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Do We All Worship the Same God?



Chapter 1

Our Multi-Religious Culture

A Cultural Revolution is creeping across our country. We are in a fundamentally different religious environment from what our grandparents or even our parents encountered. No longer can we think and speak in terms of a Christian society. The United States is fast becoming a multi-religious culture. The world we live in has changed.

One reason is immigration. In 1998 there were about 22.5 million foreign-born people in America. While America has always been a nation of immigrants, today more than ever, they come from culturally non-Christian nations, and they bring with them the religions of the world. Our nation is becoming less and less a religiously homogeneous country. Islam will replace Judaism as America's second-largest religion in about 10 years; already 3 to 5 million Buddhists live in America; and Hindu temples dot the landscapes not only of Chicago and New York, but also of Aurora, Illinois, and Springfield, Virginia. While mosques of Islam share the religious scene in many cities. Their minarets in Dearborn, Michigan, sound throughout the city calling Muslims to prayer five times a day.

These non-Christians live in your neighborhood. They actively support your

school's PTA. You see them at children's sports leagues, piano recitals, the workplace, market and parks. They are often very friendly folk—morally upright, hard working and community-minded. Their children often excel academically and are among the most respectful and successful students in our schools. As professionals—doctors, researchers, educators and merchants—they do much to elevate our standard of living. We enjoy their company and their contributions to the society we live in.

Through this interaction we discover that people of other religious faiths are very much like us. In fact, Bible-believing Christians often find they have greater unanimity on moral issues with these non-Christian associates than with those of a liberal Christian orientation. The question naturally arises—do we all worship the same God? Are these various religions just different roads to the same God or are their adherents, and the vast non-Christian majority of earth's people, in jeopardy of being eternally lost? Just what do some of our new associates and neighbors believe?

See Appendix A for an overview of the non-Christian religions.



Chapter 2

The Test of Prophecy

Contrary to popular Christian thought, the Christian religion is not a majority world religion. Less than one third of the world's population is rated as Christian. Actually, this is an overrating. Islam is the largest and fastest growing world religion. Each world religion has its "Holy Scripture" describing its God or Gods. How do we know which is right? Each of these "Bibles" contains a system of faith by which the believer supposedly establishes a relationship with his God(s).

The God of the Judeo-Christian Bible is quite exclusive. He declares (Isaiah 44:6), "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no other God." And the Judeo-Christian God can prove it. Although the Judeo-Christian Bible is also a system of faith, it contains a built-in touchstone to prove its God is the only true God. In fact, the Judeo-Christian God in Isaiah 43:9-12; 44:11-20, challenges all the other claims to deity and identifies all other gods for what they are—the creation and imagination of the people who worship them.

What is this challenge of the One who claims to be the only true God? Listen to Isaiah 46:9,10:

"Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,
Declaring the end from the beginning
And from ancient times which have not been done,
Saying, My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure."

Also, Isaiah 48:3,5:

"I declared the former things long ago
and they went forth from My mouth,
and I proclaimed them.
Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.
Therefore I declared them to you long ago,
before they took place I proclaimed them to you.
Lest you should say, 'My idol has done them,

and my graven image
and my molten image have commanded them.'"

What an awesome challenge! Only an omnipotent and omniscient God, the Creator and Architect of man's destiny, could foretell the events of human history. Where does this God make His prophetic declaration? In His written Word—the Judeo-Christian Bible. Outside of a few vague statements, no other bible of world religions contains prophecy. Over a third of our Bible is prophetic. The test is simple—if the words of the prophecies come to pass, then the Bible is the inspired Word of the Creator and Ruler of the universe.

Hundreds of Prophecies Fulfilled

Fulfilled prophecies indeed prove our God is the one and only God. Hundreds of events prophesied in the Judeo-Christian Bible have already happened. Before Jesus entered this world, over three hundred prophecies in the Old Testament spelled out the events and circumstances that would detail his life.

Over 700 years before his birth the prophet Micah foretold the actual town where Jesus would be born—Micah 5:2:

But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.

About 1,000 years before the death of Jesus, David foretold his triumphant resurrection—Psalm 16:10:

"...you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor will you let your Holy One see decay."

In between these two events, especially the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry, are the dynamics of the greatest life ever lived. Over 300 prophecies focus in on the extraordinary events of his life:



Extraordinary Events of Jesus Life

Event	Prophesied	Fulfilled
Born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:4	Matthew 1:18, 24, 25
The seed of Abraham	Genesis 22:18	Luke 3:34
A teacher of parables	Psalms 78:2	Matthew 13:34
Betrayed by a friend	Psalms 41:9	Matthew 10:4
Silent before his accusers	Psalms 35:11	Matthew 27:12
Wounded and bruised	Isaiah 53:5	Matthew 27:26
Smitten and spit upon	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
Crucified with thieves	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38
Hated without a cause	Psalms 69:4	John 15:25
People shook their heads	Psalms 109:25	Matthew 27:39
Garments parted and lots cast	Psalms 22:18	John 19:23, 24
To suffer thirst	Psalms 22:15	John 19:28
Offered gall and vinegar	Psalms 69:21	Matthew 27:34
Side was pierced	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
Committed himself to God	Psalms 31:5	Luke 23:46
Bones not broken	Psalms 34:20	John 19:33
Buried in a rich man's tomb	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
There was darkness over the land	Amos 8:9	Matthew 27:45

This is only a partial list of some 300 prophecies fulfilled in Jesus' life on earth. How could all of these prophecies be so accurate? The Apostle Peter informs us that the writers of the Old Testament spoke as they were moved by the Spirit or power of God.

The Old Testament abounds with other prophecies. God through His prophets precisely described the future of many ancient cities and people. Ezekiel 26:1-14 contains a remarkable prediction concerning the city of Tyre, the commercial hub of the world for centuries.

Tyre

The metropolis of Tyre occupied the coast while some of its people lived on an island a half mile out into the sea. Seven main points stand out in this prophecy of Ezekiel. Many nations would attack Tyre (26:3). Nebuchadnezzar would destroy the mainland metropolis (26:8). The debris of the city would be cast into the water (26:12). The dirt or dust of Tyre would be scraped down to the bare rock then thrown into the sea (26:4,12). Fishermen

would spread their nets over the site (26:5). Tyre would never be built again (26:14).

The incredible happened! As predicted, Nebuchadnezzar captured the mainland city in fulfillment of verses 7-11. But many of the people escaped to the island city.¹ Without a navy, Nebuchadnezzar left. Over 200 hundred years passed and Alexander the Great called on the Phoenician cities to surrender. Tyre refused and found itself in siege by Alexander. He demolished the old mainland city and with the debris, built a causeway 200 feet wide out to the island city of Tyre. To complete the causeway, Alexander's army literally scraped the dirt off the old city down to bare rock to smooth out the causeway surface. Finally, he erected towers and war engines and conquered the island fortress of Tyre. What a remarkable fulfillment of verses 4 and 12.²

After eighteen years, Tyre recovered rapidly. From 314 BC to AD 1291, Tyre in fulfillment of verse 3 was sacked and restored numerous times by many nations until its final destruction in 1291. In fulfillment of verse 14, never again was there an attempt to rebuild the Tyre of old. Since then, even



today, Tyre is the “place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea.”³ The six predictions from God’s word concerning Tyre in Ezekiel 26 have been remarkably fulfilled.

Sidon

The prophet Ezekiel also prophesied (28: 22, 23) concerning Tyre’s sister city Sidon. The prophecy against Sidon is very different from that concerning Tyre. It was foretold that Tyre would be destroyed, made bare like a rock and built no more. The prediction against Sidon was that blood would be in her streets, her wounded should fall in the midst of her and the sword was to be on her every side. But there was no doom of extinction pronounced against her as was the case with Tyre. George Davis observed that “not once but many times blood has been in her (Sidon’s) streets, her wounded have fallen in the midst of her and the sword has been ‘upon her every side.’” The city was demolished time after time and had always been rebuilt and is still in existence today.⁴

Israel

The fate of many other cities and nations, such as Babylon and Nineveh, are detailed in the Old Testament. The most striking are the numerous prophecies relating to Israel’s final restoration that are being dramatized on the current stage of history. The rebirth of the state of Israel in 1948 was a miracle of history (Ezek.37:1-11; Luke 21:29,30). Never before has a nation been destroyed, its people dispersed to the ends of the earth, and then nearly two thousand years later, regathered to their homeland and reestablished as a nation. The Scriptures speak of this final re-gathering with a permanency. Israel “shall not be plucked up” or “pulled up” “any more forever” (Jeremiah 31: 38-40; Amos 9: 14,15). The latter rain would once again fall in the land, then both the early and latter rains would increase in precipitation (Joel 2: 21-24). “The land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden” (Ezekiel 36: 35). “They shall plant grapevines upon the mountains of Samaria” (Jeremiah 31: 4,5). The Bible Jerusalem would be liberated by Israel in a

war with the Arabs (Zechariah 12: 2,5,6). Prophecies concerning Israel’s final restoration are myriad. Prophecies being fulfilled by the Jewish people are the strongest proof that the Judeo-Christian Bible is inspired by the only true and living God (Isaiah 44: 6-9).

New Testament

There are numerous prophecies in the New Testament. We will just mention several contained in The Lord’s Great Prophecy. Jesus predicted that the magnificent edifice, Herod’s Temple, would be completely destroyed (Luke 21: 5,6). History well documents this destruction in AD 70 by the armies of Rome.

Then, in Luke 21: 20, 21, Jesus made a remarkable prediction concerning Jerusalem’s destruction and the church on the scene at that time. Actually, these verses had a literal fulfillment at that time and have a symbolic fulfillment at the second advent.

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains.”—
Luke 21: 20, 21.

After Vespasian with his Roman legions overthrew all the fortified places in Israel except the capital,⁵ he began the siege of Jerusalem.⁶ Then a strange thing happened. Political instability broke out in Rome at the death of the Emperor. Vespasian withdrew his armies and rushed back to Rome. The Christians in Jerusalem recalled Jesus words recorded in Luke 21: 20, 21, and fled to the mountains of Petra to hide. Titus, son of the new Emperor Vespasian, returned and destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70.⁷ History records that the Christians escaped this carnage.

In Luke 21:22-24, Jesus predicted the fate of the Jewish People during and after the destruction of Jerusalem:

For these be the days of vengeance,
that all things which are written may be fulfilled.
But woe unto them that are with child,
and to them that give suck, in those days!



for there shall be great distress in the land,
and wrath upon this people.
And they shall fall by the edge of the sword,
and shall be led away captive into all nations:
and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles,
until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

The *days of vengeance* covered the period of the destruction of the Jewish nation by the armies of Rome. This began the dispersion of the Jewish People and the treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles for over nineteen-hundred years, as history confirms. Josephus recorded that 97, 000 were taken captive in Jerusalem, while 1,100,000 were killed during four years that ravaged the whole nation of Israel.⁸

The God of Prophecy

The Judeo-Christian God, the only true God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, knew His human race would devise gods that were the figment of their own imaginations (Romans 1: 21-23; Isaiah 44: 8-20). The Judeo-Christian God, the

God of prophecy, challenges the false gods of the various cultures to declare the end from the beginning —Isaiah 46; 9,10:

“For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,
Declaring the end from the beginning
And from ancient times which have not been done,
Saying, My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.”

The gods of the other world religions cannot meet this challenge of prophecy. They are silent—dumb. Why? They do not exist! The Judeo-Christian Bible contains hundreds of prophecies that have been fulfilled. Indeed, over one-third of our Bible is prophetic. No other purported Bible of the other world religions contains a system of prophecy. Only the Judeo-Christian Bible contains this prophetic proof that it is the inspired Word of God. Indeed, the God of Judaism and the God of Christianity are one and the same God—the God of prophecy, the only true and living God.



Chapter 3

The God of Science

Science is a systematic knowledge of the physical or material universe gained by observable facts. The sacred writings of all world religions basically contain a system of faith. Yet each do make statements within the province of science that provides a uniquely valid test to prove their authenticity. If their scientific observations are in reality superstitions reflective of the culture in which they were written, these so called sacred books are disqualified as the inspired Scripture of God. If, indeed, the scientific observations of any of these purported Holy Scripture agree with the facts of science today, then that Bible is the inspired Word of a true and living God. Why? The Creator and God of the universe is the God of science—the author of the scientific laws that govern His universe. Only the God of science could cause scientific facts to be recorded in a book—the Bible—hundreds or thousands of years before scientists discover them.

Only the Judeo-Christian Bible contains scientific facts that anticipated scientific discovery by hundreds and in some cases several thousand years. The following are examples of remarkable scientific observations found in the Judeo-Christian Bible.

What Holds the Earth Up?

Three thousand years ago the Hindu scriptures recorded the earth was resting on the backs of several huge elephants. The elephants were resting on the back of a very large turtle that was swimming in a sea. Greek mythology claims that the god Atlas was holding the earth on his shoulders. But our Bible says in Job 26:7—“[God] hangeth the earth on nothing.” What a remarkable statement of fact. The earth is suspended in space. Nothing is holding it up. Job wrote about the same time the Hindu

Scripture was written. How did Job know this scientific fact? Only God could have revealed this to Job. The Old Testament prophets wrote as they were moved by the holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). The Judeo-Christian Bible is the inspired Word of God.

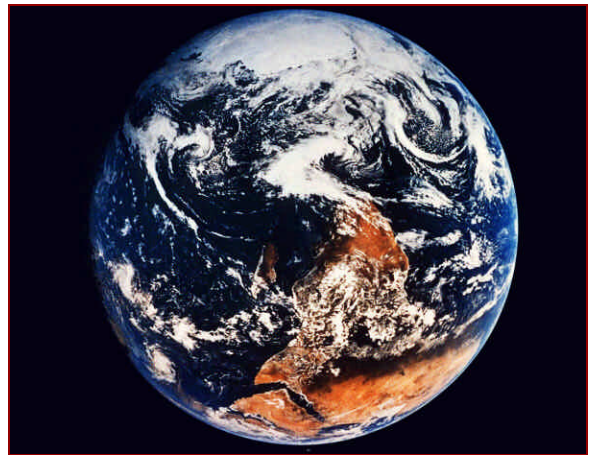


Figure 1 - NASA

Flat Versus Round Earth

For thousands of years people believed the earth was flat. If one went too far, he would fall over the edge. This was taught in both Hindu and Buddhist scripture. In the 1500s, the first ship sailed around the world. This proved the earth was round. But the round earth was recorded in the Judeo-Christian Bible long before man discovered it in the 1500s.

The prophet Isaiah (40:2) spoke of the “circle of the earth.” Solomon wrote, “He [God] set a compass [circle] upon the face of the deep.” Proverbs 8:27. In our century, Arabs spoke of infidels being pushed over the edge into space. About 3,000 years ago, our Bible said the earth was round. This was not discovered until 500 years ago. Indeed, the Judeo-Christian Bible is the inspired Word of God.



Sun, Moon and Stars—Who? What?

Ancient people were afraid of the sun, moon and stars. They thought they were alive—that they were gods. But over 5,000 years ago, the Judeo-Christian Bible in the first chapter of Genesis pointed out that the sun, moon and stars were created by God. Remember, our God states that He is the one and only God. This proves the sun, moon and stars that He created are not gods.

Eclipses are an example of what people feared. An eclipse happens when the sun's light is blocked by the earth or moon. The moon is bright because it reflects the sun's light. But when the earth blocks that light, the moon looks like it is disappearing. Also, when the moon comes between the earth and the sun, it looks like the sun is disappearing.



Figure 2 - Solar Eclipse

This was frightening to people long ago. Some thought eclipses happened when the moon was mad at the earth and turned its face away. The Chinese believed that an eclipse was caused by a demon or some huge animal that ate the sun and then would give them up again. God told Jeremiah (10:2 KJ): “Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.” God

went on to reassure Jeremiah that the universe is under God's control.

Later scientists learned that heavenly bodies were not alive and that man need not fear them. Thousands of years before scientists discovered that the planetary bodies were inanimate, the Judeo-Christian Bible contained this scientific fact.

The Bottom of the Ocean

Until modern times people thought the ocean floor was sandy like the desert and saucer shaped—deepest in the middle. This was even true of the pre-1900 geologists. But in the 1900s oceanographers found the sea had many deep valleys or canyons. The deepest canyons were called trenches. The Marianas Trench in the Pacific is so deep that if Mt. Everest (29,000 feet high) was dropped into it, the peak would still be a mile below the water's surface. There are also underwater mountains. The Atlantic Ocean contains an undersea range of mountains 10,000 miles long.

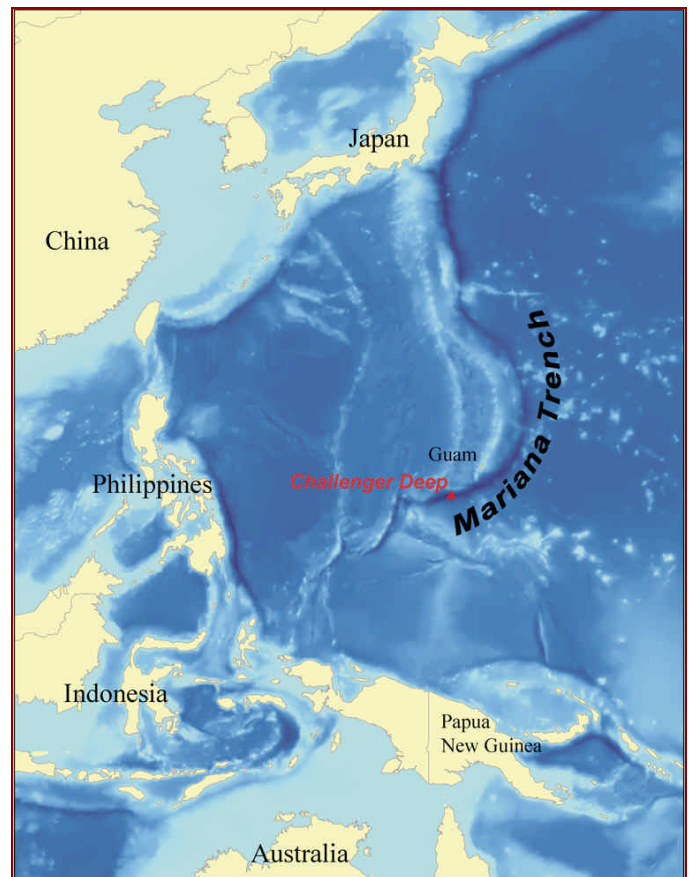


Figure 3 - Mariana Trench

In addition, 3,000 years ago the Judeo-Christian Bible spoke of the valleys and mountains of the sea. In Psalm 18:15 (NIV) David wrote of God being the creator of “the valleys of the sea.” God asked Job (38:16 NIV): “Have you walked in the recesses [valleys] of the sea?” The prophet Jonah was thrown off a ship and spoke of falling to the bottom of the mountains in the sea (Jonah 2:6).

The Judeo-Christian Bible spoke of the valleys and mountains of the sea thousands of years before scientists discovered them. Indeed our Bible is the inspired Word of God.

The Paths of the Sea

In the 1800s, Matthew Maury, an officer in the United States Navy believed his Bible. As a Christian he loved to read the Bible. One day Maury was reading about the dominion man was given over the animals in Psalm 8. He was amazed that verse 8 spoke of the fish and all creatures that swim in the “paths of the sea.” “Paths of the sea”— how could this be? He never knew there was such a thing. He was determined to find them. Maury discovered that the oceans have many paths or currents, which were like rivers flowing through the sea. Maury wrote the first book on oceanography and became known as “the pathfinder of the seas”— “The father of modern navigation.”

Maury received his idea about ocean currents from reading Psalm 8:8 which was written about 3,000 years ago by King David. David wrote as he was moved by the Spirit of God and probably never actually saw an ocean.

Incidentally, Psalm 8:8 also spoke of fish in the “paths of the seas.” All fishing boats make a good catch in the currents or paths of the sea. They have learned this is where the fish swim.

Lightning, Thunder and Rain

In ancient times, most religious scripture taught that lightning bolts were missiles thrown in anger by their gods.⁹ In China, Taoist scripture regarded the rainbow as a deadly rain dragon.¹⁰ In Confucius scripture, the goddess of lightning, Tien Mu, flashed

light on intended victims to enable Lei Kung, the god of thunder to launch his deadly bolts accurately.¹¹

Since rain is so necessary to life, ancient people pondered what caused it. Some tried to stab holes in the clouds with spears. The Vedas (Hindu scripture) advised to tie a frog with its mouth open to the right tree and say the right words and rain would fall.

Our Bible also talks about rain, lightning and storms. But it contains none of these superstitious ideas found in the other so- called scriptures. The Judeo-Christian Bible taught that earth’s weather followed rules and cycles. Genesis 8:22. “While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”



Figure 4 - Lightning in Romania

Job stated (28:26): “God made decrees [rules] for the rain. And He set a way for the lightning of the thunder:” Centuries later, scientists began to discern the “rules for the rain” that Job talked about. Rainfall is part of a process called the water cycle. Here’s how the cycle works. The sun evaporates water from the ocean. That water vapor rises and becomes clouds. This water in the clouds falls back to earth as rain, collects in streams and rivers and makes its way back to the ocean. That process repeats itself again and again.



About 300 years ago, Galileo discovered this cycle. But amazingly the Scriptures described this cycle centuries before. The prophet Amos (9:6) wrote that God “calls for the water of the sea. He pours them out on the land.” How did Amos know this? He wrote as he was moved by the Spirit of God.

Actually, scientists are just beginning to fully understand God’s “decrees or rules for the rain.” Since 68 BC it was thought that somehow thunder triggered the rainfall. Now scientists are beginning to realize that as stated in Job 28:26, it is lightning that triggers the rain to fall. Job knew this 3,000 years ago. Certainly his writings were inspired of God (2 Peter 1:21).

Pleiades, Orion and Arcturus

Remember the story of Job? Job was extremely wealthy—enjoying a wonderful family. Then tragedy struck. He lost his wealth. His children were killed and his wife deserted him. Then Job lay in excruciating pain, covered with sores from head to toe. All this was too much for Job. He accused the Lord of being unjust. God didn’t answer Job’s accusation directly. He merely raised questions concerning the wonders of His creation. Three of these questions found in Job 38:31, 32, illustrate the dynamic logic conveyed in God’s questions.

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades,
or loose the bands of Orion?
Canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Orion

“Canst thou ...loose the bands of Orion?” Garrett P. Serviss, the noted astronomer, wrote about the bands of Orion¹² in his book *Curiosities of the Sky*.

At the present time this band consists of an almost perfect straight line, a row of second-magnitude stars about equally spaced and of the most striking beauty. In the course of time, however, the two right-hand stars, Mintaka and Alnilam, will approach each other and form a naked-eye double; but the third, Alnitak, will drift away eastward so that the band will no longer exist.

In other words, one star is traveling in a certain direction at a certain speed, a second one is traveling in a different direction at a second speed, and the third one is going in a third direction and at a still different speed. Actually every star in Orion is traveling its own course, independent of all the others. Thus, these stars that we see forming one of the bands of Orion are like three ships out on the high seas that happen to be in line at the present moment, but in the future will be separated by thousands of miles of ocean. In fact, all these stars that at the present time constitute the constellation of Orion are bound for different ports, and all are journeying to different corners of the universe, so that the bands are being dissolved.

The Pleiades

“Canst thou bind the sweet influence of the Pleiades...?” Notice the amazing astronomical contrast with the Pleiades. The seven stars of the Pleiades are in reality a grouping of 250 suns. Photographs now reveal that 250 blazing suns in this group are all traveling together in one common direction. Concerning this cluster, Isabel Lewis of the United States Naval Observatory tells us:¹³

Astronomers have identified 250 stars as actual members of this group, all sharing in a common motion and drifting through space in the same direction.

Elsewhere Lewis speaks of them as “journeying onward together through the immensity of space.”



Figure 5 - The Pleiades, NASA/ESA/AURA/Caltech



From Lick Observatory came this statement of Dr. Robert J. Trumpler:¹⁴

Over 25,000 individual measures of the Pleiades stars are now available, and their study led to the important discovery that the whole cluster is moving in a southeasterly direction. The Pleiades stars may thus be compared to a swarm of birds, flying together to a distant goal. This leaves no doubt that the Pleiades are not a temporary or accidental agglomeration of stars, but a system in which the stars are bound together by a close kinship.

Dr. Trumpler said that all this led to an important discovery. Without any reference whatsoever to the Book of Job, he announced to the world that these discoveries prove that the stars in the Pleiades are all bound together and are flying together like a flock of birds as they journey to their distant goal. That is exactly what God said. “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?” In other words, Canst thou keep them bound together so that they remain as a family of suns?

INCREDIBLE! God’s laws of cosmology are loosing or dissolving the constellation Orion. Sometime in the far distant future, Orion will be no more. Conversely, wonder of wonders—every last one of the 250 blazing suns in the Pleiades are ordained of God to orbit together in their symmetrical beauty throughout eternity.

Arcturus

“Canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?” Garrett P. Serviss wrote:¹⁵

Arcturus, one of the greatest suns in the universe, is a runaway whose speed of flight is 257 miles per second. Arcturus, we have every reason to believe, possesses thousands of times the mass of our sun. Think of it! Our sun is traveling only 12 ½ miles a second, but Arcturus is traveling 257 miles a second. Think then of the prodigious momentum this motion implies.

A further observation of Arcturus by Serviss reveals:¹⁶

It could be turned into a new course by a close approach to a great sun, but it could only be stopped by collision head on with a body of enormous mass. Barring such accidents, it must,

as far as we can see, keep on until it has traversed our stellar system, whence it may escape and pass out into space beyond to join perhaps one of those other island universes of which we have spoken.

Charles Burckhalter, of the Chabot Observatory, added an interesting note regarding this great sun:¹⁷

This high velocity places Arcturus in that very small class of stars that apparently are a law unto themselves. He is an outsider, a visitor, a stranger within the gates; to speak plainly, Arcturus is a runaway. Newton gives the velocity of a star under control as not more than 25 miles a second, and Arcturus is going 257 miles a second. Therefore, combined attraction of all the stars we know cannot stop him or even turn him in his path.

When Mr. Burckhalter had his attention called to this text in the book of Job, he studied it in the light of modern discovery and made a statement that has attracted worldwide attention:¹⁸

The study of the Book of Job and its comparison with the latest scientific discoveries has brought me to the matured conviction that the Bible is an inspired book and was written by the One who made the stars.

The wonders of God’s universe never cease to amaze us. Arcturus and his sons are individual runaway suns that seem to be out of orbit in our galaxy. Traveling at such incredible speeds, why don’t they crash with other suns or planets? Where are they headed? Only God knows. Indeed they are not runaways. They will not crash. Why? God is guiding them.

The Lesson of The Pleiades, Orion, and Arcturus

Few have suffered the multiple tragedies of Job. How could God reach through the enormity of Job’s self-pity? (Job thought God just didn’t care.) In these three questions (Job 38:31, 32) God is in reality saying:

Job, you think I am not concerned about your suffering. Well, let Me ask you these questions. Can you loose the bands of Orion? No, you cannot. But My Divine power will. Some



day Orion will no longer exist. Job, can you bind the 250 stars of the Pleiades together in their symmetry of beauty and not have a single one drift off? Only I have this power and wisdom. Can you prevent the runaways—Arcturus and his sons—from colliding as they go dashing out of the Milky Way? No, only My Divine power and wisdom can.

Job, if I am caring for the details of the universe, do you doubt that I not only care for the details of your life, but I have the ability to solve your problems? Trust that there is a good reason I am permitting these tragedies. Remember, Job, I work from the perspective of your eternal welfare.

What an awesome way God chose to tell Job that He was in full control of human affairs, including Job's life!

The Lesson of Job for Us

Some write off the history of Job as Old Testament folklore. Whoever heard of God talking to a man! These are hand-me-down tales! However, the account of Job cannot be gainsaid. Whatever the method of communication used by God, the astonishing facts cannot be refuted. These scientific facts recorded in the book of Job concerning the Pleiades, Orion and Arcturus anticipated scientific discovery by nearly 3,000 years. Scientists only discovered these startling facts in the Twentieth Century, yet they were recorded in the book of Job nearly 3000 years ago. What an awesome confirmation of the Bible! Who can doubt the Bible is the inspired word of God? Yes, the book of Job has a powerful, exclusive lesson for modern man. Twentieth Century science has proven God's Word, the Bible, is true.

Other Sacred Books and The Physical Sciences

The Hindu scriptures, the Vedas and Uparushads, consider that "all the objects and phenomena of nature which man is surrounded, are animate and divine."¹⁹ This includes the sun, moon, earth, clouds, rain, rivers, seas and rocks as being alive. Writers of the Buddhist canon also ascribe life to numerous non-living objects— sun, moon, lightning, rainbows, mountains, etc. The Taoist and Confucian writings of China contain similar errors.

The Koran, the scripture of Islam, written 1,500 years after the Hindu scripture, does not contain many of the ancient superstitions. Yet its observations of the universe are seriously flawed. The Koran speaks of seven literal heavens which are solid.²⁰ These heavens contain lamps or stars whose main purpose is to be "darted at the devils."²¹ Mohammed wrote that "the sun sets in a sea of black mud."²²

Which Bible is Inspired By a Living God?

The Judeo-Christian Scripture made scientific observations that were confirmed centuries later by modern science, while the sacred scripture of other world religions merely reflected the scientific superstitions of their culture. How could the Judeo-Christian Scripture anticipate scientific discovery by 3,000 years? The Judeo-Christian Bible was written by men who were inspired by the Creator and God of the Universe—the God of science. Only the Judeo-Christian Bible is the Divine Revelation provided by our infinite Creator to direct us in the path to eternity.



Chapter 4

Our Attitude

What should our attitude be towards our associates who belong to non-Christian religions? Our attitude should be the same as God's attitude. In John 3:16 we read:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

God not only loved the world—all humankind, but He “*so loved*” them that He gave his only begotten son to die for them that they might obtain eternal life.

All non-Christian religions believe eternal life is obtained by noble works decreed in their respective scriptures. But the conclusions of the previous two chapters have invalidated the claims of the non-Judeo-Christian scriptures to represent the only true and living God.

Christian Scripture, the New Testament, clearly states the terms of salvation. The door to salvation from Adamic condemnation and death, pronounced back in Eden, is faith in Jesus' sacrifice. Thus we read in I Corinthians 15:22—“As in Adam all die (we were all born with inherited sin) even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” “The wages of sin is death: The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord.” Romans 6:23

Apostle Peter speaking of Jesus said in Acts 4:12, “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” No matter how noble our works, we are at best “unprofitable servants.” Only faith that Jesus died for our sins will save us from Adamic death. This is confirmed by Paul's words (Romans 5:18):

“Therefore as by the offense of one *judgment* came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift* came upon all men unto justification of life.”

Our non-Christian associates might react—This sounds narrow-minded. Think of all the non-Christians who have never accepted or have never even heard the name of Jesus as the only way to salvation. Over the past centuries it numbers into the billions. Does this mean that these billions are lost? This is indeed a valid question which deserves an answer.

God So Loved

Remember God *so loved* humankind. Just how comprehensive is God's love? The Apostle Paul answers this question in I Timothy 2:3-6 (KJV):

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus: Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

Notice verse 4—“[God] *will* have *all* men to be saved [from Adamic death] and come to a knowledge of the Truth [which is the basis of eternal salvation].” Verse 6 tells why. “[Jesus] gave himself a ransom for *all* to be testified in due time[s] [Greek plural].” Eternal salvation is the result of first believing the knowledge of the Truth of God's Word. Note verse 4 is not explaining eternal salvation. In verse 4 knowledge follows being saved. Paul is dealing with a salvation that precedes knowledge—not based upon knowledge. Verse 4 is defining a salvation that all men will experience that is not eternal. How can that be?

Any deliverance involves two stages. Deliverance *from* something and deliverance *to* something. A fitting example of this is Israel's deliverance from Egypt. When they miraculously crossed through the Red Sea, their deliverance was only partial. It was not until they, by the province



and power of God, traversed the wilderness and crossed the River Jordan into Canaan that their deliverance was completed. Another example is that during the Holocaust many Jews were able to escape from the country they lived in, board ships for Palestine only to have those ships intercepted and returned to Europe. They died in the Holocaust. They were not delivered. Only those whose ships were not intercepted were delivered from the death camps.

There are two aspects of salvation. First, all are delivered from Adamic death—“As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Then *all* men will come to a knowledge of the Truth. Their eternal salvation is conditional to their faith in this Truth. Obviously most of our non-Christian friends have not even received this knowledge of the Christ centered way of salvation. Most have died without receiving this knowledge. And this is just the point of the plural “times” in verse 6 of I Timothy 2—“Jesus gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due times.” (Look it up in any New Testament Greek lexicon)

In Due Time[s]

What “times” are meant, when God will make his *ransom for all* manifest? We turn to the Book of Acts for clarification.

“Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name. This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written, ‘After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David [typical of Christ’s Kingdom], which has fallen; from its ruins I will rebuild it, and I will set it up,’ so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called. Thus says the Lord, who has been making these things.” –Acts 15:14-17 (NRSV)

In other words, God first calls out His Church (a people for His name) during our Christian era. After that, during Christ’s reign over earth at the Second Coming, “all other peoples” the masses of the human family who have not yet accepted Christ,

will seek the Lord—even those “over whom my name has [previously] been called.”

The due time for the Church of Christ (a little flock) is now during the Christian Age. The due time for the remainder of humankind is future. Further, Acts 15:14-17 reveals the purpose of the call of the Church and setting up Christ’s Kingdom is to enable “all other peoples” to seek after the Lord. This is why the Church reigns with Christ in his Kingdom. (Rev. 20:4,6). Remember 2 Corinthians 6:2—“Behold now is *the* acceptable time; behold now is *the* day of salvation.” This is a flagrant mistranslation by translators who seem to take satisfaction in their erroneous premise of salvation for only a few. Refer to Nestle and Marshall’s or any other Interlinear Greek-English New Testament.

Look in the Greek-English interlinear column and see that the Greek text reads, “*a* day of salvation,” not “*the* day of salvation.”

Actually the Apostle Paul is here quoting from Isaiah 49:8 which clearly reads, “an acceptable time” and “a day of salvation.” There is no basis for the gross mistranslation, “the day of salvation.” This agrees with Paul’s due time(s) in I Timothy 2:4. Now is “a” day of salvation for the calling of the Church of Christ. Christ’s Kingdom will be the due time “that all other peoples may seek the Lord” (Acts 15:17).

One thing is clear throughout the Bible—God has not been attempting to convert the world since Jesus’ death and resurrection. The Scriptures speak of God now dealing with only a few for a specific purpose. Christ’s followers are spoken of as a little flock. “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). God is only calling a few at this time. A representative of every type of the human race is being called into the church of Christ. The Greek word for Church is *ecclesia*, which literally means “called out ones.” These called out ones, the little flock, will share with Christ when he establishes his Kingdom for the blessing of all mankind. Thus Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:2, “Know you not that the saints shall judge the world?” The Revelator discloses that the followers of Jesus will live and



reign with him during his Kingdom, during the time that the benefits of Jesus' death are bestowed upon the world of mankind (Rev. 20:4).

Jesus' words in Mark 4:12 show that God is not presently interested in converting even the majority of mankind. "Unto you it is given to know the mystery [secret] of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." This scripture might seem strange to some, but it gives us an insight into what God has been doing between the death of Jesus and the return of Jesus to set up his Kingdom upon the earth.

Have you ever wondered why the Christian Bible is difficult to understand? By divine intent it has been written in parables, dark sayings and symbols so that it would not be easily understood. Why? So that the majority would not bother and consequently would not be converted. During the Christian Age, the Lord is only converting a few, a "little flock," "who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honor and immortality" (Romans 2:7). These are elsewhere symbolically referred to as the bride of Christ. After Christ returns, these believers will be united with him and then the conversion of the world will begin. Revelation 22:17 prophesied of that time: "And the Sprit [the returned Christ] and the bride [the true church] say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

All Shall Come From the Graves

Since the vast majority of the human race went down into their graves without hearing or understanding the "ransom for all," the Kingdom will require the raising of the dead. This is just what Jesus tells us in John 5:28 (RVS): "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good to a resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the

resurrection of judgment." Note again the same pattern of sequence we have seen in other scriptures. All will be raised from the dead. First, "they that have done good." This refers to the true church. During Christ's return they will be raised to spiritual life and united with their heavenly Lord. Then will follow the resurrection of the "evil class"—all the remainder of men who have not yet had a full chance to learn righteousness.

They will come forth to a "resurrection of judgment." The King James Bible, translated in AD 1611, grossly mistranslated the word "judgment" with the word "damnation." The American Revised Version in 1881 correctly used the word "judgment," and no translation since has used the word "damnation." The Greek word in the text is krisis and it actually denotes "a crucial testing time." This Greek word is the source of our English word "crisis," and it has the same meaning. A doctor might say, "The patient will reach his crisis tomorrow morning." This does not mean that the patient will die tomorrow morning. Rather, the crisis of an illness is that period when the patient will take a turn for the better or for the worse.

The "crisis" or trial time for the church is in this present life, but the "crisis" or trial time of the remainder of mankind will be at the resurrection in the Kingdom. Billions of mankind, before and after Jesus' earthly ministry, died without receiving the light of Jesus. Yet John 1:9 states that Jesus is the light that "lights every man that comes into the world." A further Scriptural confirmation that, for most, truth enlightenment will require an awakening from the dead. The world has yet come to this momentous experience.

Why the Church is First Called

Why is the true Church first selected to share with Christ in the Kingdom work of blessing mankind? There are a number of reasons given in the Scriptures.

One reason can be illustrated by the noble work of Alcoholics Anonymous. An essential step of AA therapy is to assign a former alcoholic to each alcoholic that comes for help. The victim being



controlled by alcohol will not readily accept help or advice from just anyone. How could anyone know his agony, his depression, his desperation if he has not shared the same experience? But the alcoholic will accept help from a former alcoholic because he knows that this person can understand his agony. And this former alcoholic stands ready at any time to come to his side, to plead with him. It requires a former alcoholic to rehabilitate an alcoholic.

When mankind comes forth from the grave in God's Kingdom, they will be informed that they have been purchased with the precious blood of His Son and they will be made aware of the fact that they are now under the reign of Jesus Christ and his Church (I Cor. 6:2). What confidence they will have knowing that the Church understands and will enter into their problems! Why? Because the Church were once sinners, as well. This plan of rehabilitation will work. The majority will gladly receive the instruction, the disciplining, the nurturing necessary to pass their trial for eternal life.

Do Good Unto All Men

Again, what should our attitude be toward all who are not Christians? The Scriptures leave us no choice: We are told to "do good unto all men." Gal. 6:10 We are also to "love our enemies," (Matt.5:44) and Paul tells us to "owe no man anything but love." Romans 13:8 Why do we have these

admonitions? We are to love like God loves. Although the world is at enmity with God, they are his creation. At worst, they are children that have gone astray whom God is chastening in order to effect a positive change of heart. Remember your childhood? Did you stop loving your brother or sister while they were being corrected by your parents. The present lifetime is a time for all mankind to learn this one basic lesson and that is the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its bitter consequences. Most will learn this bitter lesson and have responsive hearts when they come forth from the grave and are given a knowledge of the truth.

We love our non-Christians friends. We rejoice and trust we will be a part of the Church which will give to all families of the earth the message of Revelation 22:17. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Yes, the time is coming when all the peoples of the earth will know, love and worship the same God. The Apostle John prophetically captured the overflowing joy and praise in their hearts at that time (Rev. 5:13).

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, ...heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.



Appendix A

Non-Christian Religions

The following is an overview of the beliefs of the major non-Christian religions.

Hinduism

One of the world's oldest religions, Hinduism developed in India between 1800-1000 BC. Hinduism contains many sects. Hinduism is both a religion and a way of life. It is described in the *Vedas*—considered the world's most ancient scriptures, about 1000BC.—and the *Bhagavad-Gita*, an 18-chapter poem.

Hindus believe that all things are part of God, that souls are reincarnated at death, and that our lives are influenced by *karma*, i.e., good and bad actions in this life determine one's status in the next. The goal is *nirvana*, release from the cycle of reincarnation to become one with God.

Although the ancient Hindus numbered their gods at 330 million, the principal gods of modern Hinduism are Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Sustainer, and Shiva the Destroyer, who is also the god of procreation. Notice, the Hindus have their trinity.

The ten main beliefs are:

1. *Brahman* is the "Absolute," present in everything.
2. Individuals create their own destinies.
3. Souls evolve through reincarnation.
4. One's place is fixed in a *caste* or level of society.
5. Nirvana can be achieved through meditation.
6. A *guru* helps guide a person toward total realization of God.
7. Personal discipline and observance of many rites and rituals are essential.
8. New Hindus receive names that may change more than once in their lifetime as a result of spiritual events.
9. All life is sacred.
10. No particular religion teaches the only way to salvation above all others.

Buddhism

Buddhism arose in India about 500 BC. Siddhartha Gautama found that his Hindu beliefs did not adequately explain the suffering and pain he observed in the world. Through religious contemplation, Gautama became *Buddha*, "the enlightened one," and taught others his discoveries.

Pure Buddhism is more philosophy than religion, a godless pietism. Other forms of Buddhism revere Buddha as a deity and speak of salvation through faith in him. Buddhism is a journey to an enlightened state of being. People do this by accepting the *Four Noble Truths* and following the *Eightfold Path*.

The founder, Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) lived from about 562-480 BC. Other major teachers include Nichiren AD 1222-1282 in Japan and the Dalai Lama, currently living in exile from Tibet in Dharmasala, India.

The Four Noble Truths:

1. Life is filled with misery and suffering.
2. This misery and suffering is caused by our selfish desires.
3. Misery and suffering can be eliminated by getting rid of selfish desires.
4. These desires are eliminated by following the Eightfold Path.

Eightfold Path:

1. Right views
2. Right thought
3. Right speech
4. Right conduct
5. Right vocation
6. Right effort
7. Right alertness
8. Right meditation



Confucianism

Confucianism, the philosophical system founded on the teaching of Confucius (551-479 BC) dominated Chinese sociopolitical life for most of Chinese history and largely influenced the cultures of Korea, Japan and Indochina.

Confucius joined a growing class of impoverished descendants of aristocrats who made their careers by acquiring knowledge of feudal ritual and taking positions of influence serving the rulers of the fragmented states of ancient China. At age 30, however, when his short-lived official career floundered, he turned to teaching others. The book known as the *Analects*, which records all that Confucius said, was compiled by his students after his death. The *Analects* became the basis of the Chinese social lifestyle and the fundamental religious philosophical point of view of most traditionalist Chinese intellectuals throughout history. The collections reveals Confucius as a person dedicated to the preservation of traditional ritual practices with an almost spiritual delight in performing ritual for its own sake.

Confucianism combines a political theory and a theory of human nature to yield a *tao*—a prescriptive doctrine or way. According to the political theory, the legitimate ruler derives authority from heaven's command. The ruler bears responsibility for the well-being of the people and therefore for peace and order in the empire. Confucian philosophy presupposed a view of human nature in which humans are essentially social animals whose mode of social interaction is shaped by *li* (convention or ritual), which establishes value distinctions and prescribes activities in response to those distinctions. Education in *li*, or social rituals, is based on the natural behavioral propensity to imitate models. Sages, or superior people—those who have mastered the *li*—are the models of behavior from which the mass of people learn. Ideally, the ruler should himself be such a model and should appoint only those who are models of *te* (virtue) to positions of prominence. People are naturally inclined to emulate virtuous models; hence a hierarchy of merit results in widespread natural moral education.

Then with practice, all people can in principle be like the sages, by acting in accordance with *li* without conscious effort. At that point they have acquired *jen* (humanity), the highest level of moral development; their natural inclinations are all in harmony with *tao* (way). The world is at peace, order abounds, and the harmony between the natural and the social sphere results in material well-being for everyone. This is Confucius' utopian vision, which he regards as modeled on the practice of the ancient sage kings.

Shinto

Shinto, the native religion of Japan, combines ancient religious practices with such influences as Buddhism and Confucianism. Shinto is primarily a form of nature worship. Mountains, rivers, heavenly bodies, and other things are worshipped and personified (for example, *Amaterasu* the sun spirit). Rules, rituals, and worship of *kami* (spirit) help to maximize agricultural harvests and bring blessings to social units or territories while preventing destruction and ill fortune.

Shinto has no real founder, no written scriptures, no body or religious law, and only a very loosely organized priesthood. Shinto is a nonexclusive religion, that is, people may practice Shinto along with a second or even third religion. Most Japanese practice Shinto and Buddhism.

Practitioners of Shinto use four *affirmations* ("things we agree are good") to describe their basic beliefs:

1. Affirmation of the tradition and the family;
2. Affirmation of the love of nature;
3. Affirmation of physical cleanliness; and
4. Affirmation of *matsuri* (festivals honoring the spirits).

Prayers and sacrifices to ancestors can be offered at family altars where ancestors are visibly present in tablets. For important decisions and important occasions of one's life, ancestors are consulted, that is, their graves are visited for reflection and meditation.

Islam

In AD 610, a businessman named Muhammad (570-632) of Mecca in Arabia, began to preach submission to the one God *Allah*. He attributes his religion to a vision of the angel Gabriel, who gave him the *Qur'an*, Islam's sacred scriptures. The angel Gabriel was first mentioned in the Judeo-Christian Bible. Today, Islam is the religion of about 20 percent of the world's population.

The central confession in Islam is the *shahada*, "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet." Muslim means "one who submits." Islam teaches submission to God in all things. It is a code of honor, a system or law, and a way of life based on the Qur'an. The level of devotion to this oral code determines one's salvation.

Muhammad, the founder of Islam, is considered Allah's last and greatest prophet. Muslims also believe that Abraham, Moses, and Jesus are great prophets. Jesus is not considered to be God's Son or the Messiah.

Muslims live by the Pillars of Islam:

1. Confession of faith—"there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet"
2. Daily prayer—in the direction of the Sacred Mosque in Mecca, Islam's holiest city
3. Charity—giving two percent of their annual income to the poor
4. Fasting—at various prescribed times, especially during *Ramadan*, the holiest month of the Muslim year
5. Pilgrimage—A pilgrimage to the city of Mecca, and the birthplace of Muhammad, is expected of healthy and otherwise qualified Muslim's at least once in a lifetime

Judaism

Judaism traces its roots back to Abraham in 2000 BC. God's promises to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) and His covenant (Genesis 15:1-21) began the relationship of God with Abraham and his descendants the Jewish people.

God is a personal, all powerful, eternal, and compassionate God. His history with His people and His basic teachings are found in the *Torah*, the first five books of the Old Testament. Judaism also accepts the entire Old Testament, which is entitled Tanakh—the Holy Scripture. Actually Christians accepted Judaism's Holy Scripture and called it the Old Testament. The *Talmud*, a 2,700-page record of the teachings of ancient rabbis is also viewed by many in Judaism as inspired.

Judaism stresses obedience to the Law (the Ten Commandments). They acknowledge the necessity of God's mercy since no one can perfectly keep the Law. Atonement for sin is made through works of righteousness, prayer and repentance. Many Jews believe in a physical resurrection of the dead.



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