

Jews: God's Chosen People?

Does God exist?

Whatever happened to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

Why the 2,400 years of silence?

The answers may surprise you.

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Printed In The United States Of America

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by Timothy Cross

INTRODUCTION

I would like to invite you on a journey that could change your life. Where are we going? What is our destination?—The presence of God; to discover whether the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob exists. I know this is a tall order. You may or may not even believe in God, and that is OK for now. I would rather travel with an honest doubter than a closed-minded believer.

Before we leave, I have two favors to ask of you. The first is that you "cut me some slack." Before you write me off or jump ship, will you at least read what I have to say? That is part of being open-minded.—Which leads me to my second request: will you reserve judgment on this booklet until you have finished reading it? Wait until we have reached our destination before you pass judgment on the trip itself. You may find this voyage mentally and emotionally grueling; but I guarantee you; once you reach port, it will have been worth the effort.

There was a man in a mental institution, named George, so the story goes, who believed he was dead. No matter what anyone would say or do they could not convince him he was alive. One day a young mental caseworker had an idea. He said, "Tell me, George, do dead men bleed?" George thought for a minute and said, "No, dead men don't bleed." The caseworker took a needle, pricked George's finger, and squeezed. A small drop of blood appeared. George's eyes grew big as he saw the blood and he said, "Well, what do you know. Dead men do bleed!"

Like George, no matter how much evidence I present, I cannot convince you of anything against your will—nor will I try. Therefore, if you are interested in arriving at the truth, it is crucial that you maintain an open mind. That is the one thing I cannot give you as we embark upon this journey.

Let me begin by asking you a rather blunt question: "Do you really want to know the truth about God?" If you are like most people, you are starting this trip with some emotional baggage. Some have deep emotional reasons and/or hidden agendas for *not* wanting to believe in God—like the woman who said, "I refuse to believe in a God who would allow my dad to rape me when I was a child." Or like the man who said, "I don't want to believe in God, because God may not

approve of my sex life.” Or, “I refuse to believe in a God who would allow the holocaust.”

While I sympathize with these people, and my heart aches for many of them, they miss the point. Without wanting to sound harsh or cruel, if God exists, God is under no obligation to meet their [or our] expectations. The issue is one of *existence*, not *preference*.—It is an issue of *truth*. We must adjust our beliefs to what *is*, not what we would like to be true. Does God *really* exist? That is the question.

There is no race of people on the face of this earth, past or present, who has done more to further the notion of God than the Jewish race. Because of the severity of the persecution against the Jews over the centuries, culminating with the Nazi Holocaust, Jews today are divided in their religious beliefs. Some buried their belief in God when they buried their loved ones in the Holocaust. Others modified their belief in God, as Rabbi Kushner did in his book, “*Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People?*”, where God is no longer the Almighty God of ancient Israel, but an impotent grandfather-type who cares, but has lost the power to stop evil. Other Jews have gone totally *New Age*, while some reject religion all together.

Can you identify the baggage you are taking with you on this trip? Fear? Hurt? Anger? Pride? Prejudice? Judgmentalism? Selfishness?—I personally don’t care what baggage you taking with you as long as you recognize you have it. Otherwise such *baggage* can be like a hidden time-bomb. It is hard to change or heal what you are unwilling to acknowledge.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

The most awesome concept to ever enter the mind of man is God, and the possibility of God’s existence. Our trip begins with a simple question, “Does God exist?” If you already believe in God, this part of the trip should be rather enjoyable. If you don’t, what I am about to share may take you out of your comfort zone. However, that’s probably good. Most growth occurs outside our comfort zones.

There are several reasons why I think you should settle the issue of God, if you haven’t already done so. First, you should do it for the sake of *truth*. Wouldn’t you hate to wake up on the other side of this life, assuming such a life exists, only to discover that you’d lived a lie and turned your back on the truth?

Second, is for *peace of mind*. By deciding whether God exists you can put your mind at ease. If you conclude there is no God, then throw caution to the wind. Party and screw around all you want. In a sense you win, for you are now free to live as you want. You can be the center of your own world, until they bury you.

On the other hand, if you search for God, and you find God, then you also come out a winner, for now you are tapped into the Source and Creator of all pleasure, the Creator of life itself. Again, you win.

Do you know the only way you end up losing? By being too afraid, or too proud, to honestly seek God.

Belief in God is not a casual hit or miss proposition. What you believe, or don’t believe, about God will affect the way you see yourself, others, and all of life.—Go for it! Settle the issue once and for all. If you are used to putting time, effort, and resources into getting what you want in this life, which is but a split second compared to eternity, then why not put serious thought and effort into something you know is going to affect you, one way or the other, *forever?*—Whether you’re there to enjoy it or not, never-ending time [eternity] will always exist.

Let me explain. Let’s imagine we have two people; John and Mary. John is an atheist [one who believes there is no God]. Mary, on the other hand, is convinced God exists. The question I ask you is this, “Does it make any difference who is right?” “Does it really matter if there is a God?”—Take a look at life through the eyes of John and Mary and decide for yourself.

Let’s begin with John. For sake of argument, **let’s assume for a moment that John is right, and there is NO GOD.** According to John’s beliefs, how would he say life came into

existence?—Answer: he would say the whole universe and all life evolved from nothing. He would view himself as the by-product of evolution.

Would John say humans have any basic worth or value?—If we are nothing more than a bunch of chemicals accidentally stuck together, how could we have inherent value? The answer is, “No.” Animals, plants, people, etc. are only *things*.

Would there be a purpose for our existence? If John is a true atheist, he would have to answer, “No.” If life on earth is nothing more than, pardon the expression, something the universe barfed out by accident, how could there be a higher purpose? Life for John would be a short party, at best, which lasts but a split second compared to eternity. Once the party is over, it’s over.

In John’s opinion, would real moral rights and wrongs exist?—Probably not. According to his naturalistic, materialistic beliefs, man is merely an *advanced life-form* in the animal kingdom. John would likely view society’s teaching about right and wrong as cultural, or as the result of some self-preservation genes.

In any event, John would probably look upon truth as *relative* [in other words, not concrete, always subject to change].—“What’s true for you may not be true for me.” There would be no absolute truth, no definite right or wrong. The one exception might be when it comes to science. Atheists often treat science as sacred. However, John must watch how he expresses his belief that there are no absolutes. If he says, “There are no absolutes,” he just made an *absolute* statement. If John states, “There is no such thing as truth,” he opens himself to the question, “And you know this to be *true*, John?”

Since John would not believe in moral absolutes of right and wrong, good or evil, he could justify doing anything he liked if he really believed there were no God. He could do drugs or chase women all he wanted. Practically speaking, rape or even murder would not be *wrong*. John could say, “If your chemicals don’t like what my chemicals do to you, tough.”

For example, this type of thinking was/is behind much of atheistic Communism: “What’s the big deal about killing people if it is for the good of the state? They’re only things.”—In like manner, and I’m not trying to be insensitive, Hitler would not have been *wrong* if wrongs do not exist. A father who abuses or murders his child, or a Satanist who skins a baby alive, is not *wrong* if there is no such thing as evil or wrong.—Correct? [What is sad to me, is that in our society, there are some who actually think this way. It’s scary.]

In subtle, and not so subtle ways, if John were totally consistent with his atheistic beliefs [which few atheists are], that people are nothing more than *things*, rather than spiritual beings, such beliefs could, and probably would, affect the way he treats others and himself.

Latest statistics report that 100% of every generation still dies. If John were right, and there is no God, when he dies, then what? Two words best express it, “*The End.*”—When John dies, his life is over for time and eternity. For John this thought could be a real bummer. All his dreams and aspirations will end at death.

Now, let’s look at life through Mary’s eyes. **Let’s assume, again for sake of argument, that GOD DOES EXIST.** How would Mary answer these same questions? How would she say life came into existence?—Answer: She would say that, by whatever means, God created not only her, but the entire universe. Whether it took six days [instant creation], or six billion years [called theistic, God-directed evolution], the universe would show signs of intelligence and creative design.

Would Mary say people have real value and worth? Yes. According to her beliefs, people were creatively conceived in the heart and mind of God. Since God doesn’t create junk, we are of great value. Such a belief would greatly increase her sense of confidence and self-worth. She would also, hopefully, treat people with dignity and worth, because people are in some degree created in the image of God.

Do you suppose Mary would believe she has a special reason [purpose] for living?—Yes, to know and love God, to do His will by helping and serving others, and to prepare for eternity.

From Mary’s perspective, would she believe that good and evil, right and wrong exist?—Yes.

If there is intelligence behind the universe, then things which conform to that intelligence would be *right*, and things which do not conform to that divine wisdom, would be *wrong*. She would say, “Good is good, and evil is evil. What Hitler did was evil. Good and evil are not to be confused.”

Like John, someday Mary is going to die. If she was right, and there is a God, then what—For her it would be “*The Beginning*,” not “*The End*.”

By looking at John and Mary, can you see how John’s world view could lead to feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and despair; while Mary’s view could give her a sense of hope, both in this life and the next? While such differences do not prove or disprove the notion of God, do you see how the way you think about God may dramatically affect the way you see life, and the way you treat others?

Imagine a piece of chalk the size of a telephone pole [50-60 feet tall] and a chalkboard hundreds of miles long. Pretend you take that huge piece of chalk and draw a thin line that goes and goes until the chalk runs out. Think of this as a time line representing eternity. Next, put a tiny dot at the front end of that line, and let it represent your whole life here on earth compared to eternity.

Does it matter whether God exists and who is right, John or Mary?—Of course. If there is no God, you might as well erase the line, for when you die your life is over. In which case, you should drink all the enjoyment you can out of this tiny dot of time, for that is all you will ever get.

On the other hand, if God is real, and there is an afterlife, then nothing on earth could be more important. You are literally at the beginning of eternity; be it good, bad, or otherwise. Things such as war, AIDS, making money, marriage, having kids, national freedom, getting an education—even sex —would not begin to compare in importance to that which will affect you eternally.

It is a sobering thought, but true; this very instant you are one breath and one heartbeat away from eternity. And, depending on who is right, John or Mary, you face either eternal nothingness, or never-ending life of some sort.

When Bill Gates [currently the richest man in the world] dies, do you know how much money he will leave?—All of it. I have yet to see a hearse pulling a U-Haul trailer. We all live on *stand-by*, and could leave this world at any moment. We are each one breath and one heartbeat from eternity. Your life on earth is either all there is, the end of the road, or it is the first stop on an infinite journey. You have no say in the matter. All you can do is try to determine which destination is true, and adjust your life accordingly.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Since the advent of the theory of evolution, many in our society, especially teenagers, college students, and faculty, are finding it fashionable to declare themselves as either atheists or agnostics. These two terms have their roots in the Greek language. In Greek the letter “*a*” means “*no*.” The word for *God* is “*theos*.” Therefore, an “*a*-theo-ist” [atheist] is one who says there is *no God*. The term agnostic comes from the word “*gnosis*,” from which we get the word *knowledge*. Therefore, an *agnostic* is one who *does not know* whether God exists.

So, which is the most the open-minded, atheism or agnosticism?—Actually, agnosticism is the most open-minded. For an atheist to confidently say there is no God seems a bit arrogant. To claim to know that in this vast universe, in this dimension, or any other dimension of reality, there is no God is a bit presumptuous. A person would almost have to be God to have such knowledge. From my perspective, claiming to know there is no God, is like two fleas on a dog in Kansas discussing the existence of kangaroos in Australia. They’re in no position to say.

It is not intellectually wise to claim to know the unknowable. To say there is no God is an unprovable statement. At least agnostics acknowledge their limitations, that, just maybe, there could be a God outside their knowledge and experience.

There are two types of agnostics: those who say, “*I don’t know, and I don’t want to know,*” and those who say, “*I don’t know, but I am open to knowing.*” Peter Kreeft, a philosopher professor at Boston College, said, “*the great divide is . . . not between finders and nonfinders, but between seekers and nonseekers.*” I agree. Are you a seeker? If you are, and God exists, then I believe that God is big enough to show you. And, because I believe God is personal, I believe God desires to show you. The question is whether you are open to being shown. Are you open to the truth? No amount of believing can bring God into existence, if God does not already exist; nor can doubt destroy God if God does exist.

I do not want you to believe in God because it will make you feel better, although it will, but because you come to believe it is *true*. It is not an issue of being sincere or having good feelings. [Belief in Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy can give you good feelings.]

The search for God might be compared to the little boy who went fishing for the first time with his dad. He had never seen a real fish, and for all he knew fish were a figment of the imagination.

His dad taught him how to bait the hook, toss it in the water, and then watch for the cork to bob. After an hour or so of fishing, without so much as a bite, the boy was becoming pretty *agnostic* about fish. Then it happened. His cork bobbed and went under the water, his fishing line began to move, and he felt a tugging on the other end. All of a sudden his agnosticism about fish changed to fear. “What’s on the other end of the line?” “Will it hurt me?” “Maybe it’s a shark!”

The search for God is much the same. I cannot tell you what you will find on the other end of the line, but I respect anyone with enough courage to throw his or her line into the water. All I can do is help you bait your hook.

People who begin to grasp the issues of God’s existence, and how complex our universe is, will have unanswered questions.—I must confess: as a believer in God, there are days when I am overwhelmed by the whole notion of God. My mind cannot comprehend how awesome and powerful a God it would take to create our universe and more. My brain short-circuits even thinking about it.

On the other hand, true atheists must also have days when they doubt their beliefs—and that is good. It means they are thinking. I cannot imagine how anyone can look at our world and universe, and say all of this just happened by chance—that from non-life came life, that from unthinking matter came thoughts and feelings, and that blind atoms bumping into each other could eventually produce an Einstein, a kitten, a rose, or a beautiful person.

And further, how could all of this come from absolutely nothing? Evolution assumes that either energy and/or matter has always existed. In logic terms, this *begs the question*. Evolutionists assume an unproven part of their argument to be true, and then build their whole case upon something unproven.—Where did energy and/or matter come from for evolution to occur? To me, it seems there had to be an uncreated *First Cause* [God] to start the whole process.

If you believe in the Big Bang, who lit the fuse? [For what it’s worth, thanks to the Hubble Telescope, it seems our universe may not be expanding from a central point as we would expect if the Big Bang were true. Rather, the galaxies in our universe seem to be going in a whole bunch of different directions. This new information has caused tremendous shock among astronomers and physicists around the world.]

Let’s both acknowledge at the outset: **there are no easy answers. True answers? Possibly. Easy answers? No.**

GAINING PERSPECTIVE

A few years ago I read a book entitled *The Cosmic Mind Boggling Book*, and then some time later, a second book, entitled *Galaxies*. After reading these two books, my concept of the universe changed drastically. Could such a vast and complex universe as ours come about purely by chance?—You be the judge.

To help put things in perspective, let’s take two journeys; one across our universe and another

into the realm of atoms. Fasten your seat belt and let's begin.

On the first leg of our trip, we are going to take a journey to the sun. If there were a highway from earth to the sun, at fifty-five miles per hour, it would take us 193 years to drive there.—Now, since we're having such a great time, let's say we decide to take a little drive on over to Alpha Centauri. [Alpha Centauri is a triple star system with two large stars, Alpha and Beta Centauri, with a third smaller star, Proxima Centauri, orbiting the other two. Proxima Centauri is the closest star to our earth, not counting our sun.] Driving at fifty-five miles per hour, how long do you think it would take us to drive to Proxima Centauri?

To give you an idea, we could drive for 50,000 years, 100,000 years, 500,000 years, a million years, 10 million years, 20 million years—and we wouldn't even be halfway there. Finally, 52 million years later, at fifty-five miles per hour, we would arrive at Proxima Centauri. [Whew!]

Light, they say, currently travels at 186,000 miles per second, which is roughly 6 trillion miles per year. In the time it would take you to say, "one thousand one," which is approximately one second, light from the light bulb in the room where you're likely reading, could have traveled around our entire earth almost seven and one-half times [if it were to go in a circle]. Traveling at this incredible speed, it takes light from Proxima Centauri almost four and one-third years to reach earth.

There are known star systems that are billions of light years away from us. If it would take us 52 million years to drive $4 \frac{1}{3}$ light years, imagine how long it would take us to drive several billion light years.

Our sun and nine [possibly ten?] planets form the *solar system*. If we were on Pluto, the furthest known planet from the sun, our sun would look like another star.

Our solar system is part of a larger *galaxy* [a cluster of many stars] called the Milky Way, which is made up of an estimated 250 billion stars. Our sun is one of those stars.

To put our earth in perspective with the Milky Way, imagine a one inch square with 200 microscopic dots inside it, representing 200 stars, one of which is our sun.—We have already established that it might take 52 million years to drive from one star (or dot), to another at fifty-five mph.—To grasp the size of our Milky Way, it would take 160 acres worth of those one inch squares to equal the size of the Milky Way [roughly a half mile square]. If the Milky Way galaxy were reduced to the size of North America [Canada, the U.S.A. and Mexico] our solar system, by comparison, would be about the size of a coffee cup. And, our Milky Way is estimated to be only one-trillionth of the known universe.

Scientists used to look through telescopes and see what they thought were other stars. Now they realize that much of what they were seeing was other galaxies. Based on the most recent information from the Hubble Telescope, scientists now estimate that there may be 50-125 billion other galaxies, made up of 100-400 billion stars each. Once some scientists directed the Hubble Telescope at what looked like a black spot in the sky, about the size of a grain of sand held at arm's length. When they focused the telescope on that spot, and enlarged the photographs they took, what do you think they saw?—Galaxies, galaxies, and more galaxies.

The largest star we can see with the naked eye is a star located in the southern sky each winter in the constellation Orion. The name of the star is Betelgeuse [pronounced *beetle juice*]. It is the reddish star in the upper left portion of Orion, just above Orion's belt of three stars. Betelgeuse is approximately 160 million times larger than our sun. If our earth were the size of a golf ball; by comparison, Betelgeuse would be a ball 2 miles high. If there were a tunnel through the center of that star, driving at 55 miles per hour, it would take us over 1,600 years just to drive through the tunnel. [Remember it only takes 193 years to drive from here to our sun.] If Betelgeuse was where our sun is, our earth would be inside it nearer the center rather than closer to the surface.

Consider the following quote from *National Geographic* about the size of our universe [May 1974, p. 592]. "*Imagine that the thickness of this page represents the distance from earth to sun [93,000,000 miles, or about eight light-minutes]. Then the distance to the nearest star [4 1/3 light years] is a 71-foot-high sheaf of paper. And the diameter of our own galaxy [100,000 light-years]*

is a 310-mile stack, while the edge of the known universe is not reached until the pile of paper is 31 million miles high—a third of the way to the sun!”—A stack of paper 31 million miles high would go around our earth 1,240 times if it were laid on its side.

Just as I cannot even begin to fathom the vastness of our universe, neither can I comprehend atoms, the physical building blocks of the universe. The French scientist/ mathematician Pascal said that we are between the largest thing and the smallest thing we can imagine.—I agree.

How small are atoms? Whether you have had chemistry or not, put on your thinking cap again, and let’s take a journey into the world of atoms.

Atoms are the smallest self-contained things in our universe. Your body, the world, anything physical, is composed of atoms. Some are lightweight, like helium, and some are heavy, like iron. Each atom has a center, called a *nucleus*. Going around the nucleus, millions of times per second, like bees swarming around a hive, are incredibly small particles called electrons. The bigger the atom, the more electrons it has. [It used to be thought that electrons orbited the nucleus in neat little circles. Now scientists believe that electrons fly all over the place, more like swarming bees.]

So, just how small are atoms?—To give you an idea of how small atoms are, look at the period at the end of this sentence. You could put approximately 230 million HIV virus [the virus which causes AIDS] on that dot. *Each* of those 230 million tiny virus on that period would contain tens of thousands of atoms.

I have read that the simplest one-celled organism, that can reproduce itself, contains approximately the same number of atoms as 100 million pages of *Encyclopedia Britannica* would contain letters of the alphabet.

Take a few seconds and look at the smallest patch of skin you can see on your hand. What you just looked at was probably a cluster of several hundred cells. Normally, you cannot see a single cell without the use of a microscope.

Scientists estimate that the average person has approximately 100 trillion cells in his/her body. To give you an idea of how big a trillion is, if you had stacks of tightly bound \$1,000 bills, a million dollars would be a stack 4 inches tall. A billion dollars would be a stack approximately 300 feet tall, and a trillion dollars would be a stack 63 miles high.

Within each cell of your body is “DNA.” It is the genetic blueprint of your body, similar to the housing blueprint a building contractor uses. DNA determines everything about you physically—your eye color, the size of your nose, etc. The DNA in your body is like a written code, just like the letters within a book. Our bodies read DNA. They are not like random letters of the alphabet thrown together. They are like a library of information. The question is, who wrote the DNALibrary?

What is also amazing, is that each cell in your body contains the blueprint for your entire body. With the right technology, scientists could take the DNA from any cell of your body, and create another “you,” just like you are now. [You’ve heard the term cloning, which they have already done with sheep and other animals.] Each human cell’s DNA contains upwards of 5 billion genetic codes [bits of information], each of which is made up of 4 atoms. That means there are roughly 20 billion atoms in each cell of your body used to make up the DNA, and that doesn’t even include the billions of other atoms used to make up the rest of each cell.—To think of it another way, there are probably more atoms in each cell of your body than there are people who have ever lived on the face of planet earth.

Some estimate that if we could take all of the DNA from just one person, and unravel the spiral DNA strands, and attach them end to end, it would almost go around our solar system [sun and planets].

So, what does all of this mean? What difference does it make? A lot. Now that you know some of the complexities of our universe, and the not-so-simple atom, what are the odds that all of this could come about purely by chance, and all from *nothing*?

Let me be very specific with where I am going with this. Atheistic evolutionists use the

concepts of probability and chance to argue their case for evolution. [Probability and chance are what a guy uses when he is thinking about asking a cute girl out for a date.—What are the odds she will say, “Yes”?]

Considering the age of our universe, and the age of our planet, doesn't it sound reasonable to think there might be enough time for almost anything to occur by chance? Using statistics, the mathematical science of probability and chance, is this within the realm of possibility? The answer is an overwhelming, “No!” It is not even close. Let me explain.

If I had four ping pong balls numbered 1 to 4, and I reached my hand into a basket and randomly drew out one of the balls, the odds of my drawing out the number one ball the first time would be 1 in 4. The odds of pulling out the number one and two balls in order would be 1 in 16 [4 x 4], and so forth. If I ran this experiment thousands of times, on average, the odds of my drawing all four balls out in order would occur, on average, 1 in every 256 tries [4 X 4 X 4 X 4=256].

Now, instead of four balls, what if I had 300 balls, and they too were numbered consecutively from one to 300 [Think of it as a giant lottery.—If I could pull all 300 balls out in sequence and I could win the wealth of the entire world.]— What are the odds that I could reach my hand in a basket, and randomly draw all 300 balls out in the right order?

The odds of drawing the number one ball would be 1 in 300. The odds of getting all 300 balls in order would be 300 X 300 X 300 . . . [multiplied 300 times]. That equals 1 X 10¹³⁰, or in other words, “1” with 130 zeros after it.

As elementary as this is, remember that every time you put a zero at the end of a number, the number gets ten times larger. Add a mere five zeros to a million, and suddenly you have one hundred billion.

So, how big is a number followed by 130 zeros? Imagine you had a billion monkeys on every square inch of the earth's surface [tiny, huh!], and each one of these billions upon billions of monkeys had a mini-typewriter, and could type at the astounding rate of one billion words per second. At the end of a billion years do you think that even one monkey out of these billions upon billions of monkeys would have typed 300 letters in the right order? One would think so, but in actuality, the answer is still, “No.”

At the end of the billion years, the odds of even one of these monkeys typing the correct order of letters is still 1 X 10⁸⁰ [“1” followed by 80 zeros].—By the way, 1 X 10⁸⁰ is a number larger than the number of estimated atoms in the entire universe. [Recall how tiny atoms are, and imagine how many it would take to fill our universe.] The approximate distance across the known universe in inches, for example, is only 1 X 10²⁸. **As incredible as it seems, you would stand a far better chance of picking one tiny atom, out of billions upon billions of universes the size of ours, by chance, than you would to draw out 300 balls in the right order.**—Would you care to bet against those odds at Las Vegas?

Now, let's apply these principles to real life. Could a, so-called, simple one-celled organism have evolved by chance? The odds of the minimum number of DNA molecules, in the simplest cell that is able to reproduce itself, occurring by chance, in the right order, is not a number with a 130 zeros after it, but 160,000 zeros after it. you read further, take a minute and *think* about that.

When Darwin spoke of a “simple cell,” he was wrong. There is no such thing as a simple cell. What he called a *simple cell* is complex beyond comprehension.

Atheists sometimes try to get around the problem of the first cell forming by chance by saying something very scholarly like this: *“I agree that at present we cannot account for how the first cell came into existence. However, the evolution of a protozoa-like cell is a matter of natural selection. And, natural selection is not a matter of mere chance. It is a matter of mutations in the DNA molecule brought about by changing environments. Such mutations are quite frequent.”*

I have no problem believing in mutations within species. I know natural selection occurs. However, let's be honest. There would have to be “a whole lot of mutating going on” for a single-cell microscopic organism to eventually mutate into a 100 trillion-celled human with a complete

respiratory system, vascular system, brain, digestive system, a set of seeing eyes, etc.

As good as their arguments sound, intellectually, one cannot just *assume* the first cell came into existence by chance, and then proceed with the theory of evolution. **Without the first cell, there is no theory of evolution.** In 1991, John Horgan, the atheistic senior staff writer for *Scientific American*, reviewed the status of all existing scientific theories for the origin(s) of life. According to him, there is still no plausible way life could have begun by chance.

For the sake of argument, let's just pretend for a moment that some DNA [the genetic blueprint] did occur by chance. Do you realize that there still would be no living cell. All you would have would be the "engine," but no body.

For life to occur there would also have to be [hang on to your hat]: ". . . *carbohydrates, lipids, high energy phosphates, hormones, carotenoids, alkaloids, RNA, the correct pH, a lipid cell membrane with pores just the right diameter to allow the passage of substances in and out, an endoplasmic reticulum for protein synthesis and intracellular transportation, transfer RNA, ribosomal RNA, messenger RNA, Golgi sacs for the synthesis and packaging of glycoproteins, hundreds of mitochondria to supply the energy needs of the cell, lysosomes for housing digestive enzymes, ribosomes by the thousands for protein production, centrioles to aid cellular division, a nuclear membrane to house the chromosomes and nucleoli for producing RNA-protein complexes.*" [L. Margulus: "*Microbial Evolution On The Early Earth,*" in *Chemical Evolution*, Ref. 6, P. 481].—Yeah. I knew you knew that.

And, even if all of these components were present, it still would not guarantee life. All of these parts would have to come together in just the right way, in just the right proportions, at just the right time, in just the right climate [not too hot, not too cold, and not too many ultraviolet rays from the sun]. And, of course, without food the cell would die.—"Oops. Go back to square one. Better luck next time."

With all of these obstacles, there is yet another major problem evolutionists face, and that is the *Law Of Entropy*. This scientific law states that all objects, if left to themselves, tend to move from a state of order to a state of disorder and decay [e.g., dead bodies decompose, cars rust, mountains wear down, clocks run down, stars burn out, the monkeys' typewriters wear out, and of course complex molecules such as RNA or DNA break down]. For atheistic evolution to work, not only would our first cell have to overcome odds approaching infinity, but it would also have to reverse the Law Of Entropy. Time, in many ways, is an enemy of evolution.

I am not writing to debate evolution, per se, but to show that atheistic evolution, to my way of thinking, is inconceivable. Even with mutations and the natural selection process, evolutionists have to admit, if they are honest, that there is no way to explain how certain living organisms in our world could have evolved by chance. For example, what organ(s) could possibly have mutated into a seeing eye or a hearing ear? How could that which was blind know to evolve an eye [or even two eyes for depth perception]? Or, how could that which was deaf know to evolve hearing?

Let me try to illustrate the difficulty with atheistic evolution as I see it.

Imagine a society of computers debating whether man exists. Since computers live in the realm of electrical impulses, they would never have seen a man. One computer might say, "*I reject the notion of man because such a concept interferes with my sexual freedom. If I want to interface [have sex] with Sally-Database computer down the hall, I don't want some man telling me I can't do it.*"

Another computer might say, "*Man is surely a myth for we can trace our evolution from the primordial metal fields of wire and solder, which formed the first computer chip by chance, to calculators, to personal computers, to mega computers like Uncle Mac. Who needs man? The evolution of computers is so obvious!*"

One computer might respond, "*Yes, the concept of man is rather frightening. If man exists then rumors of 'the pulled plug' may be true after all. Further, it would mean that we are accountable to man for our performance.*"

Still another computer might say, *“To believe in man is an emotional crutch. Only computers with little ‘memory’ and processing abilities, who have dependent personalities, would find comfort in believing the ancient myths about man.”*

Stupid, you say? Computers could never evolve purely by chance, not in a billion billion years. That is my point. Computers are nothing compared to the human mind and body. If computers could never evolve by chance, how could a vastly more complex life-form, such as man, evolve by thoughtless chance? To me, there has to be a God. It takes infinitely more faith to believe in atheistic evolution than to believe in an intelligent Creator God, no matter how mind boggling it is to conceive of such a God.—I don’t have enough faith to be an atheist.

There are some who think life on earth began by some extraterrestrial beings [E.T.’s] from other worlds. If that were so, which I personally don’t believe, who created those life forms? All people do who believe in “E.T.’s” is shift the question of God’s existence to another planet. The odds against chance evolution occurring there would probably be the same as here on our earth.

Let me share a segment from a fictional letter, supposedly written by God. It summarizes much of what I’ve been saying.

“Are you blind? Does the sun rise and fall without your witness?”

No. You can see . . . and the hundred million receptors I have placed in your eyes enable you to enjoy the magic of a leaf, a snowflake, a pond, an eagle, a child, a cloud, a star, a rose, a rainbow . . . and the look of love. Count one blessing.

Are you deaf? Can a baby laugh or cry without your attention? No. You can hear . . . and the twenty-four thousand fibers I have built in each of your ears vibrate to the wind in the trees, the tides on the rocks, the majesty of an opera, a robin’s plea, children at play . . . and the words I love you. Count another blessing.

Are you mute? Do your lips move and bring forth only spittle?

No. You can speak. . . as can no other of my creatures, and your words can calm the angry, uplift the despondent, goad the quitter, cheer the unhappy, warm the lonely, praise the worthy, encourage the defeated, teach the ignorant . . . and say I love you. Count another blessing.

Are you paralyzed? Does your helpless form despoil the land?

No. You can move. You are not a tree condemned to a small plot while the wind and world abuses you. You can stretch and run and dance and work, for within you I have designed five hundred muscles, two hundred bones, and seven miles of nerve fiber all synchronized by me to do your bidding. Count another blessing.

. . . Is your heart stricken? Does it leak and strain to maintain your life?

No. Your heart is strong. Touch your chest and feel its rhythm, pulsating, hour after hour, day and night, thirty-six million beats each year, year after year; asleep or awake, pumping your blood through more than sixty thousand miles of veins, arteries, and tubing . . . pumping more than six hundred thousand gallons each year. Man has never created such a machine. Count another blessing.

Are you diseased of skin? Do people turn in horror when you approach?

No. Your skin is clear and a marvel of creation, needing only that you tend it with soap and oil and brush and care. In time all steels will tarnish and rust, but not your skin. Eventually the strongest of metals will wear with use, but not that layer that I have constructed around you. Constantly it renews itself, old cells replaced by new. Count another blessing.

Are your lungs befouled? Does the breath of life struggle to enter your body?

No. Your portholes to life support you even in the vilest of environments of your own making, and they labor always to filter life-giving oxygen through six hundred million pockets of folded flesh while they rid your body of gaseous wastes. Count another blessing.

Is your blood poisoned? Is it diluted with water and pus?

No. Within your five quarts of blood are twenty- two trillion blood cells and within each cell are millions of molecules and within each molecule are atoms each oscillating at more than ten million times each second. Each second, two million of your blood cells die to be replaced by two

million more in a resurrection that has continued since your first birth . . . Count another blessing.

Are you feeble of mind? Can you no longer think for yourself?

No. Your brain is the most complex structure in the universe. I know. Within its three pounds are thirteen billion nerve cells . . . To help you file away every perception, every sound, every taste, every smell, every action you have experienced since the day of your birth, I have implanted within your cells, more than one thousand billion billion protein molecules. Every incident in your life is there waiting only your recall. And, to assist your brain I have dispersed, throughout your form, four million pain-sensitive structures, five hundred thousand touch detectors, and more than two hundred thousand temperature detectors. No nation's gold is better protected than you. You are my finest creation.

Within you is enough atomic energy to destroy any of the world's great cities . . . and rebuild it.

Are you poor? . . . No. You are rich . . ."

[From the book, *The Greatest Miracle in the World*, by Og Mandino. Bantam Books, N.Y., 1977, pp. 93 -96].

We are incredibly made.

Allow me to make a couple closing points. Whenever we see obvious design, we always assume there was a designer. For example, if I looked up in the sky one day and the clouds spelled the words, "Eat at Joe's Pizza." I wouldn't say, "Wow, what a coincidence." No, I'd assume that Joe had probably hired a pilot to do some sky-writing. When I go to an art gallery and look at a portrait or landscape painting, I don't wonder if the painting happened as the result of an explosion in a paint factory. Although I may have never seen the artist, not once have I questioned the artist's existence.

One night a woman brought her husband into the psychiatric hospital where I work. The man was as drunk as drunk could be. I asked him if he went to A.A. [Alcoholics Anonymous]. He said, "No, I don't believe in all that God stuff." His wife said, "You should!" He responded, "I don't believe there is a God."—At that point I couldn't resist, so I said, "I think there is an easy way to prove to you there is a God." He took the bait, so I said, "See that picture behind you? . . . Would you believe me if I said there was an explosion at a paint factory and it blew paint everywhere and just by chance made that painting?" He said, "No." I asked, "Why not?" He said, "It couldn't happen."—"So, whenever you see design, there is usually a designer, or when you see art, there is usually an artist, right?" He said, "Yes." Then I said, "When you look at Cindy Crawford, the super model, or an Arabian stallion, a rose, or a New England Fall, do they look like something the universe puked out by accident, or does it look like there's design?" He said, "Design."—I said, "Then there must be a Designer, and that is God." He said, "####, you got me!"

Some ask, "Tell me then, who made God?" Obviously, I can't answer that question, but let me share some thoughts which you may find helpful.

I believe that God has revealed [more on this later] certain truths about Himself, one of which is that He has always existed, and that He is without beginning or end.—[Some object to God being called "He," because they say it puts too much emphasis on the masculine. They believe, and rightfully so, that God must contain both male and female characteristics since God created both sexes. I use the masculine pronouns for God, not out of disrespect, but because it is culturally accepted, and because I have to use some form of pronoun.]

How can God be eternal? Ironically, it was Albert Einstein's theory of relativity which has given us a possible answer.

If you have watched some of the popular science fiction movies or television shows [e.g., *Star Trek*], you are probably familiar with the term "time warp," where people are able to go forward or backward in time. [As far as we know, though time is relative, it is always forward. You can never go back in time.]

According to Einstein's theory, as an object approaches the speed of light, time slows down. Supposedly, if an object, or being, could equal or exceed the speed of light, time as we know it would cease. If there were a Being [God], who lived in the realm of light, He would not exist within time. Time would exist within Him. Scientifically, an eternal God could exist.

Further, if we cannot understand God's creation, all the way from the tiny atom, to a universe estimated to be 14-16 billion light years deep, how would we be able to comprehend the God who created it? Believing in infinity, and thinking about such unanswerable questions as, "Where does the universe end?" or "What is beyond our universe?" is not much different than thinking about an infinite, eternal God. They are all beyond human understanding.

Even if there were answers, they would probably make about as much sense to us as astrophysics makes to a baby. If computers could actually think, they wouldn't have to understand man in order to believe in man. The same is true with us and God. The fact that we exist should be reason enough. We don't have to understand something in order to believe in it and enjoy it.

Logic and common sense demand there be a God.

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

For the rest of this booklet I am going to assume that God exists. For me the question is not, "Does God exist?" but rather, "Since God does exist, what is God like?" Using our minds and looking at the universe around us, what can we learn about God?

We have already considered the concept that *something cannot come from nothing*. Following this line of reasoning, does it make sense to believe that a God without intelligence could create people with intelligence? "No."—Therefore, God must be intelligent, incredibly so to create the universe around us. By sheer observation, we can also surmise that God must be powerful beyond belief.

Could a God without personality create people with personality? While that might be arguable, it stands to reason that God in all likelihood is infinitely personal, since He created love and joy which are components of personality.

Could a God without feelings create people who can feel? Could a God without sight, hearing, a sense of touch, the ability to taste, and the ability to smell, create creatures with these five senses without possessing, in one form or another, these qualities? Again, the probable answer is "No." It doesn't stand to reason that God would not possess these qualities in some fashion. In like manner, could a God who cannot communicate create a race of people who can communicate?—"No."

Let me interject one caution at this point. Using this line of reasoning, some wrongly conclude that if there is evil in the world, then God must also be partially evil [which is the Hindu view of God]. I disagree for two reasons.

First, if God is all wise and all good, as I think God is, He would know all things, including how things would be if they weren't good. For example, I have never murdered anyone, but that doesn't mean I don't know what murder is. That God should allow evil, as He obviously does, does not mean that He is evil. His allowing the possibility of evil is, I believe, the highest good. God created us as choice-makers, with free wills so that we would not be robots. At stake was whether we could freely love, versus whether we would be robotic androids.

Case in point; what if I told you, "*I'll take you out for lunch, and you can have whatever you want. You can have pizza, pizza, or pizza. What do you want?*"—That is no choice. God, in like manner, could have said, "*You have a choice. You can love Me . . . or you can love Me . . . or you can love Me.*"—Again, that is no choice. For real love and goodness to exist, without us merely being robots, there had to be an alternative, a real choice; evil. As strange as it sounds, love demands it. The possibility of evil and suffering existing is necessary if we are to have real free will. As much as we sometimes hate it, that is the price tag for having freedom of choice.—

Because God has given us free will, we can love Him, or hate Him. We can love people, or we can abuse them. We have the potential to do great good or great evil.

Are there consequences to our choices? Of course. There may be *hell* to pay for those who choose evil, such as Hitler did.

The second reason God could not be evil, is because He wrote the rule book. By definition, God is the only one who can truly call good “*good*,” and evil “*evil*.” Whatever He says goes. Our judgments of Him matter little. If He created us, who are we to sit in judgment of Him? We would be using brains He created to criticize the One who made us. That would be like a character in a book criticizing the author for the way the book was written.

If we were born with a sense of right and wrong, as I think we were, then it is because He, too, knows right from wrong, and created us with such knowledge. For example, if I were a teacher, and I believed in absolute relativism, that there is no such thing as right or wrong, I could say, “*In my class all girls will receive F’s, while all guys will receive A’s.*” The females in the class would likely riot saying, “*That’s not fair.*” Automatically they would have appealed to a higher sense of fairness—of right and wrong. You’d never hear them say, “*You’re correct. There is no such thing as right and wrong. It’s OK if you flunk all females.*”—Why? Because we are moral beings. Intuitively we know right and wrong exist. We expect a fair world, because we know real fairness exists.

It is one thing to talk about there being no absolutes, but quite another to live life in the real world 100% consistent with that belief. Just as we know right from wrong, God too must know right from wrong, which means that He is wise, not that He is partially evil. For an all-wise God to knowingly do evil doesn’t make sense.

Therefore, returning to my original point about what God is like, as popular as the notion is that God is some sort of impersonal “Force,” who set things in motion, and then stepped out of the picture, such a view does not hold up to reason. God is much more than a “Force.” He is infinitely personal and all-powerful. Logically speaking, I think He has to be.

If God is personal, and has the ability to communicate, the next question is whether He has communicated with mankind. There are many different religions who claim that God has spoken to them, usually through one of their prophets or founders.

One of the first steps, it would seem to me, in discovering which of the major world religions might possibly be true, is to simply ask which of the world religions believe in an all-powerful, personal, moral God as I just described?

Unless I am mistaken, only three of the major world religions believe in such a God: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. The infinitely personal God hardly fits the description of the impersonal Brahma [the World Soul of Hinduism who is both good and evil], nor does it fit the “Buddha Consciousness” in which Buddhism seeks to suppress human desires as harmful.

Could Islam be the true religion because many of their views of God [Allah] seem right? Although Islam may be one of the most passionate, dedicated religions on earth, to me Islam cannot be the one true religion as it professes.—Why?—Because Islam’s founder, Muhammad, said the Bible was to be “believed.” In the Islamic scriptures, called the *Qur’an* [sometimes spelled *Koran*] Muhammad said, “*We believe in Allah, and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and in (the Books) given to Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets, from their Lord we make no distinction*” [Surah 3:84].—In a nutshell, Muhammad said the writings of the Hebrew Bible [the Law and the Prophets], and the Christian portion of the Bible are to be *believed*.

Here’s where the problems come. Muhammad’s attitude toward Israel and Jews is anything but consistent with the Hebrew scriptures. How could the Hebrew Bible be true with its covenants with Abraham and David, and yet Muhammad have such negative things to say about Israel and Jews?

Muhammad’s views of Christianity are also distorted. For Christians the historical crucifixion of Jesus [*Yeshua* in Hebrew] is the central theme of the New Testament. However, Muhammad

denied that Jesus was crucified. Most Muslims are taught that Judas was actually the one crucified, not Jesus—and the list of contradictions goes on.

How could Muhammad say the teachings of Judaism and Christianity are to be *believed*, and still deny most of the major doctrines of each of those religions? The reason I believe Muhammad was so mistaken, and obviously uninformed about the real teachings in the Bible, is that he was probably illiterate. He could not read or write. Even if he could read, there was no Arabic translation of the Bible until after he died.—No wonder he distorted its content; he was going on secondhand (mis)information. [For a detailed response to Islam, read my booklet addressed to Muslims.]

Such obvious contradictions make Islam untrue in my thinking. Such huge contradictions also explain why most Muslims are forbidden to read either the Jewish or Christian portions of scripture, sometimes under threats of death. If they read these sacred writings, they would know Muhammad was wrong, because the contradictions are so obvious. Who wants to follow a mistaken prophet?

Also, any religion, such as the Ba'hai faith, which teaches that the Qur'an and the Bible do not contradict each other, could not possibly be true. Someone has their wires crossed. People who believe such things may be wonderful individuals [and most are], but they are sincerely mistaken.

HAS GOD SPOKEN?

I think God has revealed Himself. What I am about to share is as hard for our minds to grasp as is the existence of atoms or the vastness of our universe. Nevertheless, I believe it is true. You have hung with me thus far; please weigh carefully what I am about to share. I don't ask that you agree, only that you remain open to the evidence. If ever there was a diabolical plot to distort and twist the truth, it is over what I am about to share. If you will give me a fair hearing, I think you'll be in for some big surprises.

Simply stated, I believe that God revealed Himself to Israel as recorded in the Hebrew Bible, and in these last days has revealed Himself in the person of Jesus [Yeshua] the Christ [Messiah], as recorded in what Christians call the New Testament. [I know the term New Testament can be offensive, because it implies we have done away with the Old Testament, which is not the case. I'll say more about this later.] For the duration of this booklet I am going to refer to Jesus as *Yeshua*, his actual name, and *Messiah* in place of the word Christ.

CLEARING UP SOME MAJOR MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

Before going any further, I want to clear the air, so to speak, and address, as well as apologize for what some so-called Christians have done to Jews in the name of Christianity. It makes me sick and ashamed. I certainly understand why many Jews have a bias and a lot of well-deserved bitterness against Christianity. Horrible persecutions were conducted against Jews during the Crusades, the Inquisition [which was not only against Jews, but also against true believers in Yeshua who were not Catholic], and all in the name of the church.

I disavow those who committed such atrocities, just as I think Yeshua would disavow such behavior. It runs counter to virtually all He taught about love and mercy.

If you have a prejudice against all Christians, in fairness, I ask you to reconsider.—Let me share some little known facts that most Jews (and even many Christians) don't know, or they fail to take into consideration. The things I am about to share may be hard for you to swallow, but they are *true*.

(1) Yeshua and all of His disciples were *Jews*. Christianity began in Israel. At its core, Christianity is *Jewish*.—Surprised? Christianity for the first 8 years of its existence was totally, 100% Jewish.

(2) All evangelism in the early church was first to Jews, and secondly to Gentiles. Acts 17:2-4,

11 reads, “As his custom was, Paul [formerly Rabbi Saul] went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ [Messiah] had to suffer and rise from the dead . . . Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks . . . Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Many of the Jews believed . . .”

(3) Did you know that all of the 27 books of the Christian’s New Testament were written by Jews, with maybe two or three exceptions? As you probably know, Christians accept as part of their Bible the entire Hebrew Bible, which we call the Old Testament. All of the books related to the life of Jesus and the early church we call the New Testament. What you may not realize is *the whole concept of a New Testament (meaning New Covenant) comes from your Hebrew Bible.*—Read Jeremiah 31:31-33 to see what I mean. I’ll say more about this later.

In Romans 11:1-32 there is almost a whole chapter devoted to God’s love for the Jewish race and the promise of their restoration. Similar statements are peppered throughout the rest of the New Testament. [E.g., read Romans 1:16 and chapters 9-11 of Romans]. The whole notion of Yeshua’s second return is that He might fulfill God’s promises to His chosen people, the Jews. Revelation, chapters 6-19 deals almost exclusively with God’s working once again with Israel. God will raise up 144,000 Jewish-Christian evangelists to proclaim His message. How anyone can read the New Testament and be anti-semitic is beyond me. In my circle of Christian friends I do not know of one anti-semitic. My Lord was Jewish.

The early Christians didn’t lead a rebellion or a military crusade against Jews, pagans, or against the evils of the Roman Empire. They chose martyrdom instead of armed resistance in order that people might know the love of Christ. Love, not war, was the hallmark of Yeshua and the early church (See Matthew 5:38-48; Romans 12:17-21). That which was done in the Crusades and Inquisition was anti-Christian in the truest sense of the word.

(4) The first major crisis within the early Jewish church [and no, it is not an oxymoron to say Jewish church] was whether or not to allow Gentiles into the fold. It seems an unexpected revival broke out with both Samaritans and Gentiles. They too began embracing Yeshua as the Messiah. Read Acts, chapters 8-10.

(5) For the first century or so Jews and Gentiles worshiped side by side.

(6) It was not until the number of Gentiles so outnumbered the Jewish believers that segregation and misunderstandings began to grow.

(7) Contrary to some common misconceptions, all, or even most, Gentiles are not “Christian” in the Biblical sense of the word. A real believer in Yeshua is one who follows His teachings and has made Him a part of his/her life. Biblically, a person who *lives like the devil* throughout the week and goes to a Christian church on Sunday, is *not* a Christian. Just because a cat has kittens in an oven doesn’t make them biscuits. Going to church doesn’t make a person a true Christian.

(8) There is another side of Christianity you may not realize, or you may have forgotten. It is a side of Christianity and church history which are just as real as the failures you know about. Even though you don’t hear a lot about it on the news or in history books, true Christians were some of the strongest defenders and supporters of Jews during the holocaust. Many true Christians lost their lives hiding and protecting Jews during W.W. II. One such story of a Christian family hiding Jews from the Nazis, if you care to read about it, is a book entitled *The Hiding Place* by Corrie TenBoom. They modeled real, Yeshua-type caring.

Do not judge Yeshua by the religion some people have made through the use or misuse of His name, or through some possible bad experiences you may have had with “Christians.” As one man said, “The thing which most drew me to Christianity was Christians, and the thing which most turned me off about Christianity was Christians.”

I truly believe, if you really *knew* Yeshua, you would love Him.

So why did the church persecute Jews? [I share this, not to excuse, but to bring

understanding.]—The church became weakened when the Roman emperor Constantine declared Christianity the state religion. This act forced hundreds of thousands of pagans into the church, along with many of their idols and non-biblical traditions. For example, Constantine would march whole armies of pagans through a river and this was suppose to be their baptism.—Imagine how Judaism would have been effected had Constantine become a Jew and had forced all pagan males to be circumcised (ouch) and forced them to start attending synagogues. How might Judaism have been changed?

After Constantine and the great influx of pagans into the churches, the Roman Catholic Church became the dominant force within Christendom for well over 1,000 years. The true church of Yeshua was, by and large, driven under ground. As the centuries went by the church strayed more and more from the teachings of the Bible and became enmeshed in the political system of the day. With time the priesthood became corrupted and some very ungodly popes came to power. People in churches were denied access to the Bible. They were lied to and told that only priests could read and study the Bible. Without a knowledge of the truth, lies prevailed. [Again imagine how Judaism could have been compromised if some corrupt rabbi's had seized power and forbidden the reading or studying of the Law and the Prophets.]

A young Catholic priest by the name of Martin Luther sparked what we now call the Protestant Reformation when he exposed many of the heresies and hypocrisy within the Catholic Church. [Protestants were so named because they were *protesting* the anti-Biblical practices of the Catholic Church.] With the invention of the printing press a few decades earlier, Luther and other reformers got the Bible back into the hands of the people. [The first book ever printed on the printing press was the Bible.] Spiritual revival began as thousands were able to read the word of God for themselves. I regret to say that even though Luther helped get the church back on track, he was far from perfect. As he tried to convert Jews to Christianity he became frustrated and made some very horrible comments against Jews.

Over the centuries, I believe that many of the atrocities against Muslims, Jews, and true Christians, were committed by “wolves dressed in sheep’s clothing.” They were Christian in name only. In our New Testament (Acts 20:29) Paul wrote, “*I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock . . .*” —The New Testament predicted such apostasy in the name of Messiah. I only regret that Jews got much of the brunt of it.

You must understand that much of what you are rightly condemning is *not* real Christianity. If the Crusaders had truly been following the Bible, they wouldn’t have done what they did. Were the Crusades done in the name of Christianity? Yes, but it was name only. More recently, Hitler identified himself as “Christian.”—Please hear me. Hitler was no more “Christian” than the man in the moon. Hitler was an occultist, close to being a Satanist. The blood ceremonies of the S.S. soldiers under a full moon was highly Satanic. Just as it would be unfair to label all Jews as Communists, because Karl Marx was a Jew, it is also unfair to lump true believers in Yeshua with the likes of a Hitler.

Also, some [not all] tele-evangelists model a brand of Christianity so far removed from my own, that I want to gag. How would you like it if you, and all Jews, were equated with Yigal Amir, the young man who shot Yitzhak Rabin? How would you feel if the media touted him as being representative of all Jews? It would be an unfair comparison, correct?—Be careful the comparison you make between various “Christians.”

CONCRETE EVIDENCE TO PROVE YESHUA’S CLAIM TO BE MESSIAH

Many Jews find it hard to entertain the notion that Jews can retain their Jewishness and at the same time be Christian. However, as I mentioned before, Christianity began as a movement within Judaism. Jews by the thousands, who were schooled in the Law of Moses and the Prophets, embraced Yeshua as their Messiah. *Had it not been for Jews, Christianity would not*

exist. In the first century it was not an oxymoron to say a person was a Hebrew Christian.

If you are open-minded and are willing to do some honest inquiry, **I want to show you some concrete, tangible evidence which you, or any thinking person, can easily check.**—Then form your own conclusions.

Some think of Christianity as “escapism” or as “pie in the sky.” The real issue, of course, is whether it is *true*. Is there really “pie in the sky”? To say, “There is a tunnel under this prison” may be an escapist idea but it may also be true. So how can you determine whether Christianity is true? Actually it is not as hard as you may think.

There are a lot of religions and people saying what God is or is not like, and whether or not He even exists. The only one who can say for sure whether God exists and what He is like is God Himself. As simple as this is, it is an important point to grasp. Only God can give the final word on Himself.

Suppose one day a man (Yeshua) walked this earth claiming to be God, saying that He was “*THE way . . . THE truth . . . THE life*” (John 14:6, emphasis mine). What if He claimed to be the incarnation of Yahweh [John 8:58]. Now this would be something you could easily investigate.—Any person claiming to be God would either be psychotic with delusions of grandeur (crazy), a deceiver out to pull off one of the greatest scams of all time, or, this person might actually be the incarnation of God.—Possibly God had chosen to write Himself into His own story and become a man, just as He did with Abraham in Genesis 18, 19.

In essence, this is what the Bible teaches concerning Yeshua. The concept that God can appear as a man or angel should not be foreign to you as there are numerous places in your Hebrew Bible where it says God did that very thing. The theological term is *theophanies*; God appearing physically. There are numerous examples: Genesis 16:7-10; 18:1-19:27; 22:13-16; 32:30; Zechariah 12:10 (cf., John 19:37)—as well as prophecies where it says God will appear physically in the future: Zechariah 14:3-4 (cf., Revelation 19:11-16). [NOTE: Throughout this booklet I cite references from the Hebrew Bible with support all the major teachings of, what Christians call, the New Testament. Check the reference for yourself.]

In the New Testament Yeshua is called almost every major name used to describe God in the Old Testament: “God,” “Yahweh,” “Lord,” “Creator,” “Savior,” “King of kings,” “the Alpha and the Omega,” “Holy One,” etc. Even though Yeshua taught that God is the only one worthy of worship (Matthew 4:10) He, nevertheless, received worship (Matthew 28:9,17). It even says the angels of God are to worship Him (Hebrews 1:6). If Yeshua were not God, He had no right being called God or allowing others to treat Him as God. It would be the ultimate in blasphemy and arrogance. Yeshua, a God-fearing Jew, would have known that.

To believe that Yeshua was *just* a good teacher (assuming He really claimed to be God) would be out of the question. He would either be much more than a *good teacher* (i.e., God), or much less (i.e., a liar or lunatic). Think of the hundreds of thousands who have died martyr’s deaths because of His claims. If He is not God, these people died for a lie, for a false idol.

C.S. Lewis—author, professor, and Christian intellectual—wrote, “*A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus [Yeshua] said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon, or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.*”

There can be no middle ground. Just as no one is ever half pregnant (either they’re pregnant or they’re not), in like manner, Yeshua is either God or he isn’t.—Lunatic, liar or Lord, you choose.

If you really want to know the truth about God, it is not intellectually wise to ignore the life and teachings of the one major religious leader in all of history, and a Jew at that, who actually claimed to be God: Yeshua. He is too important of a figure to pass over lightly. He stands alone

in the claims He made. Yeshua produced anger, hatred, or worship from the people of His day. To take a middle-of-the-road position concerning Him is to totally fail to grasp the claims He made. The enemies of Yeshua clearly understood His claim to divinity. They tried to kill Him for blasphemy because He claimed *equality* and *oneness* with God (e.g., John 5:18; 8:58-59; 10:33, Mark 14:6¹-64, etc.). All of the main writers of the New Testament, such as Rabbi Saul [Paul] and the apostle John, clearly taught the deity of Yeshua [e.g., Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:6,7; Romans 9:5; John 1:1,14; Hebrews 1:1, etc.].

This is even more staggering when we realize that those saying these things were monotheistic Jews (who only believe in one God} . They were not talking about Yeshua being a *god* in some pantheistic, Hindu sort of way. No, they worshiped Him as the incarnation of God Almighty (e.g., Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Matthew 28:9, John 20:28, Hebrews 1:6, Revelation 5:8-14, Philippians 2:10,11).

Reason with me. For sake of argument, if Yeshua is God, then He could state the truth about God (i.e., Himself) and about the only way to have a right relationship with God, because He is God. Correct?—What He says goes. What He says is right is right, and what He says is wrong is wrong. Like it or not, if He was/is God then He could make such statements. If He wasn't God, He'd be crazy, Christianity would be false, and you should avoid it like the plague.

That is why Christianity is such an exclusive religion and why Christians sometimes seem so narrow-minded. If Yeshua's claims are true, Christians have no other choice but to proclaim Him as God incarnate, who shed His blood for Adam's race [Acts 10:28]. Yeshua taught that He was the *only* way to God (e.g., John 8:24, 14:6; see also, Acts 4:12). Christianity is not a matter of likes or dislikes, but an issue of whether Yeshua was telling the truth. Because Yeshua claims to be God, His teachings are to be regarded more highly than any other religion in the world. It does not mean we are to be disrespectful of other religions, or that 100% of what they teach is wrong. But, Christians have an obligation to tell the world about Yeshua and His claims (see Matthew 28:19-20).

Rather than questioning the severity and harshness of God in making the way to Himself so seemingly narrow, maybe we should look at the severity of sin and the harshness of the human condition which would make it necessary for a holy God to go to such extremes to win mankind back to Himself. According to scripture God entered this world for the express purpose of dying for the sins of the world (Isaiah 53; John 3:16; Acts 2:23).

Let me summarize some of the major evidences, as I see them, that Yeshua was telling the truth. Again, you be the judge.

1. The first is Yeshua's character. No single human being who has ever lived from the beginning of time has so powerfully affected life upon this earth as Yeshua of Nazareth. His teachings are profound. (If you have never read the New Testament account for yourself, a good place to begin would be with the *Gospel of John* or the *Gospel of Luke*). It is hard to read the account of Yeshua's life and teachings and maintain that He was either a liar or a lunatic (the only other two alternatives). Either we believe His seemingly unbelievable claims (to be God) or we disbelieve His believable character.

2. The second is the historical evidence for His rising from the dead. This is crucial. Disprove the resurrection and you disprove Christianity. However, to do so, you would have to explain what happened to Yeshua's mutilated body. For example, why didn't the enemies of Yeshua just produce the body if He never arose? How did the tomb, which was guarded by Roman soldiers, get empty? Does it make sense that Yeshua's disciples could steal the body of Yeshua when every Roman soldier knew that if a prisoner [in this case a corpse] escaped while under his watch it would be his life for the prisoners? Why wasn't there a fight and why weren't there killed disciples around the tomb? If the soldiers were asleep, how could the disciples have rolled away a stone weighing over one ton without waking the soldiers? Another theory says that Yeshua, having been crucified by the Romans, swooned in a state of near death, suddenly revived, rolled away a stone weighing 1-2 tons, scared away the Roman soldiers, and told His disciples, "Hey

guys! Look, it's me! I've conquered death!" [No way. It takes more faith to believe some of the theories which try to explain away the resurrection, than to believe that Yeshua did arise from the dead as He foretold.]

And what about the disciples and over 500 other people who claimed to have seen Him physically alive following His crucifixion? What about Thomas who was told to put his finger into the nail prints in Yeshua's hands? What made the disciples, who were cowards before His death, suddenly change and begin preaching a message under the threat of death which eventually turned the whole Roman world upside down?— For further reading I highly recommend Josh McDowell's book *The Resurrection Factor*.

3. The third major piece of evidence is the documented accounts of Yeshua's miracles from both Christian and non-Christian sources. If Yeshua is God, then for Him to heal someone, or calm a stormy sea, would be no big deal, but merely a small repeat of what He did when He created the world. The New Testament clearly teaches that Messiah, as God, is creator (John 1:3,10; Colossians 1:15-18; Hebrews 1:1-2). One reason Christianity spread so rapidly was because of the miracles Yeshua and His followers performed. If you were born blind and you could suddenly see because Yeshua touched you, you would probably believe too! [Read the Gospel of John, chapter 9.]

4. Fourth is the trustworthiness of the eyewitnesses themselves. If you can't trust them, you might as well throw out the first three pieces of evidence. Of the original twelve disciples, not counting Judas who betrayed Messiah [as foretold in Psalm 41:9], tradition tells us that all but John were killed for their belief and bold profession that Yeshua had conquered death, that they had seen Him alive after the crucifixion, and that He was the one hope for mankind.

Would these men have willingly died for something they knew to be a lie?—Would you die for a lie, especially if it involved saying that some man had risen from the dead, when you really knew his body was decomposing somewhere? I think not.

Further, they passed on to the world its highest moral and ethical teachings. Would these teachings have knowingly been founded on a lie? No. The only logical explanation is that they saw Yeshua alive three days after His crucifixion, death and burial. This is the central theme of Christianity. [See I Corinthians 15:3-8.]

In the gospel accounts the disciples didn't falsely cast themselves in a favorable light, as one would expect if they were making up the story. They recorded their own bickerings, Peter's denial, their cowardice, etc. Yet, these Jewish followers of Yeshua, who only believe in one God (the one religion in all the world least likely to entertain such beliefs about God becoming man), spoke of the glory and sinlessness of Yeshua, and called Him "Lord" and "God" (e.g., John 1:1,14; 20:28; Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; etc.). And, as mentioned earlier, they even went so far as to worship Him (Matthew 28:9,17), an act reserved only for God as you know (Deuteronomy 6:13-15; Matthew 4:10).

These followers of Messiah had lived with him day in and day out for three years, and yet they were willing to die for their belief that He was sinless and "God."—Could anyone live with you for three days, let alone three years, and think you are sinless?

5. Fifth is the reliability of the Bible as a historical document. There are over 24,600 partial or complete manuscripts of the New Testament in either Greek or Latin. The second best documented manuscript of antiquity is *The Iliad and The Odyssey* by Homer. It has around 600 manuscripts. Most ancient documents have fewer than 10 original copies still in existence, yet they are still considered "A-1" historical documents by historians. For example, there are only 7 extant (existing) copies of the works of Plato, and 5 of Aristotle's works.

Even if all of the New Testament manuscripts were destroyed, we could still reconstruct all of the New Testament, with the exception of about eleven verses, from the writings of the early church fathers before the year 325 C.E. Even non-Christian historians have to admit that by all scientific, archaeological, and historical standards applied to any ancient manuscript, the New Testament we have today is over 99.9 percent reliable. Not one word in a 1,000 is in question,

and no major doctrine is in doubt.

Concerning your Hebrew Bible, up until 1947, most Jewish and Christian scholars had been using the Masoretic Hebrew text dated around 1,000 C.E. In 1947 the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in the caves of Qumran, near the Dead Sea, by a young shepherd boy. They are easily dated around or before the time of Messiah (100 B.C.E.-70 C.E.). They were virtually identical to the Masoretic Text [over 99% the same] which scholars had been using dated 1,000 C.E. The *Dead Sea Scroll* copy of the book of Isaiah, for example, was so identical to the Masoretic Text that only eight minor discrepancies were found.

Add to this the reverence and painstaking methods that Jewish scribes used to copy, check and double check their handwritten copies of the Hebrew Bible, including using a mathematical numbering system to see that things “added up.” With this said, you see why the entire Bible is the most well-preserved piece of literature from ancient times. Anyone can dispute its message, not so its historicity.

The Christian Bible as a whole is a miraculous piece of literature. Its 66 books (39 Old and 27 in the New) were written over a period of approximately 1,600 years, by 40 authors, on three different continents (Asia, Europe and Africa), in three different languages (Hebrew, Chaldean and Greek), with many literary styles (poetry, historical narrative, parables, proverbs, allegory), under all types of conditions (on the battlefield, in times of peace, in prosperity, in poverty, in captivity, at sea, in palaces, in the desert), by all sorts of people (fishermen, shepherds, kings, a physician, a rabbi, a tax collector, scribes, priests), on about every topic imaginable (God, salvation, sex, money, marriage, family, war, politics, religion, relationships, leadership, business, etc.), and yet the Bible reads, not as a fragmented mess, but as a unified whole.

The next question, of course, is whether modern translations of the Bible are accurate translations of the originals.

There are many different Bible translations on the market, which often confuses those not familiar with the Bible. Some mistakenly assume that because there are many different Bible translations they must be saying contradictory things. Except for one or two Bible translations by cult groups where they have altered a few key verses to fit their theology, this is not true. For example, most Bible translations are translated from one of two basic New Testament Greek texts (considered to be most reliable by Biblical scholars) and one basic Old Testament Hebrew text.

Thus, while translations vary in style, they are all saying the same basic thing. To say, “Hi,” “Hello,” or “Howdy,” are all accurate ways of saying the same thing. The content is the same, but the wording varies. The same principle is true of Bible translations.

It is my personal belief that the original writings were “inspired,” perfect in every way (II Timothy 3:16-17). Modern translations are not inspired, but they are accurate translations of those which were inspired.

6. Sixth is the testimony of believers. Whatever one says, there are many people, like myself, of every age, nationality, social class, or century, who say they have experienced the living Messiah. The accounts of restored lives, answers to prayer, healed bodies, and other evidences are hard, if not impossible, to explain unless Yeshua is alive. The New Testament, written by all Jews (except for Luke) bears witness to a living, resurrected Lord who is alive and well, and able to change lives.

7. The last major piece of evidence is prophecy. Prophecy is God’s ability to see history *before* it happens, and to record it hundreds, or even thousands, of years in advance. One book states: “. . . new discoveries have confirmed [the Bible] as the only book on planet Earth that bears a message provably orchestrated from outside our space-time.” [From *Alien Encounters* by Missler and Eastman; Koinonia House, Coeur d’ Alene, Idaho, 1997, P. 216.—Get this book if you are looking for fascinating facts about prophecy and reasoned explanations about UFO sightings.]

There are at least 48 specific prophecies in the Bible foretelling Messiah’s coming, including where He was to be born (Bethlehem; Micah 5:2), and that He would suffer and die having his hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16; cf., Isaiah 53; Zechariah 12:10).

If you have the courage to research what I am about to share, I think you will discover that Yeshua has to be the Messiah. Did you know that Daniel, in Daniel 9:24-27, prophesied the exact week Messiah would be killed? (Could this explain why most Jews seldom read or study Daniel?)—Can I prove what I just said about Yeshua’s death?—Yes.

In fact, the Bible is so accurate in its predictions, that almost 600 years before Messiah was born, in Daniel 9:24-27, Daniel prophesied the exact week Yeshua would die. He said the Jewish Messiah would die 483 years after *the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*. Using a Jewish calendar, which operated on a calendar year of 360 days, and starting at the exact day the Persian king Artaxerxes issued this decree [March 14, 445 B.C.], and counting forward 483 years, you not only arrive at the week Yeshua was crucified, but you arrive at April 6th, 32 A.D., 173,880 day following Artaxerxes’ decree. What is so significant about this day? It is what Christians call *Palm Sunday*, the only day that Yeshua publically presented himself as King to the whole nation of Israel. [See Zechariah 9:9.]—Five days later they rejected him as their king and crucified him.

Let me write out Daniel 9:24-27 in italics, with my comments in brackets. Read this slowly and think about each phrase. It says,

“Seventy sevens [a term sometimes translated “week,” or a 7 year period of time.—The same term was used of Jacob working for Laban for 7 years in Genesis 19:28.] are decreed for your people [Daniel was a Jew, therefore these “people” are Jews] and your holy city [Jerusalem] to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness [usually through the offering of a sacrificial lamb, except this time the Lamb of God was the Messiah: see Isaiah 53:1-12], to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem [which was in 445 B.C.E. by King Artaxerxes of Persia] until the Anointed One [Messiah], the ruler, comes there will be seven sevens [7 X 7 = 49 years], and sixty-two sevens [62 X 7 = 434 years. Add these 434 years to the 49 years and you have a grand total of 483 years], . . . after the sixty-two sevens the Anointed One [Messiah] will be cut off [die] and will have nothing. The people [Romans] of the ruler who will come [Titus] will destroy the city [Jerusalem] and the sanctuary [which Titus did destroy in 70 C.E.]”

Put in layman’s terms, this passage says that from the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, which we can easily date in 445 B.C.E. by King Artaxerxes, until Messiah would “atone” for sin and be “cut off” (die), would be a total of 62 + 7 weeks = 69 “weeks,” or in other words 483 years. Using a Jewish calendar, with operated on 360 days per year, starting at the time Artaxerxes issued his decree, it comes out exactly to the week Yeshua was crucified [April 6th, 32 C.E.!] Also, the Messiah had to come and be “cut off” before the destruction of the temple and sanctuary which we know occurred in 70 C.E. when Titus and his soldiers destroyed Jerusalem and burned the temple.—To better understand Daniel’s prophecy, get a copy of the small book: *Daniel’s Prophecy Of The Seventy Weeks*, by McClain; Zondervan Pub., 1970.

Concerning Daniel’s prophecy in 9:24-27, there is no way this passage could have been altered or rewritten following the death of Jesus. How do I know? Because the Septuagint [the Greek translation of the Old Testament] was written in 270 B.C., over 200 years before Messiah was born, and the Septuagint records this same passage from the book of Daniel, word for word.

What famous Jewish religious figure, claiming to be the Messiah, was born in Bethlehem, died having his hands and feet pierced, on a Day of Atonement, exactly 483 years from when Artaxerxes gave his decree, and all before Titus destroyed the sanctuary in 70 C.E.?—There was only one such Person!—Yeshua.

If the first 69 weeks were literal, what happened to the 70th week you say? I believe that the Bible teaches that this 70th week has yet to be fulfilled. It will be uniquely Jewish, more than Christian. Christians call it the Great Tribulation [Matthew 24; Revelation 4-19]. In the Hebrew Bible it is known as the time of Jacob’s Trouble or the Day Of The Lord [Jeremiah 30:2-7; Zephaniah 1:14-18; Zechariah 14:1-9]. In between the 69th and 70th week is the church age, where God’s mercy, grace and salvation has been extended to the Gentiles [as foretold in Isaiah

49:6].

Further, the Bible also predicted that Yeshua would conquer death by being resurrected (Psalm 16:10; cf., Acts 2:22-27). How could the Bible predict such astounding things hundreds of years in advance if the Bible wasn't true and Christ wasn't who He claimed to be? The odds are astronomical that any one man could fulfill these exact prophecies made by many prophets over a span of several hundred years.—It was God's way to be sure we wouldn't mistake His coming.

Would you care to make a prediction that 700 years from now a great religious world leader will be born in a certain small town with a population of probably less than 1,000 people? And, could you predict 600 years in advance the exact year and week this person would die? The Bible did!

Some scholars used to say that the Bible writers had taken events from the past and written about them in such a way as to make it sound like they were yet to happen. However, with the discovery of the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, we can now prove that the prophecies were written before the actual events, especially the prophecies about Jesus. In Jerusalem at the Shrine of the Book, there is a complete copy of the book of Isaiah, with that beautiful passage in chapter 53 about the Messiah being the suffering servant. There were also eight copies of the book of Daniel among the *Dead Sea Scroll* parchments.

In a booklet of this size I cannot go into detail but I recommend you read Josh McDowell's book, *Evidence That Demands A Verdict Volume 1*, for more on this subject.

The Bible also predicts future events still to come. According to the Bible, God will not let sin and evil go on forever. There is a day coming when Messiah is going to return and set up His kingdom, head-quartered in Jerusalem, here on this earth. What many Jews failed to realize is that Messiah had to first come as the atoning sacrifice for sin [Isaiah 53] before he would return a second time as King and Judge.

Concerning Yeshua's second coming, he said that no one would know the exact day or hour of his return, but he did say that we would know it was getting close when we began to see certain signs (Matthew 24:33).

Did you know that your own Bible even prophesied that most Jews will be surprised when the Messiah returns? Why? Because they failed to recognize him the first time. Read as Zechariah 12:10 and 13:6 describes the scene, "*And I [God] will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced [Jesus on the cross], and they will mourn for him [notice change of pronouns which indicates God has now taken the form of a man] as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son . . . If someone asks him, 'What are these wounds on your body?' he will answer, 'The wounds I was given at the house of my friends.'*"—What an awesome portrayal of God's love for you and the Jewish nation! He came the first time and was "pierced." The second time he comes as King.

Let me highlight a few signs which the Bible prophesies will happen as the end of the age draws to a close. It makes me believe that Messiah's return is near, *very near*. And once again, ask yourself, "If the New Testament isn't inspired by God, how could it give predictions 2,000 years ago that read as though they were off the front page of today's newspaper?" If you went to a theater to see a play you had already seen before, and you happened to arrive late, you could tell, just by looking at the props on stage, what was coming next. The same is true about the Lord's return. The Bible is very clear concerning the props which must be in place before Messiah returns.

a. Virtually all prophecy centers around the nation of Israel because God has not forgotten His promises to the Jewish people. (There are also some wonderful prophecies for non-Jews.) The Bible predicted that Israel would become a nation again [Daniel 9:27; Ezekiel 37:1-14]. After almost 2,500 years Israel did in 1948. Let me share a quote from Dr. Paul Meier concerning Israel becoming a nation:

"In the Torah, Moses wrote (Leviticus 26:18 and elsewhere) that in the future, whenever

Israel sins greatly as a nation God will allow calamity to come their way. He will however, give them time to repent. If they, as a nation, do not repent after their warning period, then the remainder of their punishment will be multiplied by seven.

Over 600 years before the birth of Jesus, God used Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel, to show Israel her sin. In Ezekiel 4:3-6, God told the prophet to lie on his side for 430 days to signify the 430 years Israel would spend in exile for her sins. Another contemporary of Daniel's and Ezekiel's, the prophet Jeremiah, predicted that the first 70 years of that 430 years would be a Babylonian exile (Jeremiah 25:11). That was Israel's warning period.

Sure enough, as predicted, Nebuchadnezzar came along and transported the Jews from Jerusalem to Babylon in 606 B.C. Then 70 years later; Cyrus the Great of Persian [probably Queen Esther's son] conquered Babylon in 536 B.C. and said he would pay for the millions of Jews to go back to Jerusalem. But the Jews refused. Only 50,000 devout Jews went back. The rest didn't want to interrupt their businesses in Babylon (now Iraq).

This obviously made God angry, so take 430 years of exile, subtract 70 years of warning, and multiply the remaining 360 years times 7, as Moses instructed in the Torah. You will get 2,520 prophetic years of 360 days each = 907,200 days from the day Cyrus made his decree to return to Jerusalem which comes out (are you ready for a shock?) to May 14, 1948, the day Israel became a nation."

Had God forgotten his people? No. He was merely carrying out the prescribed judgement which your ancestors brought upon your people when they chose to disobey. [Do you ever get the idea that God takes our choices seriously? I do.]

According to Matthew 24:34 Yeshua said *this generation* would not pass away until all these things were fulfilled. Obviously, he wasn't speaking of his own generation 2,000 years ago. So, what generation did he mean? Was it the generation alive when Israel was to become a nation? Most consider a generation 70-80 years. According to that view Messiah will likely return before the year 2028, possibly much sooner. The second view is that it will be the generation when all of the major signs he predicted begin to occur. Either way, as I view things, it is getting close, very close.

b. Another event the Bible predicts is that there will be a coming together of 10 nations recreating the old Roman Empire (Daniel 7:21-25; Revelation 17:12). With the forming of the European Community in 1992 this prop is almost in place.

c. The scriptures have a great deal to say about a 7 year period on the earth known as the Great Tribulation (Daniel 9:26-27; Matthew 24; Revelation 4-19; Jeremiah 30:7; etc.). It is the 70th "week" Daniel talks about in the passage we examined earlier. It is a time when *all hell will break loose* on earth. Revelation 8:7-11 describes some of what will happen during this time. Among other things it says a third of the earth will be destroyed by fire and a third of the world's waters will turn to *wormwood* (poisonous or bitter). It is interesting, but the word *wormwood*, translated into Russian is *Chernobyl* [as in the nuclear power plant that experienced a meltdown and spread radioactivity over much of Eastern Europe and Russia].

This is likely describing nuclear war and nuclear fallout. For example, after the United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima in World War II, thousands and thousands of people died, not only from the bomb blast itself, but also from drinking water contaminated by radioactive fallout.

d. Another major prop is that an army out of the East will come toward Israel some day with an army of 200 million men. The Bible says the Euphrates River will dry up before them. Red China today can easily muster an army that size and isn't it interesting that the Euphrates River now has a dam across it with huge spillways so it could dry up before this army (Revelation 9:13-21). And remember, this prophecy was written when the entire earth's population was not much larger than 200 million and huge dams did not exist.

e. The Bible predicts that there will come a man, called the Anti-Christ, who will proclaim himself to be God, and he will rule the world during much of the seven years of Tribulation. In

Revelation 13, it says he will make everyone take a *sign* on the hand or forehead [the number “666”] called the *Mark Of The Beast*. People who do not have it will not be able to buy or sell. With computer technology, computer chips [such as the army implants in soldiers to track them by satellite in case they are captured], visible and invisible inks, and laser scanners [like you see at grocery stores] the world is primed for *Big Brother* to track every man, woman, and child on the planet.

At the time of this writing, with the instability of the world economy, it is possible that there could be a worldwide economic collapse, which might bring about such a monetary system. There are signs all around us that we are moving toward a “New World Order,” a one-world government. Such talk is common within the United Nations, among some NATO pact countries, and by past and current presidents of the United States.

Many in the occult and New Age Movement are also predicting a coming world leader [the Anti-Christ] with superhuman powers who will usher in the *Age of Aquarius*. They believe he is already alive, and that when the world’s political climate is right, he will declare himself as savior of the world. Some think it may take a third world war to set the stage for his takeover of the world.

f. During the Tribulation there will be plagues and diseases which will wipe out a fourth of the world’s population (Revelation 6:7-8). With AIDS, the ebola virus, germ warfare and other diseases this is a real possibility.

g. The Bible predicts that the Jewish temple, or tabernacle, will be rebuilt in Jerusalem [implied in Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15]. I understand that Israel already has a temple designed. A tabernacle [tent] such as David used might also qualify [Acts 15:16]. In Jerusalem, Orthodox Jewish priests are already being trained on how to perform temple sacrifices as prescribed by Jewish Law.

h. In Matthew 24:6-8 Christ spoke of an increase in *wars, famines and earthquakes*. We have already had two world wars. At the time of this writing, according to the U.S. Geological Survey in Boulder, Colorado, there has been a rapid increase in earthquakes with a magnitude of over 6.0 on the Richter Scale. To give you an idea of how rapidly things are changing look at the following statistics:

1890-1900	1 major quake	1950-1960	9 major quakes
1900-1910	3 major quakes	1960-1970	13 major quakes
1910-1920	2 major quakes	1970-1980	51 major quakes
1920-1930	2 major quakes	1980-1990	86 major quakes
1930-1940	5 major quakes	1990-1995	over 100 quakes.
1940-1950	4 major quakes		

Besides wars and earthquakes, famines have been increasing worldwide. The world foodbank storage is at an all-time low [down to 49 days at last count], and one in every six people on planet Earth suffers acute, chronic hunger.

i. In Matthew 24:22 Yeshua said that unless he returned to earth there would be “no life” left on this planet. Yeshua spoke this when the Roman two-edged sword was about the most powerful weapon on earth. Now, think of the nuclear, germ, and chemical weaponry that could be unleashed and ask yourself how much longer our world can survive?

One multiple-warhead nuclear bomb today has more power than all the explosives and bombs used by all the nations in World War II combined. Supposedly, if you dropped a fork from your kitchen counter at exactly the same time a major nuclear bomb exploded 50 miles away, you would be vaporized before the fork hit the floor.

j. Revelations 11:7-9 says two prophets of God will be killed during the reign of anti-Christ, and people all around the world will view their bodies. People used to make fun of such a notion—until satellite TV.

k. Revelation 16:21 talks about hail balls weighing up to 100 pounds. Impossible you say?

That's what scientists thought until the first atomic bomb was exploded forcing moist air high into the atmosphere creating hail balls large enough to dent the decks of Navy test ships near the explosion site.

I. The Bible predicts major breakdowns in the family and in moral values prior to Messiah's return (II Timothy 3:1-5). This is happening. Look at the rise in abortions, crime, unwed mothers, abuse, violence, suicides, rapes, drugs, gangs, school shootings, etc.

There are many more prophecies I could list, but I wanted you to see that what the Bible talks about is as real and as practical today as when it was written. In fact, the book of Revelations in the Bible is much easier to believe and understand now than when it was written almost 2,000 years ago.

I believe our days here on this earth may be rapidly drawing to a close. I Thessalonians 4:16-17 says, "*For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ [Messiah] will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*"

Read Zechariah 14 and the physical coming of Yahweh to Jerusalem. Compare Zechariah 14 with Revelation 19 and the physical return of Yeshua, and suddenly it all starts to make sense. Passages which Rabbis for centuries have allegorized and spiritualized, may actually come true literally when Yeshua, your long awaited for Messiah, returns to Israel.

WHAT WILL YOUR RESPONSE BE?

Most who call themselves Christians, I think, will agree with what I am about to share. I want to tell you about the New Covenant which was instituted through the blood of Yeshua the Messiah [Isaiah 53:4-7]. As mentioned earlier, what Christians call the *New Covenant* (New Testament) is a concept solidly rooted in your Hebrew Bible. The prophet Jeremiah prophesied that one day God would make a "**new covenant**" with his people [Jeremiah 31:31-33], and that God would put his Spirit within us. This covenant was instituted beginning with the death of Yeshua on the cross and culminating on the Jewish day of Pentecost at which time God placed his Spirit within all true believers. Christianity is not merely following a set of rules, such as the Law of Moses, but it is a relationship with God. His Spirit indwells us. Instead of God's Law written on tablets of stone, as Jeremiah 31:31-33 states, it is now written on the tablets of our heart.

Are we anti the Law of Moses? No, we operate under the law of love which is wholly consistent with the spirit of the Old Covenant.

Doesn't God have the right to modify His own laws? [Yes.] While this New Covenant ratifies the covenant made to Moses, it does not change the Abrahamic Covenant, because that covenant is an eternal, unconditional covenant. Christians believe that The Abrahamic Covenant makes provision for God to be gracious to Gentiles. God told Abraham that through his seed "all the peoples" on earth would be blessed through his seed (Genesis 12:3). I, as a Gentile, take great comfort in God's promise to your father Abraham, for it is through Abraham's seed [ultimately expressed in Yeshua] that I am blessed.

Question: "Will your theology accommodate the possibility that God might want to save Gentiles? Isn't it reasonable to think that God's love would extend beyond you the chosen people? Is God's mercy so limited that it could not extend to Gentiles? I pray that racial pride will not keep you from seeing that this is what God promised all along. Could it be pride which has hardened Israel to what God has been doing the last 2,000 years?"

What I am about to share about the New Covenant is extremely important. Again, I'm not asking that you believe me, but I hope you will have the spiritual integrity to pray about it and ask God to confirm it in your heart if it is true. Fair enough? I will list Bible references in the hope that you will research and double check what I have to say. I will also cite references from your Hebrew Bible, because I want you to see that these same New Testament truths were clearly taught and/or foretold in your Bible. If you are open-minded and truly want to understand

Christianity you would do well to look up each reference, either now or later.

Spiritual Law #1: God is a God of love. He loves you, and has a wonderful plan for your life [I John 4:16; John 3:16; 10:10, Ephesians 2:10]. What God wants for your life is awesome beyond belief [Ephesians 3:14-21].

Spiritual Law #2: So, what went wrong? Why aren't more people experiencing what God intended? It is because our sin separates us from a holy God [Isaiah 59:2; Romans 6:23]. Sin is active or passive rebellion against God. It is not listening to God, but "*doing our own thing.*" Because God is "holy," totally without sin or wrongdoing, we cannot just bop into God's presence [Isaiah 6:1-5, I John 1:5]. Just as you wouldn't be allowed to walk on someone's expensive white carpet if you had oily, muddy shoes, neither will God tolerate sin in Heaven. If we went to Heaven without a basic change in who we are, we would corrupt and pollute Heaven, just as we have the earth.

We all fall short of God's standard of perfection. If we lined up in front of the Grand Canyon, and tried to jump across it, some might jump further than others; but the point is, we would all fall short. [Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23]. Because Adam and Eve chose to sin, the Bible teaches that this sin nature got passed on to all mankind; the same way a leopard inherits its spots from its parents [Genesis 3; Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12-21].

According to the Bible, sin is more than murder, stealing, or adultery. From God's perspective sin is such things as boasting in our own achievements. Sex outside of marriage is sin. Lying, gossip, slander, cheating, cowardice, yielding to fear, not trusting God, coveting what others possess, not acting in faith, being disrespectful, putting worldly success or money before God, unforgiveness, lack of prayer, not keeping our promises, looking lustfully at someone, swearing, not acting in love, and a bunch of other things, are sin [Exodus 20; James 4:16; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8; Romans 1:18-32; 14:23; Matthew 5,6; etc.].

According to the Bible, we all stand guilty before God, no matter whether we have sinned a little or a lot [James 2:10].—It is like the man who said, "*But, Judge, look at all the people I didn't kill.*"—The point? None of us deserves to go to Heaven. We have all sinned against an eternal God and committed eternal sins.—Stating it bluntly, unless God forgives us, by God's standard we're deserving of Hell. As a just and righteous judge, God cannot just sweep our sins under the carpet.

Spiritual Law #3: Yeshua is the only way to God. He died to pay the penalty for our sin. By his death, Yeshua bridged the gap between a holy God and sinful man. Either we go to God by way of Yeshua, or we do not get to God [II Thessalonians 1:8-9; John 3:16; Romans 5:8, Acts 20:28; I Timothy 2:5].

The story is told of a young woman who received a phone call from the emergency room of a hospital stating that her dad was deathly ill, that he may have only hours to live. Because she lived a couple hundred miles away, she got in her car and began frantically driving to see her father. As she was going through a small southern town, she looked in her rear view mirror, and there was a police car chasing her. Because she was going so fast, the officer didn't merely give her a ticket, he arrested her. The next day she appeared before the local county judge who told her that for going 50 miles per hour above the speed limit, her fine would be \$300 or three days in jail.

She pleaded with the judge. "*Your honor, you don't understand. I don't have \$300 with me, and I can't spend three days in jail. I must go to see my father who is dying.*" The judge said, "*I'm sorry, young lady, but the law says you must pay \$300 or spend three days in jail.*"

She began to weep, and the old judge was moved with compassion. To the surprise of everyone in the court, he stood up, stepped down from the bench, walked over, took off his robe, put on his sports coat, walked around in front of the bench, pulled out his checkbook, wrote a check for \$300, and laid it on the bench. Then he walked back around, took off his sports coat, put back on his robe, and resumed his seat. He said, "*Young lady, the law says you must pay \$300 or spend three days in jail, but I see someone has paid the fine for you. Case dismissed!*"

In essence, that is what God did for us. The Bible says that the penalty for sin is death [Romans 6:23]. When we stood condemned, without hope, God took off his robe of deity, put on a robe of humanity, became a man in the person of Yeshua, and died for us. God did for us what we could never do for ourselves [Romans 5:6].

Leviticus 17:11 says, “. . . *I have given it [blood] to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.* ”—Please think with me very carefully: if there is no atonement without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22), and God's word and his Law cannot be broken, then how can Jews today possibly be saved? Sacrifices ended in 70 C.E. when the temple was destroyed and blood sacrifices stopped. Does that mean that it has been impossible for people on the face of this planet to be saved since 70 C.E.?—No. Yeshua was God's atoning sacrifice for sins, not only for Israel, but for the sins of the world. [Isaiah 53 clearly spells this out. See also John 3:16-18 and Romans 3:21-31.] Yeshua's blood was shed once for all, a sacrifice that did not need to be repeated year after year. Salvation for the Jews has always been there. God never abandoned his people. It was they who abandoned him, they who crucified Him.

God's atonement, which he accomplished in Messiah, was foreshadowed in your Hebrew Bible in several ways:

- God offered the first sacrifice. He made coats of skin [possibly sheep] for Adam and Eve thus requiring the shedding of blood (Genesis 3:21).
- Abel offered a blood sacrifice [presumably a lamb since it says it was from his “flock”] for **himself** (Genesis 4:2-4).
- With the institution of the Passover, a lamb was sacrificed for the salvation of the **family** (Exodus 12:12-14).
- With the giving of the Law, a lamb was offered on Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, for the sins of the **nation** (Leviticus 23:26-32).
- Yeshua was the Lamb of God for the sins of the **world** (John 1:29; Psalm 40:6-8; Isaiah 49:5-6; 52:15; 53:4-12). [NOTE:It is customary within the Jewish community to interpret the suffering servant of Isaiah 53 as the nation Israel. If you will read this passage carefully, you will observe that, grammatically speaking, there is no way the suffering servant (Messiah) can refer to Israel. Isaiah uses singular personal pronouns in speaking of the Messiah dying for the sins of the nation. How could Israel be its own Messiah and die for itself? That makes no sense. The reason, I believe, such an interpretation of Isaiah 53 is made is to avoid the inescapable conclusion that if chapter 53 speaks of a literal person, as the passage indicates, Yeshua is the only viable candidate.]

Just as Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness, and as the children of Israel who had been bitten by serpents had to look upon the bronze snake that Moses lifted up on a pole [Numbers 21:8-9], so we, by faith, look upon the Lamb of God who was lifted up on the cross for us. Yeshua became a curse for us when he died for us (Galatians 3:13; cf. Deuteronomy 21:23).

Virtually everything Yeshua did had special Jewish significance, especially his death. The events surrounding his death were historically recorded for us in the first four books of the New Testament, called the *Gospels*: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These books were widely distributed in the first century, beginning in Jerusalem. Had the basic facts been wrong, there would have been a massive outcry, especially from the enemies of Yeshua. It is hard to imagine that Yeshua's disciples would have been so dumb as to state as fact things which could easily be refuted, such as Jesus dying on the Passover, riding into Jerusalem five days prior to Passover, etc.

Consider the following historical Jewish events surrounding Jesus' death.

1. Did you know that the day Yeshua entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey [cf., Zechariah 9:9], which Christians call Palm Sunday, was the day that the Passover lamb was chosen [5 days before Passover]? It is as though God said, “Here, I am sending you my choice, the spotless Lamb

of God.”

2. Did you also know that Yeshua was crucified on the **Passover**? At exactly 3:00 P.M. one of the Jewish priests would stand on the wall of the temple and blow a ram’s horn signifying that the atonement process was finished. As the horn would blow, the masses of people in Jerusalem, possibly 100,000-300,000 people, would grow quiet. It was at this exact time, at 3:00 P.M., that Yeshua uttered his last words while hanging on the cross, “It is finished.” With that, it says he gave out a loud cry, piercing the silence and the darkness that had come over Jerusalem, and he died. Yeshua died as God’s Passover Lamb at exactly the right time.

3. Yeshua was placed in the tomb later that day as the **Feast of Unleaven Bread** began. The Feast of Unleaven Bread was where seeds were symbolically buried as the people looked to God to bring forth new life from the ground. As Yeshua was placed in the tomb, it was as though his body was planted to bring forth spiritual fruit for God. Just the week before Yeshua had said, “*The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. . . . Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father glorify your name!’*”

4. On the third day, Yeshua arose from the tomb alive. It was on the **Day Of First Fruits**. Yeshua is the first fruits of God’s new order.

5. Fifty days later, on the **Feast of Pentecost [Shavuot]**, the Holy Spirit of God was poured out upon the band of Yeshua’s disciples [comprised of all Jews] gathered in an upper room praying. This was in fulfillment of the prophecies given in Jeremiah 31:31-33 and Joel 2:28-32.

Historically, the death, burial and resurrection of Yeshua, coincided perfectly with the feasts God had already instituted with the nation of Israel. All of the feasts had foreshadowed what God would do in Messiah.

Many Christians believe that the next major event on God’s calendar will occur on a **Feast Of Trumpets [Rosh Hashanah]**, when the trumpet will sound and the dead in Messiah will be resurrected to be with Yeshua. [See I Thessalonians 4:13-18.]

Is God finished with the Jews? Not hardly. God has not forsaken his chosen ones. The coming of Yeshua and the founding of the church is inexorably linked to Judaism. Had Israel embraced Yeshua as their Messiah the first time there may have been no Gentile church as we know it.

Yeshua, your Messiah, came first as the suffering servant foretold in Isaiah 53, to die as the Lamb of God. The next time Yeshua comes it will be as judge, to set up his kingdom as promised to his servants Abraham, David, etc.

Spiritual Law #4: Knowing the first three laws is not enough. It takes a response on our part. While we cannot earn salvation, it is nonetheless a *gift* which must be received [Isaiah 64:6; Ephesians 2:8-9]. John 1:12 says, “*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*”—How do we *receive* the gift of salvation?

First, we are asked to *believe* several wonderful truths: (1) that Yeshua loves us, (2) that he died for our sins [past, present and future], and (3) that he arose from the dead [John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 10:9; I Corinthians 15:3-5].

Since it is our sins which have been keeping us from God, we must be willing to turn from our sin [Mark 1:14,15]. The Bible calls this *repentance*, which simply means to *turn around*.—For example, if you are on the wrong bus heading away from God, you need to change buses, and get on board with Yeshua. Or, putting it another way, if you have been driving your own bus, it means being willing to get out of the driver’s seat, and inviting Yeshua to take over as your bus driver. He can turn your life around, and get you going in the right direction.

God’s salvation is a gift that you receive by faith. You do not deserve it, nor could you earn it by going to church [or synagogue], or by trying to do good deeds (Isaiah 64:6; Ephesians 2:8-9). You must believe that Yeshua died as the atonement for your sins (Psalm 22, Isaiah 53), that he was buried (Isaiah 53:9), and rose again as foretold in your scriptures (Psalm 16:10). Once you confess your sins and repent of them, God will put His Spirit in you (Joel 2:28,-29, 32;

Revelation 3:20; Ephesians 1:7-14; Galatians 2:20). Unlike trying to obey the Law of Moses in your own strength, he will write the Law on your heart and he will live in you, empowering you and giving you the motivation to live for him.

Knowing, or even believing the first three principles is not enough. It takes a response on our part. While we cannot earn salvation [Isaiah 64:6; Ephesians 2:8-9], it is nonetheless a *gift* which must be received [John 1:12].

Pray to him and ask him to be Lord and Messiah of your life [Psalm 2:1-2,12; John 1:12; Revelation 3:20]. It means He calls the shots. He is in the driver's seat. The Bible says, ". . . if you confess with your mouth, 'Yeshua is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." [Romans 10:9].

The moment you receive His Spirit you become a child of God, a joint heir of Heaven [Ephesians 1:3; Romans 8:31,32; I Corinthians 3:21-23]. Because God does not lie, if you meet His conditions for salvation, you can *know* you have eternal life [I John 5:11-14].

A TIME OF DECISION

Will you now take time to study, reflect, and read the passages cited in this last section. You may have to buy, borrow or check out a Bible from the library.—If you purchase a New Testament, I highly recommend the "*Jewish New Testament*," translated by David Stern [a Hebrew-Christian scholar]. You can order one by writing: *Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc.; P.O. Box 615, Clarksville, Maryland 21029 U.S.A.* Otherwise, the *New American Standard Version* or the *New International Version* are accurate, yet very readable, translations.

If you feel the Spirit of God speaking to you, and you become convinced in your heart and in your mind that what I have written is true, then a decision is called for. God makes salvation conditional upon having an active faith in Yeshua. Merely being Jewish will not save you.

No matter how much evidence I give you, and I have given you a lot, the final step is ultimately one of faith, even though there is solid evidence upon which to base that faith. For example, I can't *prove* that George Washington lived, but I can show overwhelming evidence that he did. By *faith* I believe George Washington lived and by *faith* I believe Christianity is true, based on evidence, the fact that it works and that I know Jesus, your Messiah, has changed my life.

The tale is told of a man who tightrope walked across Niagara Falls with a 200 pound sack of sand on his back. Upon successfully completing his feat he turned to a spectator and asked, "Do you believe I could do that again?" The person said "Sure!" The tightrope-walker tossed down the sand and said, "Then climb on my back!" Real believing is more than giving mental assent to the claims of Christ. God asks us to "climb on board" and commit ourselves to him. We must believe from the heart, and not just with the head. Receiving Yeshua into your life is not a blind leap of faith, but rather a reasonable step of faith. It is the wisest thing you will ever do.

A simple way for you to test the truthfulness of what I've said is for you to actively, honestly seek God on his terms (as best you understand), with a willingness to follow the truth, whatever that is. Not to honestly seek God with all of your heart is to gamble with your soul. Choosing not to decide is a decision. To do nothing is the same as saying "No."

How do you seek? Pray. You may also want to pray something like this, "*Dear Lord God, if You're there, and what this booklet says is true about Yeshua, then I want to know. Please show me the truth.*"—Praying this prayer will not make you a Christian, but it is an honest start.

Secondly, read.—Read the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. Don't only rely on what you have heard. Set your prejudices aside and study it for yourself. Look up the verses in this booklet. Think with your mind; listen with your heart. And when you read the New Testament accounts of Yeshua, simply ask yourself whether He sounds like a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord of Glory [your only three choices]. Also, read some of the books I mention in this booklet. There are well thought-out answers to virtually any question you can ask.

Some day you will stand before God, either forgiven or unforgiven. Hell is one of those horrible doctrines most Christians, myself included, don't like to discuss. However, Yeshua talked about it more than all the other Bible writers put together. Not to choose God and accept his offer of forgiveness is to choose a life of eternal separation from him (Daniel 12:2; Revelation 20:11-15; II Thessalonians 1:8-9; Matthew 13:40-43). God is serious when it comes to sin. If you refuse his forgiveness, and you hang on to your sin, you will die with your sin like a person refusing to get off the Titanic. It is that simple. If there was any other way, Yeshua would not have had to die. There is no other sacrifice acceptable to God than the death of Yeshua on the cross. As Peter preached to that Jewish crowd on the streets of Jerusalem on the day of Shavuot, he said, "*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved*" (Acts 4:12).

There is no sin too great for God to forgive. He loves you. He died for you. Whatever you have done, whatever guilt you are carrying around, God is willing to forgive. God does not lie. He promises to forgive you *if* you will but ask (Isaiah 1:18; I John 1:9). He will give you new life (II Corinthians 5:17), and the strength to overcome any sin (I Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:13). With God's Spirit living in and through you, you can experience God's peace and joy (John 14:27; Galatians 2:20, 5:22; Romans 7:14-8:11).

I know this is probably a hard decision for you. Much is at stake. If you receive Yeshua as your Messiah and Lord, it will cost you. You will likely be misunderstood by many of your own people and branded as a traitor or a shallow thinker.—Welcome to the club. Yeshua was also misunderstood.—They crucified him. Are you willing to pick up your cross, so to speak, and follow Messiah? He died for you. Are you willing to live for him?

No one has a deciding vote in this decision but you. God votes for you. Satan, who is also very real, votes against you. I pray that you will cast your deciding vote before it is too late. As I understand scripture, there are no second chances in another life (Hebrews 9:27).—The question is whether you are willing to let him change you. Yeshua said, "*Here I am! I stand at the door [of your heart] and knock. If anyone [you] hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in . . .*" Revelation 3:20 (words in brackets mine).

If you become convinced that what I have said is true, then find a quiet place and make your peace with God by inviting Yeshua, your Messiah and coming King, into your life. What greater joy could you have than to know your sins are forgiven, that you have been given eternal life, and that you are ready to meet your Messiah when he returns. (Zechariah 14:1-9; I John 3:1-3).

When you are ready I would suggest a prayer something like this, "*Dear Yeshua, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for the ways that I have sinned against you. I believe you are the Messiah. I believe that you shed your blood for me as the atoning sacrifice for my sin. I receive your forgiveness, by faith, as a gift. I could never deserve or earn it. As best I know how, right now, I ask You to come into my life. Cleanse me from all my sins—past, present, and future—and make me the person You want me to be. I need You. Thank You for hearing my prayer. Amen.*"

Pray this prayer, or one like it. (See I John 5:11-15). The words are not magical. The important thing is that you mean them.

Once you have invited Yeshua the Messiah to be a part of your life, I encourage you to find a loving church where the Bible is both honored and taught. See if there are any Hebrew-Christian Churches in your area. There are many Messianic Jews in most larger cities. Visit several churches before you decide. Pray about it and listen to your heart. It is sort of like trying on a new pair of shoes. You don't necessarily want to buy the first pair you try. There are also several good Hebrew-Christian organizations such as *Jews For Jesus*, *Zola Levett Ministries*, etc. you can contact. Maybe they can point you to a good church in your area.—And remember, to receive Yeshua as your Messiah is not to give up your Jewishness, but rather to affirm it.

Continue to pray, read scripture and allow God to speak to you. If you're a student in high school, check out such interdenominational groups as Campus Life, Young Life, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, K-Life, etc. If you are in college there are interdenominational college

ministries such as Campus Crusade For Christ, The Navigators, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, etc. Groups such as these are a great way to begin to grow in your faith, and to find support throughout the week.

The story is told of a native witch doctor who had done much evil in his life, causing much needless suffering through his superstitious beliefs. As a result of the love and work of some Christians, this man yielded his heart to Yeshua. He called a tribal meeting to share with his village the transformation that had occurred in his life.

He said that before he came to know Yeshua as savior it was as though there was an evil dog in him that made him do cruel, hateful things. When he repented of his wrongs, and asked Yeshua into his life, he said it was as though a powerful good dog came to live in him.

As he spoke, a small lad sitting at his feet grew more and more absorbed with what he was saying. When the lad couldn't take the suspense any longer he blurted out, "*Did the bad dog leave?*" The former witch doctor paused and said, "*No, son, he still hangs around.*" The boy asked "*How do the two dogs get along?*" The old man replied, "**They fight all the time!**" The little boy, with great concern in his voice said, "*Well, which one wins?*" The old man, with a smile and a twinkle in his eyes said, "*The one I feed the most.*"—How true.

There are spiritual battles that will go on in your life. Just as God and angels are real, Satan and his demons are also real. The New Testament has much to say about them. Beside the books I've mentioned thus far, there are two books I highly recommend to help you understand, gain, and maintain spiritual victory in your walk with Christ. The two books are: *Victory Over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker* by Dr. Neil Anderson.

Another book I highly recommend, which will help you learn of the awesome love God has for you, is *Search For Significance* by Robert McGee.

If possible, I urge you to read such authors as Charles Swindoll, Josh McDowell, and Max Lucado. If you like somewhat heavier philosophical reading, try C.S. Lewis [e.g., *Mere Christianity*, *The Weight Of Glory*, *The Screwtape Letters*], or Peter Kreeft [e.g., *Making Sense Out Of Suffering*, *Heaven The Heart's Deepest Longing*, etc.].

To grow as a new believer, I suggest you contact any of the following Christian organizations for their assistance and literature. You can most likely get their addresses from a library, a Christian bookstore, or you may access them over the internet:

Billy Graham Evangelistic Assoc.: <http://www.graham-assn.org>

Campus Crusade For Christ: <http://www.ccci.org>

Fellowship Of Christian Athletes: <http://www.gospelcom.net/fca/>

Freedom In Christ Ministries: <http://www.ficm.org>

Great Commission Ministries: <http://www.greatcommission.org>

Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship: <http://www.ivpress.com>

Josh McDowell Ministries: <http://www.ccci.org/josh/>

The Navigators: <http://www.gospelcom.net/navs/>

Youth For Christ: <http://www.gospelcom.net/yfc/>

Log onto <http://www.gospelcom.net> for addresses of other Christian organizations and resources.—Keep feeding the good side.

C.S. Lewis once remarked, "*Joy is the serious business of Heaven.*" If Heaven is true, as Yeshua taught it is, then no sacrifice or cost is too great to please the *One* who loves you. Set your heart and your mind on the reality of Heaven [Colossians 3:1,2; Matthew 6:19-21]. Let it motivate you all the days of your life.

May His grace and peace be yours. Shalom!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This booklet is one of several booklets in a series defending the Christian faith, written by myself. You can read or download any of the booklets off the internet at:

<http://www.4seekers.com>.

Due to the potential risk to my family by religious groups violently opposed to Christianity, such as some Muslim extremists and Satanists, I have chosen to write all booklets in this series under the pen name, Timothy Cross. I am willing to die for my faith, should it come to that; I just don't want to speed up the process.

Why did I choose the name Timothy Cross? Because it was *Timothy* who was told by the apostle Paul to guard the gospel [II Timothy 1:13,14]. And, what is the central message of the gospel? It is the *cross* of Yeshua the Messiah [ICorinthians 1:18-2:2]. Further, by writing under a pen name, it takes the focus off me and puts it where it should be, upon the truthfulness and trustworthiness of Yeshua and him alone. As Titus 2:13 says, Yeshua is our glorious "*God and Savior.*"

So you know a little about me, I work primarily as a chaplain with a hospice [terminally ill patients], and in a psychiatric hospital. On more than one occasion, I have worked closely with Josh McDowell [Campus Crusade For Christ]. I became a Christian through Youth For Christ [Campus Life] in high school, and was very involved with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship as a student in college. I have always attended churches which are evangelical and interdenominational in flavor [e.g. Evangelical Free Church, Evangelical Covenant Church, Great Commission Ministries, etc.].

I hope this booklet helps you discover and walk in the awesome truth that, not only does God exist, but you are awesomely loved by God.

With deepest respect,
Timothy Cross

"... in love he claims all."—C.S. Lewis

