

**GOD**

**AND HIS**

**WORD**

**An Executive Summary  
Presentation Of Humanity's  
Most Incisive Picture Ever.**

**By: Victor G. Bitar**

**GOD**

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## The Bible – A Summary Presentation For You to Consider

‘Religion’ is the human expression of the understanding of ‘Deity’ or a ‘Super-natural’ being. Thus, it is humanly inspired arrangements, explanations, organization, and certain practices.

‘Faith’ is a relationship of, a very unique nature, between a human person and the ‘Super-natural’ being. It is a ‘Spiritual’ relationship that is not of human origin, and it will differ for each human being.

This book is an attempt to help **you** develop an understanding of “The Faith Of Abraham”, in the hope that **you** will be able to experience this ‘faith’ personally; just like I have, for the past five decades of my life on this Planet Earth.

## **The Bible – A Summary Presentation**

This is an open challenge and a fair warning to every reader. If you approach this with a truly open mind it may change your life completely, for the better, and forever.

God, The Creator and Sustainer of all life, created human kind “in His own image” with a God-like characteristic, and God desires to fellowship with humanity. I hope that you will experience that fellowship.

**Please make a free-will choice to have an open mind as you read on.**

My love for you is not going to change no matter what you decide. God created you uniquely, and HE loves you so much more than you may think, thus so do I.

## **The Bible – A Summary Presentation**

This book is presented to my brothers and sisters in the human race; especially to those who are seriously trying to better understand and comprehend God through The Word that He chose to preserve for humanity through the last five millennia.

It is my loving and sincere desire that it will:

ENCOURAGE YOU TO LEARN MORE  
FROM GOD'S WORD.

CHALLENGE YOU TO A CLOSER WALK  
WITH JESUS CHRIST ON THIS EARTH.

HELP FILL YOUR HEART WITH THE  
UNSPEAKABLE JOY AS YOU FELLOWSHIP  
WITH GOD.

**The Bible – A Summary Presentation**

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# INTRODUCTION

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### A WELCOME NOTE

Warm greetings. My sincere hope is that you will find the following pages rich in what you may be looking for. You arrived here, I believe, according to the will of our Creator and Sustainer, and only because HE really loves you and cares for your life. HE does provide you and me with every breath of our lives, you know. Therefore, please keep an open mind to what you read and learn, and then decide whether this is real for you, and whether it is worthy of your diligent attention and serious commitment from a certain point, and on for the rest, of your life.

### A WARNING

The GOD of the Bible is not a man-made god. Since HE is **The Creator and Sustainer** of all life, HIS promises are true, and they have been proven throughout the ages to a huge number of people across the millennia. HE also makes this promise to you: If you truly ask HIM to come and be your God, HE will come and never leave you alone. Beware, HIS faithfulness is forever, and your life will never be the same, because HIS Spirit will live in you; and convicts, challenges, convinces and directs you for the rest

of your life. Of course, HE is not like a human being that you may be able to deceive, because HE knows the intent of your heart of hearts. So, if you are ever serious in your plea for HIM to come and live in your heart, then you are in it for life that never ends; not even with physical death.

As you can imagine, this may really alter your entire life and relationships that existed during the prior years of your life on this earth. However, if you ask any ‘faithful believer’, they will tell you that they will not trade that for anything in this whole world.

Therefore, **the decision is yours** and now is the time to not venture forward unless you are ready to be honest in your desire to explore and see if this is really for you.

My prayer is that you will allow HIM to lead you on.

If you are a confessed and serious believer, then you are a Third Millennium Little Christ (just as Christians were first called in Antioch, Syria – in a derogatory manner may I add, because they were trying to imitate Christ in their daily conduct); and I welcome you with all my heart as a brother/sister in our Lord Jesus Christ whom we hope to

imitate and attempt to please **in everything we think, say, and do**. I pray that you too will learn something from this little book.

### THE MAIN PURPOSE

This book is intended to give you, the reader, a summed up yet comprehensive view of what the Bible is all about from the perspective of one who has lived and experienced GOD and HIS grace, mercies, and faithfulness for over five decades; and in real life situations all over this world; especially during the past four decades plus.

Admittedly, I grew up in a Christian home in a Muslim environment, and I have personally experienced persecution first hand and at the very young age of fourteen when the government closed down our Christian school in the middle of the school year of my eighth grade. Officially, this was done because of the illegal-Christian missionary activities. Over the years, I studied comparative religion because I truly wanted to understand other people's beliefs and reasoning; especially when I traveled and worked in various cultures as an American business

executive of Fortune 100 entities.

For many, the Bible sounds like a formidable book to just read. Opinions are formed based on what one hears from others within the family or peer group, and one often takes at face value. Hopefully, this small book will help you in developing, a much better informed view, so that you can reach your decision about it with your own personal convictions.

This book will present the Bible realistically, and as best as I can present it, of course based on my own convictions about, and beliefs in, **the truth**. Hopefully, my positive attitude will not be construed as trying to convince you whichever way. I deeply believe that there is no human on earth than can convince another of anything that that person does not want to be convinced of. I also deeply believe that GOD has a plan for every person who chooses to find that out, and HE leads that/every person who is willing to find God's plan for his/her life in a mysterious way towards finding it. I believe that you can relate to this, and because of that I feel relieved of the burden of proving my effort.

### COVERAGE AND SUBSTANCE

The material to follow will start with a bird's-eye view of the **foundational** contents of The Biblical text in the section following this Introduction, and will then get into more –significant- details in the next couple of sections. For example, we will start with Creation and the Garden experience, move into the pre-flood period, then pick-up with the era of the Patriarchs, and so on into the various periods of both the Old and New Testaments; including some of the surrounding historical empires.

The various truly major concepts (so called doctrines) will then be reviewed in order to familiarize you with them to some degree.

Then, It will address you where you are at this point in time in your earthly life, and where you want to be in light of what you have learned from this book. Hopefully, the suggestions that it will share will make good sense in being both fundamental and practical from the perspective of real life at the beginning of the Third Millennium CE.

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*About*

*Human*

*Life*

*And*

*Living*

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## BEFORE THE BEGINNING

This is just a note of clarification as to how it (**GOD’S WORD**) all came about; so that you may understand that the account we have in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (for Christians) was written –as we believe, under the inspiration of The Holy Spirit- by Moses (whom we will cover more extensively in the next section of this book).

Based on all my studies, the first chapter of the first book in the Bible, the Book of Genesis, is the only picture that was ever painted of the world before planet earth came to existence (as humanity has known it since its inception) by any book or religion. It is also the most unique and consistent depiction of The Creator of all creation as a SPIRIT.

The first three words in the Bible also signify the mortality of every human person. The phrase simply expresses the frame of reference of the human mind: For life, as humanity knows it on this earth, there has to be a beginning and an ending. Only the CREATOR is everlasting, thus the

most fundamental concept of human existence, function and relationships:

A CREATOR, creation, and mankind who was created for the purpose of fellowshiping with GOD and of maintaining this creation according to the purpose and guidance of The CREATOR.

### ABOUT HUMAN EXPRESSION

Above all, one must keep in mind that the human person was created equipped to fellowship with GOD his Creator, thus every human being has retained the trait of being able to comprehend (sense and feel – if you wish) more than he/she can express. Communication problems began to be a part of human life as soon as the human person chose to abuse their God-given freedom to choose, and chose to disobey the CREATOR and took things (literally) into their hands. Therefore, this is especially true of the written word in terms of conveying the picture in a specific culture and time; and then for future generations' understanding and comprehending such in the same depth in which it was originally expressed to that generation and in that culture and total environment. A valuable illustration for our (even the current older) generation will be the difference in our

ability to comprehend the Bible from the (English) King James Version in contrast to the New International Version or the New King James Version translations.

## THE CREATION

(Genesis: Chapters 1&2)

God, The Spirit that the sin-infected human mind can not quite conceive, brings order out of chaos, and creates all that the human person can relate to with all his/her senses: Light and darkness, space, clouds, ground and body/s of water, plants and vegetation that produce its seeds, day and night, and seasons; and then life. Life in the water, life in the sky, and on the ground. And, **all was good**.

Then, God created mankind uniquely **”in the image of God”** and endued him with creativity, and ability to manage (discern, make decisions, and act) all of God’s creation; and HE gave them the authority and the responsibility to do so. GOD gave the First Man the ability to discern that he was unique from all the rest of creation, and then he took a part of him (**very close to his heart**) and

made a mate that suits him; and GOD gave them the discernment so as to be able to fellowship with GOD. HE also made them so fit and complementary to each other that no other person (not even parents) could/should come between them. They were meant to be one even though they were two physically distinct persons, as if to portray humanity as just one step below the Trinitarian Creator.

GOOD, EVIL and SIN  
(Gen. 3)

This chapter has probably the deepest meaning relating to life and human existence on this planet, and here we'll touch on just a few of the concepts:

Satan, the Fallen Angel (this becomes clearer later on in the Biblical text) comes in the form of a wild animal.

Satan came to the woman and not to the man.

Let us remember that God had given humankind the authority over all the animals and creation.

The woman, being taken from the physical body of the man, seems to possess more of the earthly senses.

Satan, being subtle, comes to the woman and does not come to confront. Satan, is also true to his character as a liar, because he starts his conversation with a lie in order to shift the attention of the woman from God's blessings to HIS single restriction. Only when that was accomplished did he follow up with the ultimate lie that convinced the human creature to trade his/her freedom to choose, life and fellowship with GOD, for a sensual earthly experience (sight and taste); and for gaining wisdom (equality with GOD concerning knowing good and evil). Actually, it was the venturing into the unknown and choosing one's own way (regardless of the risk and the prior warning) instead of accepting GOD's Word as the truth to live by.

Of course, God's warning unheeded, and humanity's wrong choice brought on the death (loss and separation) and the curse on Satan and the planet that accommodated him. Human life on this earth became one filled with the struggle for sustenance, the fear from the pending end of this earthly physical existence, and the return to the ultimate unknown; except for the faithful Believer in God and His sovereignty and the truth of His Word.

From that point on, humanity began to yearn for that sweet fellowship that it once experienced and treasured with The Creator GOD. Later on, humanity got divided into two kinds of people: The Believing Group which confesses, repents, and continues to yearn for the time when God will restore that fellowship and harmony; and the other who chooses to rebel against any and all things that have to do with GOD, even to the point of denying that there is a Creator for all of this magnificent creation.

The first group accepts GOD's gracious provision for restoring that harmonious relationship, while the other insists on choosing its own way of understanding life and human existence.

### A BRIEF ANCIENT HISTORY

The Bible relates very briefly a number of historical periods, and we sum them up in the following paragraphs so as to provide a frame of reference:

First is the period of **human innocence**, the Garden of Eden experience. Adam and Eve (the mother of all humanity) lived in total harmony with GOD and with His

creation; and they enjoyed close fellowship with GOD as they trusted and obeyed all His Word.

Then, the **Fall and curse**, and the discontinued fellowship. Humanity had to live with the choice to distrust God's Word, and rely on its own understanding; and the struggle to make a living began. Very shortly thereafter, there came humanity's rejection to anything that GOD had ordained in terms of even temporarily restoring the chance for fellowship. That happened when Cain even killed his brother Able who chose to be obedient to GOD in terms of the offering that GOD had instituted as a condition for experiencing the fellowship during this life on earth. Evil actually began to increase in its dominance on the face of the earth during this period, and the Believing Group/those Faithful to GOD's Word who trusted HIM in the face of all the surrounding rebellion became fewer and fewer until **Noah and his immediate family** formed the total remnant. All of these centuries are known as the Anti-Deluvian period, or the period that preceded the Great Flood; during which God had preserved a portion of His Creation on a water-cleansed planet Earth.

In the few centuries immediately following the flood, humanity continued to choose to go its own way that led it

apart from GOD; and The Bible relates the history of one person called **Abram that was truly willing to trust GOD** and His Word, and leave all that was familiar to him ( his country, his tribe, and all that he had ever known) as a proof of his total reliance on GOD and faith in HIM.

Abram, who **was later called Abraham** (because he was to become the father of many nations – the Jews, the Muslims, and others) truly lived a life of faith, as any faithful human being/Believer, may be able to live in any -even in our- day and age. The Bible tells us that ‘Abraham was blessed to be a blessing to others’; and **he became the father of the Hebrew nation** that carried the ‘Faith in GOD’ throughout the two plus millennia before Christ came to this Earth to provide the sacrifice that would restore humanity from its sin and the separation that it brought with it into the renewed fellowship with GOD The/its Creator. It was during those two millennia that **all the world’s other religions** from the ancient Egyptians to the Greeks, and so **on to human philosophy** became so well known to a majority of the world population.

However, since Jesus Christ came to this world and lived the perfect/sinless life in human body; and since HE was willing to give His own life for the redemption of

humanity, the tide of the war (between good and evil) was reversed. This is why we find that since the time of the early Apostles (Christ's disciples who lived after His death and resurrection) Believers were able to conquer empires, and His kingdom keeps going forth no matter..

This brings you to our day with a very brief understanding of the major historical periods. You must bear in mind that within each of these periods there were several significant periods of development of the faith; as well as in the manner God's Word was preserved, translated and spread throughout the centuries.

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*HISTORICAL*

*PERIODS*

*AND*

*PERSONS*

*BRIEFS*

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## STARTING WITH MOSES

The main reason for starting with Moses is because he was the writer of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament, as we Christians know it. These books are also known as the Pentateuch, or the Books Of The Law.

Moses is a Hebrew name, and means ‘taken out of water’. It originated by the daughter of the Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when one of her maidservants retrieved the little baby in its box from the river Nile. The Bible tells us that he was kept alive mainly because his parents feared/believed in GOD; especially since keeping him alive at birth was against the explicit orders of the king at that time. I am grateful that God had impressed on Moses’ heart to relate that story to us, briefly as it may be; mainly because Moses has never forgotten who gave him life and sustained him all these years. Moses comes almost at the midpoint in the history of human existence on this planet, almost 3,500 years ago or about 1500 BC; and about 500 years after Abraham.

Moses was born to a devout Hebrew family who were slaves in Egypt, and at a time when the Egyptians became very concerned about the high birth rate amongst the

Hebrews who were living in the Nile delta. He had an older brother and sister, and they were called Aaron and Miriam. When the parents just could not keep him home any longer, they made the little box for the 3-month old baby, put him in it, put it in the Nile river near the place where the king's daughter and her maidservants went to wash and swim; and Miriam was hiding and observing what would become of her little brother. As soon as the king's daughter got the baby, Miriam appeared and asked if she would like to have her go and bring a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby for her. When Pharaoh's daughter said yes, Miriam ran and brought her mother to be that nurse, and then when the boy was weaned, she brought him to the king's daughter to become her child.

Therefore, Moses grew up in the palace of the most important king on earth at the time, and he learned all that the Egyptian civilization had to offer. Legends claim that he became the brilliant leader of the Egyptian army at that time, and by age forty Moses was having (what we call in our age) a midlife crisis. So, we find him inspecting the work of the slaves, and their supervision; and his emotions were aroused when he saw an Egyptian master beat a poor

Hebrew slave under the burden. When Moses came the next day to view the situation again, and found two slaves fighting with each other, he tried to reason with them that this is not the way to deal with each other; he was shocked to find out that the aggressor knew that Moses had killed the Egyptian slave-master the previous day. Therefore, Moses fled from Egypt to escape being killed by the Pharaoh in punishment for killing the Egyptian.

After many days of hardship, hunger, and thirst in the Sinai desert, GOD led Moses to the Midianites, a tribe living near the Mountain Of God/ Sinai. It was the daughters of The Priest of Midian who found Moses by the well, and that is how GOD introduced Moses to the roots of the faith of Abraham. The Midianites learned that from their old master Abraham, the Hebrew, a few centuries back; and they kept these roots unspoiled because they had only few infrequent contacts with the outside world at that time.

Moses had many encounters with GOD, starting with the burning bush (that was not consumed by the fire); and over a period of forty years, Moses had learned much from GOD as he had close fellowship with HIM. This is the Moses who authored the first five books of the Bible, and the one

that GOD used mightily in bringing deliverance to His people Israel from the slavery of the Egyptians. Thus, you now know the brief background of how the essence of the Bible was written and documented by the person whom GOD had ordained to carry this purpose for HIS people throughout the world and the millennia.

#### CREATION TO NOAH

As we saw briefly above, mankind was created for perfect fellowship with **THE CREATOR**, but humanity abused (continues to abuse) the privilege that GOD had granted our human kind; and our choice, represented in Adam and Eve, then in Cain and his descendants, then in the rest of the people except for Noah and his family. Therefore, GOD was patient and tried to keep showing humanity the errors of its ways, but HE finally had to judge the blatant sin of the human race. Yet, through Noah's faithfulness, GOD preserved a remnant and cleansed the earth through/by the flood.

The following fundamentals of the relationship with GOD were clearly established very early on:

GOD is a Spirit and Mankind has a Spirit

Since Man could fellowship with God prior to his choosing to disobey GOD's command and counsel, and to also communicate with the devil on equal terms, leaves no doubt that human beings have a spirit

Good and Evil

The human creature had the freedom to choose and the discernment to know what he/she is choosing. They also knew that there was one fundamental choice between trusting, thus obeying GOD's Word; or believing the claim of the devil. Adam and Eve must have known that listening to the temptation of becoming like GOD (any more than they already are/were) would be disobeying GOD's Word and separating themselves from GOD and siding with the devil. Humanity, throughout its early history chooses to follow its own earthly (foolish and short-sighted) desires regardless of the possible disastrous consequences.

Sin

Choosing the evil thought, word, or action, freely is sin. It is choosing to put GOD and His Word to the test on our flawed human terms. In essence, a human being appoints him/her-self as a judge on the truth of GOD's word

Therefore, we separate ourselves from GOD with intent to usurp that which we are not entitled to, or equipped to handle, ‘The Forbidden Fruit’ so to speak.

### Judgment and Punishment

GOD is The Judge of all creation, and HE will punish evil at the right time and appropriately. However, GOD loves HIS human creature, because HE chose to create them with the gift and ability to fellowship with HIM. Therefore, even though HE banished humans from the Garden (in order to protect them from committing a greater disaster), HE provided them with the covering (made of animal skin and not of the fig tree leaves that they reached for from the cursed earth) so as to help them better understand HIS way.

### GOD’s Way for Covering and Sacrifice

The life of an animal was taken in order to provide the skin for covering of the earthly nakedness of Adam and Eve. This message was repeated when Able provided the acceptable sacrifice (from the first born of his herd) rather than Cain’s sacrifice that was the result of his human effort. Reliance on GOD’s provision is the only acceptable way for a covering, or to pay the price for sin; and in order to be accepted again in HIS sight, and to experience fellowship.

The line of God's people that descended from Seth (who took Abel's place), all the way to Noah, Abraham, and his grandson Jacob (later named Israel) recognized this fundamental element in their relationship and walk (of faith) with GOD; **for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.**

### The Ultimate Sacrifice

Obedience is what GOD wants more than anything else, because it confirms faith and total trust. The sacrifice was just the symbolic expression that Israel, GOD's people (between 1500 BC and the first century AD) used as the confirmation that they will do it GOD's way, and rely totally on HIM and HIS provision of life for the ultimate sacrifice, His Son, The New Man. Abraham's willingness to be obedient to GOD when HE asked him to go and offer his only son "according to the promise" Isaac, and God's provision was the picture that God wanted to demonstrate to HIS people so that they will understand clearly. It is the faith and total trust that HE is looking for, not that any human sacrifice can fit the bill (in today's terminology).

Jesus The Christ, who was born of the Spirit (not of the will of man), lived a sinless life, honored His Father/GOD in everything on this earth, and freely chose to give His life as the acceptable sacrifice to save the human race; so that **(whoever –freely chooses to - believe in Him)**, can have the everlasting life, as HE restored fellowship between GOD and humanity.

Enoch, Noah’s great grandfather, was the only person that was mentioned to have “walked with GOD” (since Adam), and “then he was no more, because GOD took him away”; that is to a perfect eternal fellowship with HIMSELF.

Noah, who became the laughing stock of his generation for his building the ark for almost one hundred years, persisted in living his faith because he believed and was willing to take GOD at HIS word and obeyed HIS instructions. GOD used Noah in order to preserve the only remnant of the human race that overcame death and the destruction of the flood.

Noah and his children lived the rest of their lives after the flood within the tradition of the ‘Faith of their Fathers’, and under the ‘new’ covenant that GOD made with their father

Noah. In essence, GOD renewed HIS covenant with Adam concerning creation; and the earth had a renewed/cleansed beginning. However, sin had not been overcome totally, and as new generations were born, and many made their decisions to walk their own foolish way; humanity reached a new climax in the Tower of Babel. This time, the “spirit of darkness and rebellion” blinded their eyes and darkened their minds; and they arrived at the same kind of point where the human race was prior to the flood. However, GOD, being faithful to HIS promises and word, decided to deal with them in a manner that allowed the evil spirit to control some of them (even a majority at times); even while the few chose to walk with the True GOD.

## THE PATRIARCHS

### Abram/Abraham And Lot

Several generations after Noah, and the Babel experience, GOD called a man named Abram; and HE asked him to ‘leave everything that was familiar’ and to embark on a life journey into the unknown. Abram had nothing to go by except GOD’s word, and his own trust in the GOD of his

father Terah. However, GOD chose to also send a young nephew of Abram with him, Lot, the young Believer that was a product of the culture of Ur of the Chaldeans; that is southern Mesopotamia – Iraq of this day and age.

As the journey began, Abram and his immediate family (Father, brother Nahor, his wife Sarai/Sarah, and his nieces and nephew Lot) settled in Haran for a few decades. In fact, Abram did not begin the next leg of his journey to Canaan until after his father had passed on. Only Sarai (his wife) and Lot accompanied Abram on the next leg of the journey. The only mention of the rest of the family comes during the life of Jacob Abraham's grandson, when he fled from his brother (Esau); and they were not so much different from their community and culture (worshipping idols and not really knowing much about GOD).

Abram journeyed on, and as he traveled across the land that GOD had told him to go to and sojourn, GOD gave him a promise about his future, and about his descendants. Only after much testing, struggles, failures, and faithful experiences did Abram become Abraham, "GOD's Friend" and the 'Father of Faith' as we know it today. Later, his

faith was tested and refined, and was proven over and over again despite Abraham's typical human nature and failings. On the other hand, GOD chose to give us a vivid picture of contrast from the life of Lot; who was motivated by earthly prosperity in terms of riches and position/status regardless of the spiritual dullness that such leads to. GOD, through Moses, gave us such a wonderful picture of both Abraham and what his life became, and of Lot – his choices and where they led in the end; even on this earth. Truly, this is one of the most vivid illustrations about GOD, faith in HIM and HIS leading; and the alternative to that and where it would lead, inevitably.

Abraham did become the father of many nations that continue on until this day; but more importantly, he became the "Father of Faith" in GOD; **THE CREATOR** of all. This is the faith that goes on today in Jew and Gentile alike; and it continues to impact the entire world of ours despite the hold of sin on the human race. GOD's word always tells it as it really was, and it never hides the weaknesses, the stumbling, and/or the failings of even HIS most precious children. Above all, GOD wants HIS faithful children to know that they are still human; even when they

believe in HIM and trust HIM for leading them along.

### Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph

Ishmael was the fruit of Sarai's/human effort, and the thinking behind it. Well-intended as it may have been, it inevitably backfired. Unfortunately, when the woman (who is usually much more emotional –thus more earthly attached) aims to achieve her interests according to culture and traditions, the results will not be as desirable as when she seeks to listen to GOD's word and seeks HIS counsel. Sarai's wish, which Abram agreed to (because it served his human desires) unfortunately continues to generate the ugly consequences - that it led to just a few years later - even in our generation (the conflict between the Arabs/Muslims and the Jews). Just another vivid illustration of GOD's eternal wisdom for humans to consider and contemplate as they seek to learn about life and living on this earth.

Isaac's life brought both joy and pain in the ultimate test that Abraham had to go through. Sarah was humiliated before GOD before she was told that she was going to have the promised child Isaac, yet Isaac became her life and joy as long as she lived afterwards. However, for Abraham

GOD will surely perform according to HIS promise. Yet, he did not anticipate the kind of testing that would truly teach him what the true Believer will come to experience (in one way or another) in this earthly life; to share a glimpse of what GOD went through when HE sent HIS ONLY SON JESUS to die on the cross to save humanity. The kind that makes a human being share with GOD, as the Apostle Paul later called ‘the fellowship of His sufferings’.

Isaac’s walk with GOD was certainly more of the ‘typical Believer’s walk’ than anything exceptional, like his father Abraham. However, at a relatively early age for his generation, he experienced GOD’s faithfulness in his father’s servant’s fruitful journey to bring him a wife from his kinfolks in Haran. Rebecca became his beloved bride; and GOD even answered his prayers for her to have children.

Moreover, we have a glimpse of Isaac at the latter part of his life on earth as someone who continued to discern GOD’s will in matters; even though he was tricked by his wife’s and son Jacob’s presentation of the food in order to secure his blessing.

Then, we have the twin brothers: Esau, the typical earthly

human; the hunter who cared so little for understanding and arranging his priorities in life, which caused him the loss of his father's blessing. Jacob, on the other hand, was obedient to his mother (as she knew what she was doing about who must carry the Faith) and father (who ended up giving him double blessings) as he embarked on his journey of faith with his father's and grandfather's GOD.

Jacob's life was also given to the Believer in some details so as to alert every Believer to the realities of life; especially when he/she is going through life and dealing with the world. Life was/will be filled with both success (whichever way one may define it) and with suffering (in so many ways at so many times); yet, GOD is faithful to see each one of HIS seeking children through to a satisfying ending on this earth.

GOD even gave Jacob a special blessing, not because of his flagrant failings, but because he was willing to continue to put GOD first when it counted. Even though Jacob was not the best example for an outstanding human behavior, GOD recognized his honest and sincere commitment to worship HIM alone, and to continue to testify to HIS faithfulness. This is why GOD called Jacob by the new name (that even

today carries the wonderful connotation of faithfulness as GOD's people) ISRAEL.

Joseph, was his father's beloved of all his children mainly because he always obeyed and loved. He was hated by his brothers, because he was beloved of his father; and thus he was shown favors that they envied. Of the twelve, Joseph was the most worthy of carrying the banner of Abraham's faith, and of GOD's people throughout the generations. He went through 'the valley of the shadow of death' in the well that his own brothers through him into in the Judean countryside; and in the prison that he was thrown into for a crime he did not commit.

Joseph's faith was most assuredly impacted by what he had learned from his father Jacob/Israel, and it was built on the solid rock of **the faithfulness of GOD** regardless of culture, location, and the surroundings; even in the presence of the most powerful king on earth. The cheerful attitude of the faithful servant, who will not compromise when it comes to GOD's Word, won the battle of life that was quite painful for some time/years. GOD took Joseph through the valleys, kept him, and then rewarded him wonderfully. But, all the fame, position, power, and wealth

did not cause Joseph to change his basic attitude of humility, love no matter, and sacrifice; because he recognized that his GOD wanted him to live life that way. He believed that GOD was with him no matter where he went, just like HE had accompanied his father to Haran and back. He also knew that the only way to be true to the dreams - that GOD had blessed him with – was to live according to what he knew GOD’s word taught him at a relatively young age. Joseph’s faith and leadership sustained the people of GOD/Israel for the next four centuries in that land that brought slavery with it to the entire nation.

### EXODUS AND INHERITANCE

#### Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua and Caleb

In the same tradition of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph; the journey that Moses embarked on (even at birth) was designed by GOD for the ‘mission at hand’: **Saving the nation/people of GOD** from the slavery of Egypt, and **bringing them into the promised land** that GOD had promised Abraham centuries before. In the same tradition,

the journey had to include struggles, success, pain, and testing; and at the end of the road, the appointment with GOD at Sinai.

The assignment that Moses was prepared/made ready for was the most unique in the history of all GOD's people; thus, the special encounter at that point in human history on this planet. GOD had ordained that - when the time came for humanity to record and preserve words in writing – HIS WORD will be like no other record; thus Moses had to be uniquely prepared and fitted for **GOD's Purpose** of communicating with humanity in a manner that it could reasonably access and keep trying to discern throughout the generations.

GOD had prepared Miriam and Aaron for helping Moses as they were used of GOD; but we also know the frailties of both, and how GOD dealt with each of them. GOD had also prepared Joshua and Caleb (the two faithful spies out of the twelve that were sent by Moses), and HE used them - each in a different way – to be a leader of GOD's people who led them into the promised land and to possess it.

All in all, GOD called HIS Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph,

Moses, and Joshua to follow/walk with HIM on this earth; and to get to know HIM and HIS Purpose for their lives, just as HE calls each and every Believer to fellowship with HIM as JESUS HIS SON provided for those on this side of the cross through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Joseph, being the last of **the Patriarchs**, had helped preserve the ‘Faith Of Abraham’, Moses then was used to provide for its re-invigoration, documentation, and preservation in that transition period. Aaron and his children/descendants helped maintain it through the following generations until GOD brought about Samuel, who was the answer to an earnest prayer of a distressed young woman named Hannah (from the Hill country of Ephraim-Joseph’s son); which began the next period in the history of GOD’s people, Israel.

## KINGDOM THROUGH EXILES

### Samuel, Saul, and David

Samuel, like none of the JUDGES before him, grew up in the priesthood from the very young age of 3-5; and thus learned GOD’s Word very thoroughly for that generation.

Thus, he was able to teach it to the people throughout the nation of Israel; especially after Eli and his sons were off the scene. He served GOD very diligently, and he became HIS prophet and true spokesman; because he was always obedient to GOD. Samuel's experience in waiting on GOD to choose one of the sons of Jesse (to be the anointed king over GOD's people Israel) is a very good illustration of how in-tuned with GOD he remained even into his old age. Thus, the beginning of the new era in the history of Israel, its faith and future under David and the kings that followed. David, the shepherd boy that was anointed to be the most revered king of GOD's people Israel, was used by GOD in a manner that helped preserve the separate functions of the Priesthood and the Prophet for generations to come. His era also contributed to the writing of many of the other books of the Old Testament; as well as to establishing the new tradition of preserving the words of the prophets, and the history of the 'People of GOD, Israel'.

David's journey of faith was filled with numerous challenges, and it started with him being a young shepherd that experienced GOD's faithfulness when he confronted a lion and a bear and killed them. However, his stand for GOD in front of Goliath – the Philistine giant – that defied

the army of Israel and their GOD, was by far his most memorable moment in his young life. His victory over that giant was nothing but a ‘miracle of GOD’ accomplished at the hand of young David; as GOD honored his faith in front of all, friend and foe alike.

David’s psalms and songs of praise to GOD continue to stand most uniquely throughout the ages; and they depict a marvelous appreciation for, humility before, and faith and trust in the GOD, **The Creator and Sustainer of Life** and all that there is in the entire creation. The organizational structure that David had introduced in worshipping GOD endured for the next twenty five centuries in one form or another. However, the position of PROPHET gained more prominence as time passed; and GOD used a number of prophets, Major and Minor, to continue to bring a specific timely message to GOD’s people regardless of the locale or the situation they were in. More often than not, the message was to **return to GOD and forsake their wicked ways of idolatry and self-indulgence**. This continued even during the captivity/dispersion into Assyria, Babylon, and even in Egypt to which some went by choice.

In fact, by the time that Christ came on the scene, the Jews

were scattered into all nations (throughout the Roman Empire) from Rome to Egypt and Ethiopia, and into Persia and beyond. Yet, The various scrolls of the books of the Old Testament, especially the Books of The Law, were read on the Sabbath in every Synagogue on earth; which was a testimony to what the Davidic structure had provided, and how it was used of GOD to continue the line of faith through the enduring message of HIS WORD throughout the generations.

During this period, there were powerful and wise kings; and there were many weak and wicked kings, during whose reigns the Books Of The Law were almost totally lost. A few kings were truly faithful and diligent to revive the Faith of Abraham and Moses ‘The Servant of GOD’. There were also a few Prophets that were used mightily by GOD to proclaim His Word to king and people alike, and they were often disliked by many; because their message was too blunt and unambiguous, in fact cutting to the heart of the situation of where the nation was in its walk away from their GOD.

Even during the exile, GOD provided and sustained servants who were faithful to their God, and to the Law of Moses; even in the palace of the Babylonian Emperor. GOD continued to provide the few who were willing to put HIM first in their lives, and to testify to **who HE IS** even at the risk of losing their own lives. Some were quite willing to risk a lot for the sake of returning to the land of desolation, and for rebuilding the temple in fulfilling such prophecy; and in honoring GOD. They were all kept safe, and were honored by GOD who helped them see their goal fulfilled in spite of all adversity.

The same GOD of Abraham, Moses, and Israel protected His People during the next centuries; and HE even gave them much respect even in the eyes of their enemies. However, by the time when ‘GOD sent HIS SON’ to this world, even their religious leaders had become so focused on their worldly interests, ideas, and power that they could not accept either The Messenger (John the Baptist – the miracle son of one of their Priests); or THE SON/JESUS their Messiah.

This was mainly true, because they had lost all faith in the TRUE GOD and what HE alone can do; and they placed

their trust either in their own power, or their ability to manipulate and manage their relationship with the rulers of this world.

## ISRAEL JUST BEFORE JESUS

### The Temple Of Herod Era

Herod, The Great, was a very powerful king in Syria and Palestine; and he rebuilt the Jerusalem Temple as a means to have the Jewish leadership contented and supportive of his rule. He gave them enough autonomy to manage their religious affairs and even collect temple taxes that yielded wealth to sustain their continuity. The three main Parties: The Pharisees, Sadducees, and the Herodians were in some kind of harmony having the privileges and helping to maintain their control over the people.

There was a High Priest (which seems to have rotated annually between the Pharisees and the Sadducees), and the priesthood was well established and stable. Zechariah was one of the priests who served according to the established norm. Both he and his wife Elizabeth were

growing old in years, and they were childless; and both ‘were descendants of Aaron’. They were both ‘blameless’ in keeping The Law, according to Luke. However, even Zechariah, the ‘Priest On Duty’ during his ‘worship duty in The Temple’ could not recognize the angel when He came to him. Zechariah would not even believe the angel when he told him that his wife Elizabeth will ‘become with child’; and we know how he was unable to talk for the entire period of her pregnancy as a result of his unbelief, and for asking for a sign (putting God to the test).

Let us be reminded here too that the Chief Priests could tell Herod where the Messiah would be born, and they were very vigilant about what went on in The Temple; but they were not able to discern who the son of Zechariah was. Then, when Joseph and Mary brought the Christ Child into the Temple to ‘be presented to The Lord’, because He was a first-born to his earthly parents, none of the Priests would pay much attention to either of Simeon’s or Ana’s presence in the Temple. Neither did any priest make any note or comments about what both prophet and prophetess had to say about the child Jesus. How telling were these days about the sad situation that the People Of GOD were in, starting with their Priests and religious leaders. They

simply had no discernment of anything spiritual any more. The tragedy is that this was only the beginning, because when John The Baptist began declaring his message they (in the majority) did not believe him, nor did they want to find the truth about him. Moreover, they wanted to maintain the status quo and could not care less about all the people, as long as they did not aggravate the Romans; which may have disrupted collecting their revenues from the Temple and thus maintaining their power.

## THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW AND PROPHECIES

From the time Adam and Eve chose to disobey GOD's order 'not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil' they were destined to die. They became separated from GOD and were no longer able to experience the true fellowship with HIM; which was the norm prior to their wrong choice. From that point on, GOD's Law "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin" became operative. As we know, GOD brought them animal skins for a covering; which in effect communicated God's Law.

Just a few decades before Christ came to this earth, a

Roman emperor offered sacrifices in the Temple of Jerusalem that were prohibited, thus the altar and the Temple became defiled. Moreover, the religious leaders and the teachers of the Law became corrupt; and they were more concerned about keeping the traditions of the elders rather than seeking to honor GOD by keeping The Law that HE had given to Moses. God had given His People numerous warnings, as well as every opportunity for many centuries, and they refused to repent and chose to continue to go their own foolish ways.

### The Era of John The Baptist

Therefore, ‘in the fullness of time’ GOD sent HIS Angels with the last couple of miraculous announcements in fulfillment of the prophecies. GOD sent John ‘The Baptist’ (in the spirit of the old prophet Elijah, and for a very similar social environment) with a very clear, honest, uncompromising and unmistakable message “the call for repentance”, and “to flee from the coming wrath of GOD”. Without a doubt, John was ‘from GOD’, and this was testified to by the large multitudes of people who

responded to his call; and was even acknowledged as such by the religious leaders and the Pharisees even though they would not admit it publicly, ‘they feared stoning by the people if they denied that John was from GOD’. When Jesus asked them in response to their questioning the authority by which HE had done HIS miracles on earth, they claimed that they ‘did not know’ whether John’s Baptism was from heaven or not.

John’s message to the king was not much different from that to the people. To John, there was no one above the Law of GOD; and he was unwilling to compromise no matter the person or the possible consequence; and his faithful stand for his GOD led him into prison, and to his premature death in prison. John, having been the last prophet of the old testament era, indeed carried the tradition of the Prophet of GOD to its ultimate honorable ending. He was certainly fitting to be the last, because he heralded the coming of The Son Of GOD to earth, The REDEEMER JESUS, THE CHRIST.

## THE NEW COVENANT ERA

We know that John came ‘to prepare the way’ for the earthly ministry of Jesus, and this meant that some of GOD’s people will respond to John’s call for repentance and a change of their ways. They had to accept GOD’s way if they were ever going to truly be redeemed from ‘sin’, and reconciled to ‘true fellowship with HIM through HIS SON’. Indeed, it was not the religious leaders that responded, though some of them did after His death and resurrection; but the true disciples of Jesus were fishermen, tax collectors, and the common and simple people. It was quite telling that His own family (mother, brothers, and sisters) did not believe in HIM during His lifetime on earth. It was only after HIS resurrection that they finally came around and realized their foolishness. What a true illustration and reflection of the people of GOD/Israel.

What a wonderful and patient GOD we have! HE allowed His People/Israel additional opportunities to see ‘The Light Of The World’ for who HE truly was/is, but having failed to do so after a few decades (a whole generation) HE finally acted in history, and brought total destruction to HIS Temple. Israel had refused to acknowledge the presence of

the Holy Spirit in their midst despite the numerous manifestations in HIS New People; thus God removed the symbol of HIS earthly presence with them, and unmistakably never allowed it to be rebuilt no matter the circumstances throughout the last couple of millennia. However, as we observe, even in our day and age, human efforts and planning continue to go on around the world to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem. This continues even though it may lead to a great war and much destruction; because the Jewish people refuse to acknowledge JESUS for who HE truly was/is “The Messiah that was to come” to bring The Salvation of GOD to **all who believe**, just like in Abraham’s time.

Numerous prophecies throughout the Old Testament told of how GOD was going to pour HIS Holy Spirit on men, young and old alike; and how they will be HIS people and HE their GOD. Yet, when this happened, the religious leaders of Israel refused to even acknowledge it. In fact, they tried their hardest to fight it in every possible way, including killing some of Christ’s Apostles.

Within a period of short three years, JESUS had gathered, taught, and trained a dozen of young and not-so-young common people, including a couple of The Baptist's followers; and they were then empowered by The HOLY SPIRIT to 'overturn the world upside down' in less than a century. The NEW COVENANT that GOD had promised through HIS prophets came to replace the Old. GOD now dwells in the heart of mankind; at least in those who freely invite HIM to. The perfect fellowship has been restored in the best possible manner (on this earth) through GOD's SON, JESUS who lived the perfect human life "HE knew no sin", and gave His human life in obedience to HIS Father's will and purpose to become THE REDEEMER.

Within that one generation, GOD continued to do HIS miraculous work in, and through, the lives of all HIS people. HE caused people like Mathew, Mark, Luke, John, and Paul to write the details that HE thought were very important for the Believers (through all the following generations) to have available for their study and understanding. In the meantime, HE worked through a small group of Israelites (known as the Essenes) to preserve and hide HIS Word-The Hebrew Old Testament in clay jars

in caves in the Judean desert; so that humanity can compare and find for itself how GOD's Word/The Truth does not change over the millennia. Indeed, it is **the treasure beyond measure.**

In the fullness of time, just when the Jewish nation was reborn, in our modern time, GOD chose to use a Muslim (of the descendants of Ishmael – Abraham's son) to find one of these scrolls in one of the caves in 1947/8 CE. This happened in our generation, so that we may open our eyes and ears, and discern what GOD is showing and telling us. His prophets of Old, and His Renewed People, must keep spreading the Good News of HIS Salvation; and HE is faithful and true to allow it to reach the ends of the earth.

The life of JESUS, as was recorded in the Gospels, gives each human being a chance to see the way GOD had intended for humanity to live. However, the evil one did not like that to happen; and he wanted to prove that he was right in his rebellion against GOD. The reality in our world today is a vivid illustration of what the cursed earth and sinful humanity will continue to produce: Conflict and wickedness instead of the intended healing, love, restoration and harmony; because of HIS presence in us.

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**CONCEPTS**

**AND**

**DOCTRINES**

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One of the best summaries of the Bible Doctrines I have found comes from the NIV Disciple's Study Bible (1988 by Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN); and it lists them in groups, as follows (not in the exact order):

*The Trinitarian God*

God  
Jesus Christ  
Holy Spirit

*Knowledge Of God*

Holy Scriptures  
Revelation  
History

*The World*

Creation  
Miracle  
Evil and Suffering  
Humanity  
Sin

*God's People*

Election  
Salvation  
Discipleship  
Christian Ethics  
Stewardship  
Last Things  
Education  
Family

*God's People*

The Church  
Ordinances  
Worship  
Proclamation  
Prayer  
Church Leaders

*The Church and the World*

Evangelism  
Missions

Doctrines are, in essence, the basic beliefs of the Christian Believer; and they are derived from The Scriptures. There were different understandings, representations, and interpretations of the various doctrines throughout the centuries; and the study of the various writings from these centuries will shed some light on the various lines of thought during the past. The main source, of course, is the Biblical text.

Since the Holy Spirit indwells the Believer in Christ, each Believer will – in the end – develop his/her own doctrinal belief on the various doctrines; hopefully and genuinely led by The Holy Spirit. GOD is more interested in the simple

faith of the heart of every Believer; and not just in the verbal expression of that faith or belief. Therefore, the most important thing that anyone of us can do is to truly seek GOD's guidance, and not our own human philosophy. HE alone 'will lead each of us into all truth' as long as we are willing to seek it and are submitting to HIS leading.

As each of us knows from real life experience (of course this in itself depends on the extent of this experience) that culture, and the current environment -that one grows and matures in- will color our understanding and comprehension of things about life; thus one needs to be very careful in how to truly open him/her-self to GOD and His Word so that The Spirit may truly lead us. May we not forget that 'the heart of mankind is deceitful', and our human self-centeredness plays games and havoc with each of us at times. May we be reminded of what the Apostle Paul said in his epistle to the Romans, Chapter 7:7-25.

My sincere hope is that the above will have whet your appetite enough to **really lead you into digging in for yourself as you try to learn more and please HIM more** in the coming days of your life on this earth.

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WHERE ARE YOU NOW ?

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AND

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WHERE DO YOU WANT TO  
BE? WHEN?

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The time has come for a genuine assessment of where you really are. Do you acknowledge JESUS CHRIST as your SAVIOR? If so, do you really strive to honor him in your daily walk/life as a Believer? Do you love HIM sincerely enough to try to please HIM above your own worldly desires? These are not easy questions, and they should not be answered without much soul searching on your part. But wait! How can you have the correct and true answer/s if you do not have the knowledge base about **what GOD/JESUS/THE SPIRIT** expect of you in this earthly life? This brings us back to the purpose of this little book.

Well, if you after some real self-examination (between you and GOD alone) know where you truly are; then you still have to make the choice/decision as to WHERE DO YOU WANT TO BE in the coming days of your life on this earth.

Unfortunately, we live in a generation and environment where the ease of life, the complexity of daily existence, and the various pressures and desires to **conform to this world** have become so great, that making drastic changes

even for the Christian Believer, a huge task and a giant test of the will. Therefore, allow me to remind you of a few points that will make it somewhat easier (at least more meaningful) while you are pursuing the **change**:

- 1) GOD created you, and HE knows you more than yourself.
- 2) GOD will accept you as and where you are. You can not and need not do a thing before you come to HIM as a beloved child comes to his/her parent. Accept HIM and HE promised to accept you as is.
- 3) The Bible is where you need to spend quality time, and very regularly. That is how HE has chosen to communicate with the Believer, and HE gave us the most precious treasure ever. Just dig in, and find that for your own self.
- 4) The journey begins immediately, as soon as you have made the **free choice** to be HIS faithful child, and so does the most precious fellowship.
- 5) Beware of the spiritual (and other) warfare that you may well experience. When you choose GOD, Satan is now your enemy; but know for certain that He had been defeated, except for this earthly life.

- 6) When you fail/fall, just remember to confess that to your Father in Heaven, and HE will uphold you.
- 7) Remember GOD promises that HE will not allow anything to come into your life that HE will not give you the help to overcome it.

GOD is the GOD of the covenant, and HE keeps HIS word. Therefore, HE expects you to keep yours to the very best of your ability, and that will improve every day along the way with HIM and with HIS help and empowerment.

#### A FINAL WORD OF PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Beloved brother/sister in humanity. It has been my great fortune in this world to have come to know and trust GOD at a very early age, and had fallen in love with His Word in my early teens. Life had numerous experiences for me, some really horrendous and some marvelous; but GOD led me through them all. Most of the time I enjoyed the certainty of HIS presence with me no matter the outside circumstance; and I have often treasured the contentment and joy that HE gave me so liberally.

For my first memories as a child of six, I have the experience of fear because of the fighting between the French soldiers (who were fighting against the Axis countries in my home region of northern Syria) as they split into the Viche' and Gaulist camps; and then standing in the bread line with my Dad at the end of the war when he did not have enough money to buy enough bread for his large family of ten (including his parents). At age 14, the experience of our Christian School (that was established by my Great Grandfather in the 1860s) being closed by the government in the midst of the school year was quite traumatic; especially when I had to attend the government/Muslim school after missing a couple of months that year.

Traveling to Kuwait, where I knew no one and very little about things, was a true frontier experience; which was followed by another frontier experience of getting married, coming to the U.S., and going to college and graduate school with very little money to count on. Moreover, then having a little child within one year along with all the other uncertainties. Through it all, GOD have been Faithful and Gracious; and HE saw us through raising three wonderful young people who love HIM, and who graduated from

College, and have their own successful careers in this great country of ours, the USA.

Frontier experiences continue, and through them all GOD is the leading influence; including this little book. I just hope and pray that it somehow touched your life a bit. May it continue to be an encouragement to you and your dear friends. Won't you share it, please?

**MAY GOD BLESS AND LEAD YOU ALWAYS .**

*Victor G. Bitar (Vic) is a life long student of The Bible. He was born and raised in a small town in Northwest Syria (Idlib), and Antioch was the closest trading center to that town.*

*Vic's great grandfather, who used to visit Antioch regularly to trade for his veterinary supplies, was led to a personal relationship of faith in Jesus in Antioch in the 1860s with the help of Presbyterian missionaries from Belfast, Northern Ireland.*

*Vic grew up in the Christian school and the only Evangelical church in town, that were founded by his great grandfather at that time. Vic accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord at age 11, and began to seriously study the Bible (in Arabic) at age 14.*

*In 1963 he went to study for the ministry in Beirut, Lebanon; but later felt led to leave it for another vocation. A year later, The Lord led him to get married and come to Hope College, Holland, MI.*

*Following his MBA from the University Of Michigan he was recruited by Chase Manhattan Bank in New York City, and Later on by Dana Corporation in Toledo, OH. Thus, he worked as an Executive in banking and international finance. Then he became a management consultant and an innovator in the plastics recycling industry during the mid nineteen eighties and early nineties.*

*Throughout the years, Vic continued to study The Bible personally, and even recently in a PhD program at a seminary for over a year.*

*Vic has always tried to integrate his faith in GOD into his daily life and work, no matter; and he hopes that this small book will be of help to many in getting to know God better, and to put Him first in every matter of their life.*

**Jesus said** (according to John 3:11-19),

“ I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.”

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