years ago from the year two thousand and twenty-two, a body of men living in the thirteen original colonies took it upon themselves to be rid of a man they deemed a tyrant, King George III. They were willing to give life and limb to be free of the injustices they felt he had inflicted on them, and their victorious effort is what made the organization of our democratic institution possible. Every American since then is

obligated to defend their achievement; also, with life and limb, in order to preserve the integrity and freedom that we as a nation so dearly treasure.

It is no big secret that in the early spring of two thousand and three, our country was duped by an administration into believing that our duty to democracy needed to be extended to a country that could not achieve it for themselves. The Iraqi population is ninety-seven percent Muslim and concepts such as separation of church and state would hold no meaning for them. An Islamic faith believes and wants their state to be run by Allah. Their problem is that they have two sects, Sunni and Shiite, and even though they get their instruction from the same Sacred Book, the Koran; they cannot agree on who was given the inside track to do the governing. A democracy that did not stand a snowballs chance in hell of surviving was being offered to various factions of the same religion, who simply are not interested in uniting and resolving their own revolution. The American lead coalition toppled the mostly Sunni minority sect of Saddam Hussein and turned it over to a Shiite majority sect; that proceeded to extract its revenge by excluding the Sunni's from the new regime.

Freedom of speech is a right guaranteed by the first amendment and it saddens me to think of all the rejection and ridicule that the material you are now reading will have to go through before any body of civilized thinkers are allowed to choose it on its' own merits. In truth, we all choose to value our own opinions as being more credible than anyone else's (not that they are). There should be a law of abstract logic like the concrete physical law: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. In other words: For every good opinion there is an equal but opposite bad opinion, or as the cruder perspective states: Opinions are like assholes, everybody has one. The goal of a science of thinkology should be to determine which set of opinions contribute more to the welfare of the common good and to help us discard those that contribute more to the distribution of common misery.

For that I will take the risk of being labeled the anti-Christ who has come to deceive the world. The problem with that statement is that I am not against any of the teachings of Yeshua that promote peaceful and loving co-existence and I cannot with any degree of certainty state that He never existed. If all Christians adopted His humble and serving nature and tried to walk the way that He did; the world would be a much better place to live in. Sadly, they only tolerate his Spiritual presence for a few hours on Sunday before they go back into their secular 'what's in this for me ' mode. The first amendment guarantees everyone the freedom to

practice whatever religion they so desire. What it does not guarantee; is that laws can be made respecting a view that is put forth by your own belief. The wisdom behind this is that people who do not share your faith or point of view; do not want their rights taken away simply because you have the inside tract to the Pearly Gates. Learn to trust in your God and His Lake of Fire to deal with them at the appointed time and stop trying to save people who do not believe that they are drowning. One should practice what they believe in and teach it to their children, but please try not to meddle in the lives of others; who have a right to reject what is to them not supported by reason and logic.

The commonsense idea that humanity needs to make our world a better place to live in should not be abandoned simply because someone had an apocalyptic vision of the destruction of mankind. Scary part is that we have created and continue to create situations that can make the fulfillment of such an apocalypse a reality. Not the work of a Creator, but an act of ignorant mankind. Only when we all choose to use the chance that life has given us to make our world safer from what we perceive as hostile forces of nature: Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Hurricanes, Typhoons, Tsunamis, Tornadoes, Floods, or whatever other calamity that puts an end the lives of those who are not prepared for such events; will we be closer to putting an end to grieving and blaming an uncaring Creator for our misery. All these events have been affecting our planet for billions of years and likely will continue for billions more. The six or seven millenniums of so-called civilization of humanity on this planet is comparable to a single drop of water to all the water in the oceans of the world. Even if the estimate of a Big Bang that occurred an estimated thirteen billion years ago is true; there is still an infinite amount of time before that, if the concept of the eternal is to exist.

I, like Socrates, have come to understand that the only wisdom man can possess is that he is aware that to know that he does not know, is to know. The knowledge of all things in the world of reality only exists in the embodiment of all mankind and no individual possesses this magnitude of wisdom with the limited amount of intellect that we as individuals can achieve. The greatest achievements of humanity have never been the work of just one individual; it was the collective hard work of many men and women who were not afraid to experiment with trial and error. Sure, mistakes were made, but science dictates that we document all such work in order that the fruits of our labor will prevent future generations from duplicating those errors. We must also be aware of research and development that is not conducted in

the best interest of humanity but are a means of increasing financial gain by flooding our culture with miracle drugs that sometimes have to be recalled; because we find out that the side effects of the cure are worse than the illness it was supposed to remedy. Pharmaceutical companies have attained enough wealth to ensure that the contributions they make to the campaign coffers of the guardians of our freedom and liberty; will continue to produce legislation that turns a blind eye to their greed and their manipulation of our healthcare system.

This is not the only problem that poses a threat to our governmental institution. We have produced a culture that is composed of many huge corporate organizations. Their only goal being; to maintain their wealth by getting masses of people to work for the least amount of wages they can get away with; in order to share the profits of their industries with aristocratic shareholders; whose only concern for the welfare of humanity is that we be made aware of how many digits it takes to describe their bank accounts. A CEO is a highly overpaid overseer with the keen ability to manipulate the masses into believing that their voluntary slavery is the fabric that makes America great. They spend millions on naming rights to athletic arenas; knowing that our hum drum lives are constantly being entertained by an electronic media that excels at covering our favorite sports venue. Football fanatics all over the country dream of going to the Superbowl. Some will even deplete their life savings; just to say that they enjoyed the action from the nosebleed section of these grand arenas. Front row seats are reserved for the well-to-do; while sky box lounges are for potential clients that will do business with other corporate entities. The NFL, also a corporation, may not approve of this type of alliance, but paying the salary of thirty-two teams with fifty-three players each with six-to-eight-digit figures; they are more likely to and do accept these gift horses. These sponsorship deals are not limited just to football. Baseball, basketball, hockey, tennis, golf, NASCAR racing; just to name a few are also exploited.

There are probably more students earning their way through college on an athletic scholarship than those who have earned one for academic reasons. The students of middle-class families who do not get scholarships have to work their butts off; probably because Mom and Pop squandered their college fund on a trip to the Superbowl. Then there are the children of the aristocracy who more than likely will attend any college that suits them. No doubt some of you will now be upset with me for trampling on our other sacred institution: Capitalism. There are 3.2 million people who live in the lap of luxury while another 48.3 million are struggling below

the poverty line. The other 51.3 percent serve a dual purpose. They help provide for those in poverty with their charitable efforts and form the work force that keeps the upper one percent in the lifestyle to which they are accustomed. None of them possess acting skills or athletic prowess, but they love to spend their hard-earned money to watch those who can. Most of them are so disgruntled with politics that it has become increasingly more difficult to get more than half of them to vote. They are fully aware that lobbyist and special interest groups have flooded our nation's capital with promises of contributions to their massive campaign coffers on both sides of the fence. It does not even matter who wins if the gullible American people believe that they have selected the better of their two choices. A government that was meant to be of the people, by the people, and for the people is now a government of the corporations, by the corporations, and for the corporations.

Saving our democracy from irresponsible leadership that is fueled by the ignorance of greed and corruption is probably the most challenging task a science of thinkology will have to deal with. Change must come from within, and we cannot allow the ignorance of violence to unfold. Exercising our right to peaceably assemble and understanding how to petition our government for a redress of our grievances is of the utmost importance. When a government no longer serves the will of the people that it has sworn to serve and protect; it has altered the meaning of democracy and is no better than a Saddam Hussein regime. Those who believe that removing that despot from power has made the world a safer place; should consider to what end will we tolerate neglectful abuses of our own government when they occur. Please take note that throughout I have been expressing myself in hypothetical constructs that are designed to make us take a second look at the way humanity is progressing. I do not actually believe that America will ever produce a leader as pathetic as Saddam and I am not ignorant of the numerous strides that our society has made for human rights. However, we cannot close our minds and pretend we have all the answers and that there is nothing left to be done. A war on ignorance cannot be won unless mankind realizes that human bias is a major cause of our dilemma.



## CHAPTER X: Bigotry and Racism

Bigotry is second only to greed in fighting the war on ignorance. The white man's comprehension of it is probably the weakest because he invented it. The African-American, the Indian, the Asian, and the Hispanic understand it better because they were and sometimes still are the victims. Whether you chose to believe it or not, our founding fathers were the creators of American racism. Not all white men were immune, however. The Irish, the Italians, and the Jews were not considered country club material either. Imagine the shock at Augusta Georgia when the best golfer in the world turned out to be the son of black and yellow persons. Whoops, there goes the neighborhood. The key to rising in the aristocracy was to become better than the white man at the games he invented. Tiger, Pedro, Venus and Serena, Ichiro, Shaq, and I want to be like Mike have all become icons of our newest generation.

The problem is that the larger mass of individuals who possess a different skin tone and do not have the coordination and skill to rise to such heights, bear the brunt of cruelty and inequality we must admit still exists in our society. The time to realize that skin tones are merely genetic evolution and environmentally produced factors and have nothing to do with a person's ability to function as a human being is long overdue. GIFTED, Inc. will not use race or ethnic backgrounds in job applications. Instead, we will just ask you what your skills are or what skills do you aspire to learn to assist our common goal of making planet earth a better place to live in.

The Movie industry has also contributed largely to equalizing the status quo. they knew hiring blacks who would work for less than black-faced white actors who always wanted more money would allow them to get their foot in the door. Eventually there would be a Sidney Poitier who even white people would think he could act, and he would land an Oscar for his performance in Lilies of the Field in 1963. Then in 2001 Halle Berry got the coveted award for her role as a grieving mother who makes out with Billy Bob Thornton, a bigoted white guy on his way to seeing the light. Historically the situation for women of color in Hollywood has changed. There was Hattie McDaniel, the first African American to get an Academy Award, for her role as "Mammy" in "Gone with the Wind" (1939). Then there was the singer and actress Lena Horne of "Stormy Weather" and "Cabin in the Sky," Diahann Carroll, the star of the sitcom "Julia" (1968-71), the first black woman to lead a network series. these women were journeymen out of necessity, pouring out their souls in their creative environments.

Today everyone knows of Denzel Washington, Will Smith, Morgan Freeman, Oprah Winfrey, and a list of many more who have broken into the realm of electronic media. They have attained the white man's dream of success. However, while entertainers and sports figures have entered the ring of prosperity; as well as some politicians and other fields of higher education, it does not make up for those who are still oppressed and abused by a system that has shown callous disregard for their plight. Examples are the water problem in Flint Michigan and the handling of matters after hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005.

All of this recalls an event that occurred in my early childhood. My aunt and uncle owned a grocery store, and quite frequently after Sunday mass our family would stop by to visit and get items for Sunday dinner. At that time, I met up with a young black boy about my age, who was also duded up in his Sunday best. Only difference was he attended another Catholic church a quarter of a mile from the one I went to. Desegregation was viewed as an option and personal bias on both sides preferred that things remain the same. The contrast in the color of his skin did not faze me in the least. I worked up the courage to ask my mother, "Can I go outside and play with that little nigger?" For the first time in my life, I felt the piercing gaze of every adult in the store. I expected a yes or no answer, but I was hauled off to an isolated corner of the store to be scolded by my mother instead, "Dark skinned people needed to be referred to as colored people." I do not believe she realized that she was trying to get away with the age-old parenting trick, do as I say not as I do. Had I not heard her refer to colored people numerous times as niggers in the privacy of our home, I would have been spared this embarrassment. This was my introduction to the ignorance of bigotry.

The notion that any member of humanity is somehow greater or lesser because of their skin tone or ethnic background must be done away with. The irony of it all is that white, black, yellow, and red are not actual skin tones. Caucasians are flesh colored, blacks range from Mandingo dark to Mulatto brown, native Americans are just slightly sun burned Caucasians, and I have yet to figure out why Asians are yellow people. The entire point of this chapter is to show that racism is a man-made predicament. The Creator, whichever way you perceive that entity to exist, is responsible for the whole of humanity and we can do better. Einstein is quoted as saying, "A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion

is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.” — Albert Einstein

## **CHAPTER XI: Human Rights**

Humanity has no right to claim that they are an intelligent species. Our understanding of benevolence, care, and dignity for the sanctity of all life has not evolved to bring about peace and harmony. Instead, power hungry individuals commit atrocities to satisfy their lusts and greed, and truth and honor have no place in their concerns for the ones they control. This is the dilemma that politicians and religious fanatics force upon those who cry for world peace.

The big issue today is “Where do your human rights begin?” I would like to believe that any form of life that made it through millions of years of evolution would have at least one right. It is unfortunate for lower life forms that we have proclaimed ourselves as the guardians of morality. Our ability to use reason and logic to make choices influences everything in our environment. It is imperative that we learn the art of making good choices and find ways to prevent us from making poor or bad choices. Right conduct is the proper use of knowledge to produce actions that will be an enhancement and a benefit for the common good of all things. The destructive elements that plague our social order emanate from the misconception that free will grants us the right to do whatever we please regardless of the consequences that may occur.

Freedom of choice must be governed by a respect for the sanctity of every life form. When we settle for anything less, we are opening the door to the ignorance of abuse and immorality. Everyone should be aware that it is wrong to kill without a justifiable reason. Self-defense against someone attempting to harm you or members of your family and friends, and hunting for game or slaughtering domesticated animals to provide nutrition for the same group of people is tolerable. It is the thoughtless or premeditated cruelty of unjust actions that abuse on the rights of innocent individuals that should not be tolerated in any civilized society. The ideal of justice is severely hampered by our inability to deal out punishment that will deter the blind ignorance of causing harm and destruction to another member of

humanity. Showing compassion and fighting for the rights of individuals who were void of compassion or respect for the rights of their innocent victims is as Penn and Teller would say "Bullshit".

The ineptitude in which we conduct the judicial process is what needs to be fixed. We have managed to improve the right of the guilty so that incriminating evidence cannot be used against them and made it possible for the rights of the innocent to be trampled on. To make the claim that we sometimes send innocent men to their deaths is just an admission of how screwed up the system is. The only true injustice we all suffer is that our society has created the conditions that causes men and women to fail and make poor choices. Until we find a way to restore true equality and rise above all bias, we will always struggle with issues such as the death penalty as a deterrent. One would think that a lifetime of incarceration without parole would be sufficient, but that has not proven to be the case. In the year 2020 the American criminal justice system held almost 2.3 million people in 1,833 state prisons, 110 federal prisons, 1,772 juvenile correctional facilities, 3,134 local jails, 218 immigration detention facilities, and 80 Indian Country jails as well as in military prisons, civil commitment centers, state psychiatric facilities. American prisons are known for high recidivism rates. Nationally, 76 percent of all inmates end up back in jail within five years.

The point I am trying to make is that some individuals do not understand what a right is until it is taken away from them. Making a wrong choice can and sometimes does prevent them from the opportunity of making good choices; depending on whether they are caught. Economic inequality is what leads people in poverty to lie, cheat, steal, and even kill if they deem it necessary. They are not afforded the opportunity of a good education that instructs them in the art of making good choices. The rich lie, cheat, steal, and turn to drugs because they have learned that those are the choices that they need to make to become and remain extremely wealthy. The middle classes are the ones stuck with the attempt to balance out the equation. They supply the charity that gives relief to some of the poor and at the same time provide the rich with the work force that they need to maintain their prosperity.

Not everyone born into poverty resorts to a life of crime and drug use. The true beauty of the message of Yeshua, whether He is fact or fiction, is that it teaches the humble poor to endure the tribulations and persecutions of life. Those who remain grateful and content with the misery and injustices of life will be blessed and happy.

Their reward for humbleness in serving their fellow man will be rewarded with riches in the afterlife. We are working with the premise that every human has a soul that is separate from the physical shell in which it is housed. When the heart can no longer keep the body from going into decay, the spirit departs into an unknown realm that no one knows for sure exists. They will dwell in a heavenly city that uses gold for pavement and bliss in the spiritual realm of the Lamb will go on eternally.

On the other hand, those who wasted time accumulating wealth and riches and neglected to look after the widows and orphans, they will be cast into a lake of fire to exist in eternal torment; where the worm never dies, and the fire is not quenched. A small sect will be sent to purgatory until their case files can be reviewed to determine their final destination depending on whether they made more good choices and only a few minor poor choices, like eating meat on Friday before the ban was lifted.

Not everyone who is rich has attained their wealth through crime and drug abuse. Many of the well-to-do have earned their wealth in honorable and respectable professions. Our American culture has become addicted to entertainment and use it as an escape from their commitment to voluntary slavery. Hollywood and the electronic media have created fantastic fantasies that make us forget about our hum drum lives. If it isn't real and doesn't resemble anything close to reality; they have a blockbuster and every year the movie industry rewards its top celebrities with a little gold statue they call Oscar. It is their way of congratulating each other for acquiring so many worshippers while we sit there and watch them as they thank God for their huge egos and for blessing them with the over abundant amount of talent that they have received. Our only gripe is that we wonder if they watched the same movies that we watched, considering some of the selections that they make for top honor.

The world of sports has also been used to gratify our need to alleviate boredom. Baseball, football, basketball, hockey, soccer, tennis, golf and many more events that require some forms of athletic skill have provided many with lucrative salaries. Average people who lack talent or never had a chance to develop their athletic abilities, budget their hard-earned money to attend these events. We encourage our children to be winners so that they too might reap the benefits of stardom. All of this is not lost on corporate America as they provide us with the colosseums and arenas for these events to take place in, creating a new avenue to acquiring great wealth.

It is difficult to convince someone who has acquired a great deal that he or she has some type of flaw in their character. When the rich man asked the biblical Yeshua what he needed to do to enter the kingdom, the reply was, "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me." This probably broke the man's heart because he knew then that he was not going to heaven. The rich people of the world want their treasure here on earth where they can spend it. Does not matter if it is on wild decadent parties, yachts, fancy sports cars, or on the bling that lets you do your thing.

Critics of this rhetoric will undoubtedly view me as a disgruntled have not trying to muddy the waters of the American Dream. The goal of the Global Initiative Fostering Thoughtful Environmental Design will be a non-profit entity dedicated to saving humanity from destroying itself. All the sacred cows of politics and religion will not be vanquished overnight, and this generation will probably not see what a true science of thinkology can accomplish in their lifetime. One does not necessarily need to see the birds nesting in a large tree to know that a tiny mustard seed was responsible.

I am not a prophet, or a messiah and I was not immaculately conceived. Since my birth I have displayed an above average amount of intelligence and still managed to do as many stupid things as humanly possible and still survive. My only wish is that I be remembered as a catalyst that stirred the minds of men to free themselves of their hypocrisy and begin working in unity to make our world a place where there is no shame in being called human. Our solar system is the next frontier and only the best we have to offer will be able to adapt to the conditions of weightlessness and create self-sustaining biospheres that can be colonized.

This goes against the apocalyptic vision of the Divine One, but it should not shatter the hope of those who see that there is more to life than just destroying each other. Our planet is currently approaching the inhabitation of eight billion humans and that number could probably double and there would still be enough resources to continue without the threat of overpopulation. If a Higher Power has given us the ability to understand the greatness of His creation, we should do our best to ensure that the beauty and majesty of this gift be preserved.

When does a new life begin? It is a no brainier folks, Once the male and female chromosomes pair up and cell division begins the genetic information provided will eventually produce a human being. This has created the debate as to whether a potential partial human has the same rights as the ones who make it out of the womb.

The solution would be simple if everyone understood the procreative process and those inclined to practice recreational sex would use some form of protection to avoid an unwanted pregnancy. Parents generally teach abstinence to their children until they reach a responsible reproductive age but sometimes giving them money for condoms may be a better solution.

Bringing new life into the world is not a subject that should be taken lightly. Only two mature adults who understand the sacrifices that they will have to make should embark on such an enterprise. Why is a country with so many institutions that preach family values plagued with the problems of abortion, divorce, and spousal and child abuse? Could it be that children aren't being shown how to make good choices? Is it possible that Hollywood movies have no effect on them? Does every parent use the parenting controls on premium channels? Are their children clever enough to bypass those controls? Maybe we don't ask enough questions?



## CHAPTER XII: The End of American Democracy

*“And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.” Mark 3:24*

In the year 2016 a very credulous and misinformed portion of We the People placed in the executive branch a man whose mendacity knew no bounds. In utter hypocrisy, they chose alternative facts and truthful hyperbole to justify the biggest con ever imposed on our constitutional republic. The use of electronic media to spread propaganda and misinformation only served to further division between a two-party system that was already in jeopardy. Conservative and liberal factions were being referred to as red and blue states depending on the makeup of their population long before this event. Our culture was becoming addicted to social media outlets that allowed everyone to express their views in an unregulated platform.

On January 6th, 2020, for the first time in our American history the normally peaceful presidential transition was marred by the failure of the former incumbent to admit that he had lost the election. This led to an attempted coup that failed to change the electoral college votes. He needed a lot of help from his advisors and the rest of the guardians of our liberties who were loyal to his whims. There was also many of the American public who believed they needed to indulge in this ignorance for the safety of our country. I have probably already ticked off many groups, why not include beer drinking red necks who love a president who can kick butt. Look at what all the cuts in education have done for them. They can camp out in lines to get tickets for a World Wrestling Federation Extravaganza. Watch Jerry Springer or any other television show that pays dysfunctional families to embarrass themselves in the front of millions of viewers. Most of them work for minimum wage and hope that one day a lucky lottery ticket will allow them to tell their boss to take this job and shove it. Isn't the American dream wonderful?

The president of the United States earns an annual salary of \$400,000, according to U.S. Code 102, along with a \$50,000 expense account. The vice president makes \$230,700 annually, while most senators, representatives and delegates earn \$174,000. The Speaker of the House makes \$223,500 per year, while the president pro tempore of the Senate, as well as the majority and minority leaders of the House and Senate, all earn \$193,400 per year. Twenty-one federal officials have Level I jobs and earn \$210,700 annually, as of 2018. These positions include all cabinet secretaries, such as secretary of state, secretary of defense and secretary of education, as well as the U.S. attorney general, U.S. trade representative, the director of the Office of Management of Budget, the commission of Social Security for the Social Security Administration, the director of the National Drug Control Policy in the



Office of National Drug Control Policy, the chairman of the Federal Reserve and the director of national intelligence. Fifty-three positions are classified as Level II, which include all deputy secretaries, as well as a few undersecretaries – Homeland Security for Management, Defense for Research and Engineering and Transportation for Policy – along with positions such as the chief management officer of the Department of Defense, the principal deputy director of National Intelligence and NASA's administrator. This salary level also includes the heads of certain independent agencies, such as the Office of Personnel Management, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Library of Congress, and the Federal House Finance Agency, as well as the leaders of some boards and commissions, including the National Regulatory Commission and the National Science Foundation. Level II employees earn \$189,600. At level III, 123 officials earn \$174,500 annually. This level includes the remainder of undersecretaries, such as the undersecretary of agriculture for food, nutrition and consumer services, the undersecretary of commerce for international trade and the undersecretary of defense for policy. This category also includes several directors, such as the director for the Office of Government Ethics and the director of the Peace Corps, the commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. associate attorney general and solicitor general. It also includes administrators for the Department of Transportation, such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the commissioner of internal revenue. The federal government pays 346 Level IV employees an annual salary of \$164,200. These positions might include assistant secretaries and general counselors for the various departments, which include agriculture, commerce, defense, health and human services and energy. In the Executive Office of the president, members of the Council of Economic Advisers are considered Level IV employees, as are the assistant directors of the Office of Management and Budget and the deputy director of the Office of Science and Technology. Chief Information Officers and Inspector Generals of several independent agencies are also classified as Level IV employees, including the CIOs of the National Science Foundation and Small Business Administration, and the IGs of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Central Intelligence Agency. Level V employees comprise 143 positions that earn a salary of \$153,800 annually. Positions that fall into this category include the director of the U.S. Geological Survey, the archivist of the United States, the general counsels for the Agency for International Development, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and NASA, as well as the chief scientist of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the director of the U.S. National Museum, Smithsonian Institution. Per U.S. Code 5317, the sitting president can appoint up to 34 individuals to work as Level IV and V employees. However, the Senate must approve the appointments. An example of positions granted Level IV pay status includes the director of the National Institutes of Health and the executive

secretary of the National Security Council, while granted Level V employees include the commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans. The chief justice of the Supreme Court makes \$258,100 and associate justices make \$246,800, plus they can make an unlimited amount of money from book deals.

That is a whole lot of tax dollars going to the three branches of our government who hardly ever accomplish anything for the American public because of partisan gridlock and catering to the One percent whose money they need to get elected and then remain in office. Even when polls show an overwhelming percentage of what the public wants, they still manage to turn a blind eye and do whatever they want. Until we find ways to get individuals with honor and integrity who will uphold their oaths of office, I see no future for our American democracy.

### **CHAPTER XIII: Superstition**

We must dedicate this chapter to superstition. A war on ignorance cannot afford to overlook anything simply because it will bring bad luck, knock on wood. I was born on the thirteenth day of the month and fortunately my birthday only falls on Friday every six years. Would it be tempting fate to walk under a ladder, break a mirror, or drop a kitchen towel to ensure company would show up? Do I really need a mojo to keep a voodoo queen from tormenting me by sticking pins in a doll cushion? Oooooooh! Way too scary! Better make this my shortest chapter.

### **CHAPTER XIV: Let us get Philosophical**

Up until now I have pelted your brain with sarcasm, cynicism, and maybe even a few pessimistic outlooks. As the Ecclesiastical preacher once wrote, "There is nothing new under the sun," Much of the material that I have written about does not contain any startling revelations that mankind is not aware of. Religion has always been drowning in its own hypocrisy and no government ever formed has always acted in the best interests of the ones they were supposed to serve. Since the dawn of civilization, there have always been haves and have nots. Somewhere along the line our species developed or was given the power to reason. It is a terrible mistake to believe that such a wonderous gift should be used to produce chaos rather than order.

Along with the gift of reason came the gift of wisdom, to know that when we make good choices, our existence will experience peace and tranquility. When we choose to ignore wisdom and make poor choices, our existence will be subjected to turmoil and strife. The option to freely choose and create our own destiny has always

been at our disposal. Whatever the reason for our existence, the unique ability of man to learn from his mistakes is what sets him apart from every other living creature. Every other species known to man must survive mainly on evolutionary instincts. The ones that survive on plant life and vegetation become the victims of the ones that developed savagery to kill and feed on the flesh of their prey.

That is the natural order of things in nature. The savage animals pass their hunting skills onto their young and the docile animals have adapted by becoming more prolific at creating a greater number of offspring. Whether you choose to believe it or not, early forms of mankind relied a great deal more on the savage instinct than the slowly progressing curiosity that would propel him to the top of the food chain. The development of an opposable thumb that allowed him to grip and hold objects, as well as a larger brain capacity, and the creative ability to invent tools put us in the driver's seat. To ignore evidence that our ancestral beginnings go back a great deal further than a mere six thousand years is pure foolishness.

The cave paintings at Altamira in Northern Spain and the ones at Lascaux in the south of France are a clear indication that our prehistoric ancestors were well on their way to gaining the upper hand. Even though hunting was still their primary skill, they had mastered the element of fire and the use of pigmented tools to produce art was well within their scope. The fundamentalist who desires to have biblical Creation taught alongside the Theory of Evolution must now find a way to explain why twelve-thousand-year-old cave paintings exist on a planet they believe started only six thousand years ago. I must mention out of respect for fairness that the Theory of Evolution does not provide all the answers to our question as to why we began or why we exist. We just need to trust in our best guesses and assumptions based on the knowledge of the world that we know exists. Our limited lifespan is infinitely small compared to the vast magnitude of time that it has taken us to get here. Space must be infinite from every point it is perceived, otherwise the infinite becomes finite. If there was one Big Bang, then there must be an infinite number of Big Bangs. Hubble's law explains that the reason most galaxies are moving away from one another is because the whole universe is expanding. Pick any two galaxies at random, and the chances are they're moving away from each other. The tiny amount of our recorded history pales in comparison to the abysmal lack of knowledge that we know about the entire universe. Sure, there may be an infinite number of planets out in space that have created life forms, but there is no chance that any human will ever get to one or the other way around. Future generations may colonize the moon and maybe even Mars and mine minerals from the many moons around Jupiter with robotic machines, but the farther we get away from our star the more difficult the task becomes. That will require self-sustaining biospheres and an increase in knowledge of terraforming. The question now becomes will it be worth the effort?

If the Higher Power that the human spirit desperately craves to find truly exists, it has chosen to keep the reasons for its manipulation of the genetic genomes that create all life a secret. This brings what we call humanity to a point of intelligent design with free will and the ability to control our own destiny. There is far too much logic in the sequencing of genetic information that has produced the vast and abundant amount of organic life to believe that it all emanated from chaotic mishap. Sorry mister atheist, even though you are entitled to your non-belief, and that religions have created a Higher Power in their own image, doesn't mean that intelligence came from ignorance. Otherwise, we are just a spaceship that orbits the nearest star 365.25 days yearly as the result of winning a cosmic lottery.

What do we know? Let's begin with what matters, matter. A word that is so complex that Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary lists twenty-four applications for it. Combining the first three gives us a picture of a universe composed of physical or corporeal substances that occupy space. The material world that we perceive whether solid, liquid, or gas, in either one or two forms known as organic or inorganic. I don't believe I would have trouble convincing anyone that there is a huge difference between a rock and a plant, yet that plant was made from crushed rock that we call soil that nourishes it with water and minerals until its DNA causes the process of photosynthesis to start with the help of light from our star. There are many theories on how the earth and moon were formed and the solar system, but most scientist agree it occurred about 4.5 billion years ago. I believe that after a billion years or more, comets struck our planet, and we know that they are composed of mostly water and ice. Reactions with early volcanic activity caused steam to rise and led to the production of oceans and seas. Rain is liquid precipitation: water falling from the sky. Raindrops fall to Earth when clouds become saturated, or filled, with water droplets. Millions of water droplets bump into each other as they gather in a cloud. When a small water droplet bumps into a bigger one, it condenses, or combines, with the larger one. It is highly likely that life began in these newly created bodies of water since there are two main types of plankton: phytoplankton, which are plants, and zooplankton, which are animals. Zooplankton and other small marine creatures eat phytoplankton and then become food for fish, crustaceans, and other larger species. What started the entire process is still a mystery, but sunlight more than likely had a great deal to do with it.

The substances that compose matter have unique structural differences that enable us to identify them as atoms. An atom is composed of orbiting electrons around a nucleus of protons and neutrons. These protons and neutrons are made up of quarks and gluons. What makes each atom unique is the number of protons it contains in its nucleus and the equal number of electrons that it has in its orbits. We have identified ninety of the elements that occur naturally on our planet and have even managed to artificially create another twenty-six which are organized in the

periodic table of the elements. These elements can combine with each other to form compound substances.

One of the main properties that separate the differences between organic and inorganic is the sixth element known as carbon. We are inefficient carbon-based units that must be sterilized. Just kidding! I threw that in for trekkies who like to boldly go where no man has gone before. Man is the most complex living organic entity on our planet. Whether or not life exists on any other of the infinite number of planet-like objects in the universe is something we will never know for sure in our own lifetime. Making a trek over such a huge distance just to shake hands may hardly be worth the effort. I cannot see more intelligent life forms wanting to visit us until we lose our penchant for shooting first and then asking questions later. If we are not careful, they also might not be interested in a nuclear radioactive wasteland that was produced by the former tenants.

Another reason we cannot ignore the probability of a Higher Power is the existence of plant life. I fail to see how green leafy things in their struggle for survival would feel the need to produce apples, oranges, bananas, grapes, tomatoes, watermelons, cucumbers, potatoes, corn, wheat, and (yecch) broccoli. Their only struggle would be adapting to whatever climate we tried to make them grow in. Fluffy little white cotton balls didn't spring up out of the ground because they believed Hanes and Fruit of the Loom would turn them into major fabrics of our society. Are tobacco, marijuana, and poppy fields a form of revenge against the assholes who chop down the rain forests? Hmmmm...! Maybe we should give more consideration to the existence of intelligent plant life.

Now we have reached the point where we know that we exist and that many of us are inclined to believe that there is some intellectual force or supernatural being who is allowing humanity to regulate the course of our own destiny. The purpose of my work is not to make anyone put aside his or her beliefs. It is an appeal to find common grounds for every person who perceives there is an entity greater than himself or herself. Then beginning to find ways of pooling our resources to achieve peace and tranquility amongst ourselves. That can't happen if we continually throw up walls of separation that have nothing to do with using knowledge to help us make good choices.

Every religion seems to find numerous ways to worship and honor the messenger of their faith rather than practicing whatever it is that they came to teach them. The ideal of the Christian faith would never have tolerated events like the Crusades, the Inquisitions, or the tremendous bias that allowed the atrocity of the Holocaust to occur. How can radical followers of Allah fill their children with so much hate that they are willing to strap explosives to themselves and end their own life as well as the lives of innocent victims? No religion can terrorize the world and claim the deity they serve is a God of love.

The answers on how to fight a winnable war against ignorance will not and should not be the product of one individual. Humanity is a plural term and stewardship is meant to be for the many and not just the few. Working together collectively to ensure that no person is left behind and that every man, woman, and child is afforded the opportunity to reach their fullest potential is not the whim of a madman. None of what I have written is intended for the young and adolescent mind, it is the task of mature men and women to find ways to help them develop the art of making good choices by protecting them from the ignorance of making poor choices.

Wisdom is the use of knowledge to create good and ignorance is the use of knowledge to destroy good. I battle not against flesh and blood, but against the poor use of knowledge. Only when the wisdom of the power of love can overthrow the ignorance of the love of power, will mankind be able to boast that he was a credit to the animal kingdom. This is pretty much it for my discourse on **Life Is**. I would like to close with a quote from one of my favorite books, 'Illusions' by Richard Bach (also well known for his book 'Jonathan Livingston Seagull')

**“Everything in this book may be wrong”**