

The Failure of the 'Mosaism' Project: What Happens When Politics and Self-Centrism Mixed With Religion

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ABSTRACT: Unlike the official ratio between Christianity and Mosaism, where Christianity is considered the offspring of Mosaism, I reconsider this position based on facts and prophecies told in Bible which prove that OT has to be distinguished in two separate realities: the genuine 'voice of God' expressed in prophecies and Decalogue, and the religiousness of Jewish people affected by the Egyptian exodus, by time, social context, ego and nationalism, religious background inherited from Mesopotamia and Egypt, and so forth. The context of Mosaic's birth created the confusion that all what is written in Old Testament is the will of God, including crimes/violence, and that has led to many denials of the Old Testament, in spite of the strong relation between Old and New Testament. By separating the realities of Christ/Apostles and Prophets from the religion of Israel found in Bible, I hope to prove that, from the beginning, Yahweh separates His prophets from the people of Israel/priests for their stubbornness in listening Him, with the claim that Mosaism grew apart from Prophetism.

KEY WORDS: prophetism, religiousness, situatedness, covenant, obedience, faithfulness

Introduction¹

The general view about Christianity in relation with Mosaism is always based on the ratio between Old and New Testaments and

it follows same routine, that *Christianism is the continuer of Mosaism for the fact that everything reveled by God in the Old Testament is in fact done as a preparation for receiving a New Testament. . . .* However, it was ever conceived that these two assertions can be thought separately so that the later does not have to depend on the former? Without considering this as a premise, I've ended thinking to it when, for the reason of publishing this chapter of my next book on religiousness, I had to make an introduction to it. Reading all the arguments that *came* into my mind in a rush it is now so obvious that the religion of Jews has started on the wrong foot and it has promoted many values that had nothing to do with revelation, but it was assumed to be revealed by God to Moses and later *shoftim* (judges) of Israel, but in fact, as we can see in my whole dissertation here, were not 'a will of God-Yahweh,' since He denies them through the voices of later prophets. That and many practices Jewish people have used from the beginning of his religion, made me decide that such violent and discordant 'image of a god' drawn in OT cannot be the same with that revealed through prophets and later through Christ. The method for considering all that with an open-mind has to be the concept of 'situatedness,'² one that allows us to see every movement, reform, or even religion as a current raised against something in the human society as well as a step forward in building an understanding over Mosaism under the circumstances they had when started it. So, in conclusion, I can consider this paper my response to prof. Diane Moore (HDS) question, *How does your own "situatedness" shape your view [over religion of OT]?*

A. The Ratio of Savior Christ with the Old Testament

1. *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. . . . I am God—yes, I Am. I haven't changed . . . I will not change my plans"* (Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6; Amos 2:1; Ps. 110:4)
2. *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill."* (Matthew 5:17)
3. *"You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, 'You shall*

... *But I say to you ... (something else)* (Matthew 5:21–22 corres. Ex. 20:13; 27–28 corres. Ex. 20:14; 31–32 corres. Dt. 24:1–5; 33–37 corres. Leviticus 24:20; 38–39 corres. Leviticus 19:18)

How do we suppose to understand these declarations of the Son of God, seen in their continuity, 1–2–3? If the decisions and plans of God are eternal and they cannot be changed over time through the resignificance made by certain human or non-human interventions, this is just one of the divine immutability characteristics. At the same time, however, *God's plan* does not include premeditated fluctuations either, conflicting stages planned from eternity that are met over time (in creation) and occur as such, seemingly conflicting from the perspective of human understanding. It has a natural fluency, perhaps even natural predictable in regard of its purpose (the salvation of creation), not necessarily on the details of the path towards this end. He is unchanged in his love. He has loved his people with “an everlasting love” he loves them now as much as he ever did, and when all earthly things shall have melted in the last conflagration, his love will still wear the dew of its youth.³

And then, if we understand the divine inflexibility, how should we consider Christ's divine interventions on the Old Testament Law (3) if they are foreshadowed by the assertion (2)? For me it is clear that the two refers to two different realities, non-coincidental, occurring in the same civilization, in the same religious reality seemingly overlapped, but in reality they are two, numerical and topological, and Christ addresses them both by turn, demonstrating how He relates to them. First, He discusses the divine law directly revealed, indisputable and externally unaltered, to humans in general, but by Jews led by Moses in particular, under the sway of history.

The fact that Christ proves Himself ‘above the Law,’ as one who is the legislator himself, one who knows best what He meant and what have been His intentions when he gave these laws, is very well entrenched in the mind of Jews who had followed Him, ordinary people, uncorrupted by preconceptions formulated and professed by the Jewish religion. Some of them practitioners, others just ordinary followers, all the apostles prove to be people with an unfinished religious status, people who have not reached religious

maturity, especially theological, which give to their Master the possibility of telling them exactly how things are conceived in God's mind, without having to face the barrier of Jewish religion patterns that operates much diverted from initial concept, first revealed and then held in parallel to the Judaism by Prophetism.

B. The Ratio Between Prophetism and Judaism

A prophetic intervention of Christ over one of His apostles proves this predilection for people of sincere, honest and pre-judgmentless character. When introduced to the Son of God, Nathanael was presented by Him as "a true Israelite. There is no duplicity in him"⁴ (Matthew 1:47)—a commentary referring to the deceiving and duplicity of Israel, the historical figure unlike his father, Abraham, the one due to whom God made His covenant with man—Genesis 27:35–36. For people uncorrupted by the stubbornness and hard-neck-ness of Mosaism is the Christ's offer of a new Kingdom referring to. The new covenant of God with mankind is not based on the same ground as the first one but with same purpose. In the first place the old covenant aimed Abraham and his selfless faith, and being one among the few people inhabiting Earth at that moment, he was chosen of all people as an anchor for saving what is left of humanity. Due to the fact that he was special for his firm, unshakeable belief in the real God, he proved that mankind is not irremediably doomed to perish, so God used him of all to create a pattern, a right way of knowing, meeting and serving the Creator and Savior; this was the reason for his election. Now, after people had their time to find out more about divinity and what are the reasons for creating the world and mankind, after the aisle in history created by Judaism, in its humanly, corrupted but still God-loving way, a new, true and definitive covenant has to be made. It was possible that the first project to fail—and this failure was not far from the truth, but possibly God wasn't looking at the Judaism failure as human religiousness, but for its success in protecting and raising man's desire to know, meet and follow the Messiah. *Judaism was not the point of the old covenant*, in fact it

was known from the beginning that they is an impossible mission, to make people love the One, true God as Abraham did, without grumbling and complaining, without remorse and disclaimers as Jews did from the start. That was the reason for them to receiving the *circumcision*, as a sign of their covenant with the Lord and a reason for being set apart from all others for Him. The Israelites were required to undergo the rite of circumcision (Gen 17:10–14), but more than that, as metaphor for stubbornness of heart, it was an act of yielding obedience. But Yahweh saw in Jews a hard-necked people, unworthy of their father's blessing and covenant, for even physically circumcised Israelites could still be considered "uncircumcised." In Leviticus 26:41 Yahweh promises to listen and restore the Israelites if *they humble their uncircumcised heart (levavam he'arel; with the adjective arel)*. This spiritual meaning was more important than the bodily aspect (John 4.14) that's why centuries in a row prophets were picked and sent to Jews to reconnect with initial plan, with the very reason they became chosen for.

1. PROPHETHOOD IN OPPOSITION TO RELIGIOUS-POLITICAL JEWISH PROJECT

Besides, Prophethood in general was established as a divine intervention to get people on the right track for their religiousness; it has always proved two things: first that God didn't abandoned man, and second that man is doing something wrong, unwanted by God, that this way of religiousness is misplaced, incompatible with God's will or plan. *Prophetism worked from the beginning of Mosaism as part of it—when religious manifestation and tribal identity were one—and it became obsolete when those two passed into two different realities.* The mixture of politics and eager to conquering 'a special legacy' with religious belief make the voices of prophets [i.e. voice of Yahweh] unwanted; "As for the message that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we are not going to listen to you!" (Jeremiah 44:16). In the *Book of Judges* a cyclical pattern is recounted to show the various reasons for the need of judges: the apostasy of the Israelite people, the hardship

brought on as punishment from God, the crying out to the Lord for rescue, etc.

The *judges (shoftim)* were the successive individuals, each from a different tribe of Israel, ‘*chosen by God* to rescue the people from their enemies’ and establish justice and the practice of the Torah amongst Hebrews. While they played the role as officials with the authority to administer justice serving mostly the will of political leaders, they were thought of as *being sent by God to deliver the people from a threat. But their role grew apart from Prophetism due to the implication of politics.* How can we see that coming when the Bible says otherwise, that *shoftim* were executing Yahweh’s demands and will? For instance, comparing with a similar case, when Abraham became aware of God’s plan to destroy the infidel cities of Sodom and Gemorrah, what did he do? One would have perhaps thought that Abraham would have celebrated the annihilation of the non-believers, the apostates and the sinners. But no! We are told—and you can read it in Quran too—that Abraham prayed for them, beseeching God to spare the city in merit of the righteous people that may live there! So, the path of engaging nonbelievers was different in the eyes of Abraham, the one man who is declared ‘friend of God’ and ‘the father of many nations’ (James 2:23; Gen. 17:5) for his strong belief and love for God. In comparison to what happened after ending the desert Journey of Sinai, we see that the *friendship with God* was a statement made by God himself, not a self-reflection, while the *judges and kings later of Israel* were pronounced by people or by religious leaders as ‘elected by God’, sometimes at their command and even against God’s will (1 Samuel 11:1–7; 16:1; 8:1–9).

Then the will of God and His action were no longer enjoyed by Jews—in fact it never was, judging from their apostasy since the Sinai mountain and their grumbling against Yahweh and His prophet, Moses, several times in the desert (Ex. 16:6, 8, 9, 12 et.al.). It was obvious that Jews were uncircumcised, unwilling to give up their plans for God’s; that is why religion and tribal policy have grown separately and eventually religion ended up following more the tribal policy than the will of Yahweh. There was nothing else to show God’s will but the prophets, unfollowed, not listened and many times even killed for their attempt to ‘corrupt’ religious Jews from their religious path. “The Lord said [to the prophet Samuel]: Listen

to whatever the people say. You are not the one they are rejecting. They are rejecting Me as their king. They are acting toward you just as they have acted from the day I brought them up from Egypt to this very day, deserting Me to serve other gods.” (1 Samuel 8:7–8). Almost every prophet has ever since pointed Jews’ religiousness as wrong and corrupted by their tribal policy and selfishness. Jeremiah, for example, describes their spiritual condition as an inability to listen, “Behold, their ears are uncircumcised (*ara*) they cannot listen; behold, the word of the Lord is to them an object of scorn; they take no pleasure in it” (Jer 6:10 ESV). Yet, in anticipating the new covenant, Moses declares, “Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise (*mul*) your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live” (Deut 30:6 corres. Mark 12:33 NAS).

2. DIVINE ‘REVEALED’ COMMANDMENTS WERE ACTUALLY MIMETIC FORMS OF BEHAVIOR

The ‘growing apart’ of Judaism from Prophetism is underlined in many passages of the OT prophetic intervention. Their religiousness was deliberately otherwise from God’s wish, following a different pattern, one that they have learned from pagans, not from Yahuwah’s prophets—“Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked, each one, in the stubbornness of his evil heart; therefore I brought on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not.” (Jeremiah 11:8) Many of their religious rituals and ‘divine regulations’ were in fact a legacy of their living among pagans, not a revealed will of Yahweh, e.g. sacrifices, killing people for various reasons (from conquering the *promised land* to *the punishment of God by stoning*.⁵) The later practice, stoning (*saqal*; λιθάζω *lithazo*), was presented to the Bible’s readers as Yahweh’s intervention over those who break His covenant and Law for divers ‘sins’⁶ mostly theological in nature. They include apostasy from Yahweh (Dt. 13:11 = 17:5), blasphemy God (Lev. 24:14,16,23; 1 K. 21:10–14; cf. 2 Ch. 24:21), *touching Mount Sinai while God was giving Moses the Ten Commandments*, (Ex. 19:13), *transgressing a taboo commandment* (Josh. 7:25), *Breaking Sabbath*, (Nu. 15:32–36); *Homosexual practices* (Leviticus

20:13); “Rebellion” against parents, after repeated warnings (Deut. 21:18–21); extramarital sex (Deut. 22:23–24; Ezk. 16:40; 23:47); deceiving to be a virgin at wedding (Deut. 22:13–21), etc.,—“Then the Lord said to Moses, Certainly the man is to be put to death: let him be stoned by all the people outside the tent-circle.” (Numbers 15:35). These words, putted with a certain intention into Yahweh’s account, was in fact a practice Jews have seen it long before so-called *God’s punishment*,⁷ during Mesopotamia,⁸ Egypt,⁹ and lands in-between from where the practice escalated to all ancient world, as the most cruel punishment and to-teach-lesson for villains. The reason Jews—from Moses till the days of Christ—used it was to create a scary image of God, one that does not accept denial and infringement of the law, “God—his name is The-Jealous-One—is a jealous God.” (Exodus 34:14) Protected by this cruel, ready-to-punish God, any religious leader could demand anything from the people, for they were controlled by fear. The OT use of “fear” often indicates awe or reverence. To fear God is to express loyalty to Him and faithfulness to His covenant. Those who fear God exhibit trust in Him and obedience to His commandments. According to the OT, those who fear God obtain God’s protection, wisdom, and blessing. That was easy to be transferred to the political desire of land conquering by redirecting the Yahweh’s fierceness upon Jews’ enemies and so raising Jews’ will. “Don’t be intimidated by them. God, your God, is among you—God majestic, God awesome. God, your God, will get rid of these nations, bit by bit.” (Deut. 7:21–24). But regarding this through the words said by later prophets and Christ is obvious that everything was just a psychological shield of control and encouragement to battle. There are several examples when people of Israel used stoning as their own purpose, not because ‘God commands it’. Besides the example of Moses, scared to be stoned by his kin for telling the will of Yahweh to cross the desert of Sinai, we can see that this habit was used by Egyptians and many other tribes in the region and not a genuine Jewish religious outfit. (Ex. 8:26)

Also David, God’s elected to become king, puts his hope in God when threaten to be stoned by people “*because the soul of all the people was grieved*, every man for his sons and for his daughters:

but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God." (1 Samuel 30:6)

It is more obvious to understand this separation of Mosaism from the God's revealed will when we see in the prophets' pronouncements that, besides *stoning*, another key-concept of their religion, *sacrifices*, was not commanded by God—"For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Jeremiah 7:22; also see same statement at Hosea 6:6; 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 40:6; Psalm 51:16–17). After making the statement that He did not command the burnt offerings or sacrifices after setting Jews out from Egypt, God says "*However, I did give them this command: Obey Me, and then I will be your God, and you will be My people. You must walk in every way I command you so that it may go well with you. But they didn't listen, nor did they pay attention. They pursued their own plans, stubbornly following their own evil desires. They went backward and not forward. From the day your ancestors left the land of Egypt to this present time, I've sent all my servants, the prophets, to you, again and again. But they didn't listen to me, and they didn't pay attention. They stiffened their necks, and they did more evil than their ancestors.*" (Jeremiah 7:23–26 corres. Isaiah 1:11 ISV). This is a statement not easy to accept and digest by religious leaders that build a whole religious structure upon offerings, obedience to rules imposed as divine and now denied even by God!

After his life-altering vision of the Lord, Isaiah accepts God's call and receives his commission: "And [the Lord] said, 'Go, and say to this people: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive." Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.'" (Isa 6:9–10 ESV) In verse 10, Isaiah describes *this spiritual condition metaphorically* through the physical organs of sense: *the heart (lev) has grown dull* (literally "fat" *shamen*), *the ears (ozen) are heavy (kaved) and the eyes (ayin) are dim (sha'a')*. The prophet constructs the verse in such a fashion as "to underscore (1) the finality of the condition, namely, spiritual impotence

and unresponsiveness; and (2) the comprehensiveness of the condition. Every organ of potential divine–human communication is malfunctioning.”¹⁰ This metaphor for the spiritual condition in which were regarded not only the Jews themselves, but also their way of expressing religiousness, decadent and self-centered, making the prophets even refuse to be asked for a divine point of view (Jonah). Many times prophets’ opinion didn’t matter at all for being against people’s or king’s wish (1 Kings 22:8, “[king of Israel] answered ‘There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the Lord, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but *I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me, but evil.*’”), and soon prophets become obsolete even for religious people and their leaders, leading to their rejection, from exile to killing (Matthew 23:31; Luke 20:45–47 corres. 2 Chronicles 24:20).

Another element I would like to relate to is the way all prophets address in their books when speaking about Jewish people. They never identify themselves with Jews; always speak on third–person plural in regard of their fellow countrymen, *this people* (Ex. 5:22; 17:4; 18:18; 32:22; Num. 14:15 et.al.). In return God also use the same form of addressing, *you and this people* (Ex. 17:4; Num. 14:11; Deut. 31:16; 1 Kgs 12:10 et.al.). By this *third–person plural* formula a distance is specially created with one single purpose: avoiding identification and joint combination. And who would want this artificial distance to be raised between him and the persons he is addressing of, unless he strongly disagrees with their way of acting, thinking, behaving, etc.? “So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he said, ‘Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their fathers and have not obeyed my voice.’” (Judges 2:20)

C. Christ Relating with Mosaism . . . continuation

It is more than obvious that a gap grew deep between Yahweh and his elected people, since God reacts always without pleasure in relation with Jewish people in general and He says through his prophets that He “will keep His promise for I gave to your fathers”

(1 Kings 6:12; Jeremiah 29:10) and not because you deserve it. God feels the need to express this negative sentiment he has for Jews due to their constant injustice and duplicity, saying either that '*I will give up on account of the sins and the LORD will strike Israel*' (1 Kings 14:15–16), or, when continues to take care of Jews for the sake of few, that '*He does that for the promise He made to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*' (Deut. 9:5), somehow forced, unwillingly. But precisely that's why the Apostles of Jesus–Son of God emphasis that Jews haven't received the promise made to Abraham for they have not followed their father in his belief (Hebrews 11:13). St. Paul embraces John's assertion that "For while the Law was given through Moses, grace (unearned, undeserved favor and spiritual blessing) and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17), and underlines that idea that made Christianity a far more spiritual and intimate religion: "No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by God's Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people. . . ." (Rom. 2:29; 2:27; Philip. 3:3 cf. Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4).

1. LAW OR FAITH?

Christ has tried to make Jews being aware that the sacred Law given to them through Moses was good, an actual pattern of knowing and serving God, but they got it all wrong. He underlines the fact that who's close to God, does His work and stays connect to Him in his heart, does not need for a specific Law to obey; he does that by love, unconditionally. "For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the Law, but through the righteousness produced by faith" (Romans 4:13) that is why who loves God is above the Law, because the Law was given for those who did not love, for their correction and help in getting things right (Romans 4:2–5, 9–11). St. Paul dedicates many chapters to clarify this crucial issue, the ratio between Law/nonbelievers and Grace/God-loving–persons. "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested

apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.” (Romans 3:20,21 et.al.)

2. REASONS FOR GIVING THE LAW AND ITS EFFECTS ON PEOPLE

So, the ratio of Christ with Old Testament’s Law proves that this was given to people for their wrong behavior, as a pattern to know the truth, to serve God in case they want to. At the same time the Law is not given to those who believe, for their praiseworthy conduct and relationship with God. At the same time the Law is and isn’t given to those who believe. On the one hand, it is given to them for their confidence in God, as a sign of recognition that they worth having a revelation from God. That is why the circumcision was given to Abraham with the covenant but without a Law, for the faith he had in God before that. On the other hand, the Law does not have them as target, it isn’t given for them to accomplish, to reach the state of following God, since they already do this; they are not Law’s intention, but those who have not reached this state.

But for those with bad conduit, without a proper way to live, for transgressors and God’s offenders, for villains, in order to “make men recognize and be conscious of *sin*” (Romans 3.20 AMP).¹¹ It serves for two purposes: (1) as a base for judgement over villains, and (2) a pattern for when/if they stop living in a sinful way and repent.

(1) The *legal side*: In the absence of law there is no possibility for someone *to know sin*, therefore he cannot be judged. “In fact, sin was in the world before the law, but sin is not charged to one’s account when there is no law.” (Rom. 5:13 HCSB)¹² Thus, God needed to give man the Law, so that He can punish those who infringed the Law, after that without any exoneration. “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin. Now they have no excuse for their sin.” (John 15:22 HCSB). It is evident that the Law was given in order to set juridical terms of life and conduct.

(2) The *pedagogical side*: “[if you claim to] know His will and approve the things that are essential or have a sense of what is excellent, based on your instruction from the Law” (Rom. 2:18 AMP). The Law was a good pattern for understanding how you

can behave in a way you make God proud of you. Offering such a pattern was easier for everyone; you don't have to think on what you have to do to make God proud of you, you just have to listen. So, in this case, obeying is the right alternative to faithfulness; either you believe and love God with your life, or by being obedient in every situation of life, have the same end, *entrust God with your life*, praising Him with your doings.

In return, *what were the effects on people when God gave them the Law? Or rather, what was the true meaning of 'giving' the Law on behalf of God, what He intended to do by that?* From the Christ's words the meaning is (2), to *reveal*, to uncover, to give a path, while from the OT perspective is aiming exclusively to (1), to discover the sinners (Romans 5:20, "The Law was given so that the trespass would increase.") But this is only a matter of perspective, based on the divinity of Christ, not an internal contradiction; it is not a new way of deciphering the Law of God, but the Way for it. (John 14:6) In fact, the intention was always the same, it certainly looks like a contradiction because while in NT God Himself speaks, in the canon of OT, the whole intention is displayed to us from Jews' perspective. The entire revelation of God is written under the situatedness of Jewish already formed religiousness. That is why they just cannot get rid of fear of gods, making sacrifices to appeasing them, and all these feelings and ideas inherited from locals and neighbors drove them to do the same with Yahweh. For them, any god imprints in his followers his will and since circumcision looks the same, like a branding, they interpreted Yahweh's intention in kind and wrote His 'revelation' under these strong emotions. That is the reason why the God's 'words' written by Jews are full of wrath and anger, and yet He speaks so kind and charming in NT—"I don't call you servants anymore, because a servant doesn't know what his master is doing. But I've called you friends, because I've made known to you everything that I've heard from my Father." (John 15:15)

Thus, the effects over people who received the Law were bicephalous: as an instinct for those who are *afraid* of the law-giver, people were scared in the beginning, living a state of *denial* (same as Adam or Cain, Gen. 3:8; 4:9), 'I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid [*Yare'*, fear, afraid, terrible, fearful]' (Gen. 3:10 KJV).

Then, discovering that the law is against whatever they must've been doing/thinking/planning to do, didn't enjoyed this anymore than any man forced to leave his old habits and become otherwise overnight. More than that, let picture that this person is told that everything he believed in is wrong and he has to deny it and obey to a new, partially revealed and completely personal-engaging way of religiousness. How can he react to that? Forced to do it, he will bear the remorse and second-thoughts at all time. He might not say it lauder, but he will certainly express it every time he has an opportunity; that is what was been displayed in Jewish history ever since they've been taken by force out from Egypt. Therefore, along with this attitude of discomfort, comes the Law that tends to replace the love and trust in God, those feelings Abraham had when he unconditionally left Mesopotamia and for that reason he had no need to receive a law to create obedience. Instead now, after Egypt, things are not the same, and Abraham's descendants—for whom the promises were made to their father—needed a way to find the itinerary of Abraham to the oak of Moreh (Gen 12:6), the encounter with God. But giving the law had also the possibility of failure included in. Therefore, there is no way the Law intends to be placed above the belief in God and the pure love and trust in Him; "For in the gospel God's righteousness is being revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, "The righteous will live by faith." (Rom. 1:17)

There are only these two options for bringing the Law into discussion, and while the former gives only *the recognition of the sins, not also the power to overcome it* (Rom 8:3), the later provides *the pattern of serving God, still without the power to make you want it*, "since the Law was given through Moses and yet none of you keeps the law" (John 7:19). So, in the end, what was that Law really did? "The Law came in so that the transgression would increase" (Romans 5:20–21). These relations between entrusting believers and under-Law obeying people proves the perspective Christ-God has on the OT Law, for it has nothing to do with salvation; "for we hold that a man is justified and made upright by faith independent of and distinctly apart from good deeds (works of the Law)" (Rom. 3:28 AMP).

3. I AM NOT CHANGING THE LAW!

I keep wondering if St. Paul had a reason when concluded, in a four–chapter speech on the relation between Christians and the Law [of Old Testament], saying “Do we, then, abolish the Law by this faith? Of course not! Instead, we uphold the Law” (Rom. 3:31) or not. And if he did, what was that? And then I saw a resemblance with the words of Christ in the same relation, Math. 5:17, only that their assertion had different position in the speech, therefore bearing a different message. While Paul’s is almost like a conclusion, placed at the end of his speech, and even more like a precautionary measure for his listeners for not to be tempted to overcome the Law and to leave it aside of their lives, and thus ending a life after the will of God, the same statement is said by Christ, but this time in the introduction of all His preaching, in the beginning of His mission. *Unrelated*, these two same–statements were never other than parts of the same theological structure, giving to the auditorium same feeling on engaging the Law of OT from the same perspective, of continuity of obeying the rules of Mosaism. I had always listen sermons—even given by myself—about that passage, Math. 5:17, and the ratio of Christ with the Law of OT was always the same: Christ, as human as this text possibly make out of Him, obeying the Law Moses has gave to Jewish people. Now I feel that everybody is missing the whole point in this statement and now—I hope with God’s help—it comes so clearly to me for obvious reasons that, in fact, things are completely different. In the first place, Christ couldn’t start His mission of Savior, of Messiah, with a statement of obedience, and then, with all what He did, to contradict this obedience—*curing in the days of Sabbat, forgiving man’s sins, abolishing sacrifices, stoning, unclean food, etc.*,—therefore, my assertion on these words of Christ is that He does not make an obedience statement, something like ‘don’t worry, I didn’t come to replace the old Law and give you a new one, different or the same but a more simple one, so that His auditorium would not be stumble and leave the place. No, it has to be more than that. Christ wasn’t apologizing what he intends to do later on. Also, He wasn’t using this statement as a psychological excuse to relate His

whole new work with His predecessor, Moses, and gain trust from people so easy to peeve when picking on their religious views. In conclusion, this is not a precautionary measure statement coming from a human scared that he will be rejected by his kin and that He will have nobody to talk to afterwards. What is it then? In the light of this chapter and, mostly, related to St. Paul's same words, Christ's have a different position [in speech], message and intention. He leaves his humanly chores and start His mission as 'God among us' (corres. John 1:14). Hearing His words, from the beginning till the end, everybody acknowledge that they don't face a human, but someone different, as different as the One Abraham encountered when he has abandoned Mesopotamia, as Moses encountered in the burning bush and so on—"No man ever spoke like that! . . . His last, he said, "This man really was God's Son!" (John 7:46; Mark 15:39). So, that Jesus standing in front of Jews and talking about the OT Law streams differentness as the God of Abraham did, streams power of a God, of a Law-giver, not a Law-obeying person, 'They were utterly amazed at what he taught [διδασχί, doctrine], because his message was spoken with authority [weight and power]' (Lk. 4:32). In this case Christ's relation with the OT Law was not *to be under it*—as most sermons on Math. 5:17 are implying, considering that we don't need to put OT in opposition with NT, and Christ-God in opposition to Yahweh-God, and therefore loose the prophetic image of Messiah, the Messenger—but *above it*. Anyways, being 'above' continues to be wrong if we still consider Him as human; a human *above the Law* is nothing more than a villain, an outlaw and therefor he has to be a pariah, putted under the law and condemned by it. This was, in fact, the reason why Jews have come to convict and sentence Christ to death, because they considered him only human and His actions placed Him above the OT Law.

In this position, of the Lawgiver, same as for the Old Testament, Christ stands now in front of His people as He once did at Mt. Sinai and make those remarks on the Law (Math. 5:21–48), not replacing the OT law as thought by their religious leaders or by others which, considering that He came to make the Law even roughen, have ended in the same reaction as in OT: denying his authority and hating him for that (John 15:25, "They hated Me for no reason.") He did

those remarks only as annotations to the texts of the Law, for they misunderstood it from the beginning, got it all wrong and misplaced it in their religion, leading them to obey rules otherwise that it was intended to by God in the first place. Judaism came to be wrong in its understanding of *what God is* and *what is that He wants* from His followers to do. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD.” (Isaiah 55.8) Ever since they misunderstood who is Yahweh in Sinai desert and misplaced His image with a golden bull, they went down on another road; for them ‘religion’ was no different from others, pagans as they call them. And this is not because of a ‘little’, ‘harmless’ mistake, that Yahweh could’ve get over it at Moses’ prayers. (Ex. 32) After generations of pagan experience among Egyptians they could not pass *unharmmed*, keeping Abrahamic faith untouched, that’s why, when Yahweh chose Moses to get His people out of slavery and decided to grow a people of right religiousness, that people was unprepared, unwilling to reconnect with that strange, unseen, untouchable God Moses spoke about (book of Judith 8.14). Let’s consider further this picture: Moses took them out of their homes, lead them into the desert for 40 years, without proper food and sometimes even water, chased by enemies and brought nearly to death for several times. On top of everything he gave the supreme Law, a Law of obedience, a law with so many Commandments that they couldn’t even count, so strict and so precise that every step they took or action they made had a rule in detail; every step of their lives was taken by this Lawgiver and putted under the microscope to watch and manage. In this conditions, this *stiff-necked* people (Ex. 32:9, stubborn—*Qasheh*) turned their back to this undesirable image of God revealed by His prophet and grew a new, yet old one, more adequate to their needs and desire—of conquering and getting even to everybody who was to blame for their condition of outcasts. Yet Israel’s house keeps saying, “The LORD isn’t being consistent with his standards.’ Is it my behavior that’s inconsistent with my standards? Is it not your behavior that’s inconsistent with my standards?” (Ezekiel 18:29) For how many times Yahweh is kept by prophets with prayers out of His wish to end and perish this untrusted nation and raise His children out of rocks!?! (Math.

3:9, “don’t presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones”). For more than the promises in OT come the regrets of Yahweh that *He came to know this people and aren’t like their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, and this state of stubbornness resists and perpetuates over centuries without any slit change, ‘You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit!’ (Acts 7:51).

Comparing the words said to Abraham—“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because *you have obeyed My voice*” (Gen. 22:18)—with those addressed to Jews after Exodus—“I know your rebellion and your stubbornness; behold, while I am still alive with you today, *you have been rebellious against the LORD*” (Deut. 31:27)—we can understand the disappointment for He did so many great things among them that no one else ever did and still ‘*They refused [refuse utterly] to listen [Shama`= to obey, obedient, diligent] and did not remember Your wonders You performed among them. They became stiff-necked [oreph, stiffnecked] and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt.*’ (Nehemiah 9:17) That is why my assertion is that Mosaism grew apart from the revelation and from the real image of Yahweh revealed through prophets but unwanted by Jewish people for the lack of comfort and huge amount of liability He demands from his servants all the time, breakless. For this reason they chose to listen who ever speaks what they want instead of following the undesirable voice of the Lawgiver (2 Tim 4:3; Math. 15:14) and, in return, God left them in the hardness of their heart (Isaiah 63:17) till they will clean their hearts to *see Him as truly is* (Math. 5:8).

That is why Christ is not a lawgiver of a new Law, even if that could be a better one. His correct words (Math. 26:28) cannot refer to ‘a new Law’ for He does not give another Law, convicting the old one of imprecision, mistakes or outdated. He did a new covenant indeed, with people who embrace his words and raises a new religion, because the OT religion was outdated and full of human errors leading to a wrong image of God. *They misplaced the revealed image of God with the image they want Him to be for them,*

a vengeful one over all other humankind in order to make Jews rule on Earth. That is why Christ corrects this wrong image too and says that “My kingdom is not of this world” (Math. 18:36; 1 Chron. 17:14), and it is not taken by sword, but by another criteria—“Blessed are *the meek*: for they shall inherit the earth,” (Math. 5:5) so that is what God really wants from His servants, not to be as Israel [the biblical person who was, duplicity and deceiving], but meek, gentle, poor in spirit. His attitude as Lawgiver goes beyond a simple correction of their religious misleading, and express His new attitude towards them “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will *produce* [ποιέω – *Poieo*, bring forth, commit, *perform*] the fruit of it.” (Math. 21:43) That was the plan in the first place, same plan, and the covenant made by Yahweh with believing people, meek and eager to make sacrifices (as Abraham did, Gen. 22). But the idea of sacrifice grew wrong in the minds of Jews, for they were eager to sacrifice all others but themselves. So, instead of self-growing a people who serves the God of mercy, of love, and of care, they chose to serve a wrong image of Yahweh, no different from idols saw in Egypt, Mesopotamia and in between, and to use same method as the pagans were, sacrificing animals to be forgiven from their continue state of sinfulness. This way of religiousness was a cover for unwanted obedience: they make sacrifices of animals rather than their ego; they rather give up money or other goods than give up their wrong way of thinking, sinful and egocentric—“For I desire and delight in dutiful steadfast love and goodness, not sacrifice, and the knowledge of and acquaintance with God more than burnt offerings” (Hosea 6:6 AMP; Math. 9:13). God freed Jews from their oppressors and kindly conducted them to a land where they could have grown the seeds of Yahweh’s good will; the promise was for real that they will be led to a land they will inherit and that God will be there with them to help them conquer that land and protect them from horrible engagements with locals (Gen. 28:15; 31:3; Ex. 3:12; Isa 43:2; Matt 28:20). But Jews understood this at their will, making a warrior out of Yahweh and have served Him as weapon against locals; it was a battle between tribes with strong will of conquering the land of Canaan—and still is!—forgetting the fact

that the promise of conquering Canaan was never about weapons and murders. The very event of rescuing Jews from Egypt shows the divine concept of protection He would offer to those who He elects and uses as envoys into the pagan world; Jews didn't have to draw swords and fight with Egyptians, instead they were protected by the mighty Yahweh in a different, providentially way. "I will help you conquer all the lands" is no different from the promise "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Math. 28:28, 29)

4. OBEDIENCE FOR THE LAW OR FAITHFULNESS TO GOD?

The obedience for Judaism was denounced by Apostles for that specific reasons, namely that this religion was incapable to forgive sins and "yet we know that a person is not justified by doing what the Law requires, but rather by the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah" (Galatians 2:16). That is why the great debate between St. Paul and St. Petrus ended in a council (50 AD) which pronounced the Mosaic failure and futility as religion (Acts 15:28–29; I Cor. 7:19), abolishing all its commandments for every people who want to enter Christianity. This abolishment of the Mosaic religion was not a humanly doing, but a decision taken by God and revealed to his true followers, a decision taken by God long ago, to not enjoy this religiousness, but only now confessed for he has to whom. Now, thanks to his Son's work among man, there are many people willing to listen to his voice ('But a voice from heaven answered a second time, 'What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy', Acts 11:9).

A question like this—*Obedience for the Law vs faithfulness to God?*—raises many unwanted debates if not explained properly. *How come can we put these two in opposite sides? Can be faithfulness to God opposed to the divine law? Or rather, is the Law of God inconsistent with faithfulness to God?* This kind of issue would bring more misunderstandings than actually are. But, to answer these, we probably have to settle first which is above which. Asking Jews about that, Jesus received always the same answer, the Law.

According to their religious leaders no one and nothing is above the Law for it brings the *faithfulness to God*. In this regard they leave every other principles, human or other, they have to obey no matter what; God himself if would like to intervene into Jewish life, have to do it accordingly. "We have a law, and according to that law He ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." (John 19:7). But they forgot one thing, "he [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them," (Rom. 4:14) and it was his faithfulness to God that brought everything after: the covenant, the promise land, the Law and the mark of all these promises, the circumcision (Gen. 17:10, 12; Joshua 5), and not the other way around. And because the intention ruined the meaning, God descended to his people to let them know that are mistaken the faithfulness with obedience, and when He speaks to Jews he bring forward the hierarchy of things, "I assure you: A slave is not greater than his master, and a messenger is not greater than the one who sent him." (John 13:16) That is why, when coming to His people, they haven't recognized Him (John 1:11), for they were not looking to fulfilling the word of God and couldn't have recognize whoever speaks the will of God, for they were chasing another will, of a wrong religious one.

In order to make Jews figure that they should not have put the *obedience for the Law* above the *faithfulness to God*, Jesus give them a parable, one about a man who planted a vineyard (Luke 20:9-16). To briefly understand the point of it, I said once to my flock that a king put a soldier to guard a flower and no one, under no circumstances, cannot touch it; after several persons who were rejected in their attempt to trespass, the king himself came and asked the soldier to step aside and let him pick up the flower. Now the soldier is in the same dilemma as ours: *to obey the law or to be faithful to his master?* That is why all the circumstances were against the religious path Jews slipped of and the conversion to the right path was near to impossible due to their *`oreph*, stiffneckedness, and unwillingness to change their path as shown for the beginning. The message coming from Yahweh through all his prophets was

always the same, 'Change your way, leave your path' (Jeremiah 26), but it is hard to leave whatever you've been doing as long as you don't listen, and you consider that you are doing the right thing.

Your hearts are as hard as a field that has not been plowed.
So change your ways and produce good crops. Do not plant
seeds among thorns. People of Judah and Jerusalem, obey me.
Do not let your hearts be stubborn. If you do, my anger will
blaze out against you. (Jeremiah 4:3, 4)

What other proof for them being wrong do we need when they stick to a material object when praying, a wall, a coffin, rocks and other fabric, for saying their prayers, against they were taught (Lev. 26:1, 30), but the truth was always before them, that 'I am the sovereign God, . . . the whole world is Mine . . . and there is no other like ME in the whole world' (Gen 35:11; Ex. 19:5–23.22; Ex. 9:14), that is why Jesus came with the conclusion that "Believe Me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship Him" (John 4:21, 23) and for Him the only building we should build and see that is not ruined (Math. 7:26) is the Church, "a holy temple of the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:20–22) and that is a *spiritual building*, for it has our souls for fabric, "as living stones, are built up a spiritual house." (1 Pet. 2:4, 5) That is the reason why this new religion will never perish (Math. 16.18), for it doesn't rely on anything material, but directly in God and His Son, Christ, the real Temple (John 2:20, 21) and we are "builded up in him" (Col. 2:7).

5. THE JUDAISM TRIAL IS SET FOR ITS DISSOLUTION

"I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12:1) The plan went wrong the first time, but being the plan of God, He never surrenders and capitulates, so He came again in order to set things right and rebuild the Temple of spiritual relationship with mankind. Referring to the NT, many people—talking about the coming of Christ and

His work in relation with OT—say ‘this time’, as it is another plan, a change of plan, something like ‘well, it didn’t worked that way, so let’s do it differently this time’. But, in fact, it isn’t a change of plans from His behalf. It’s only a matter of perspective; from Judaism’s point of view things are pretty bad: someone comes to take away their religion, to throw it out as damaged, completely wrong, and *then what?* Since the vanity is too big (for humans in general) to accept they miss-take it, the plan fails again, in all its aspects. ‘At least, *says the ego*, show us how to rebuild it, what is to be change!’ But the answer is still: forget it, you have to change everything since nothing is in place with this religion. “Repent! Let there be no injustice; Change your ways! And your deeds” (Job 6:29; Jer. 7:4). It is needed for you to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may learn what the will of God is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect” (Rom. 12:2)

Coming back to the original plan, *inheriting the earth*, this wasn’t in intention to be done by swords, but by love and care for others (Lev. 19:18), something like Abraham did for locals no matter how great were their sins (Gen. 18:23–32). Conquering the world had a single, spiritual aim and it didn’t take into consideration the Jews but the praise of God—“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2.14). If they would have found out that this could be the intention and they would’ve praised the Lord within this aim—“And blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory Amen” (Psalm 72:19; Isaiah 6:3), than *how could they believe that they will reach this goal fulfillment by killing all in their way, and those that they did not reach out, by ignoring and detesting them?* And again, *how can Jews reconcile the pity of God for all, lost and sinners (Ezekiel 18.23), with the words they supposed to be spoken by Yahweh when they have descended into Canaan, to kill everyone, even their own—“Moses told them, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Each of you, take your swords and go back and forth from one end of the camp to the other. Kill everyone—even your brothers, friends, and neighbors?”*” (Exodus 32:27) The answer is simple and more than obvious for they took their ideas and placed on God’s mouth as ‘revealed’ to them, but the reality was that “As

for the message that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we are not going to listen to you!" (Jeremiah 44:16) In fact, His true revealed will wasn't about sacrificing animals, but that "you really change your ways and your actions, if you act justly toward one another." (Jer. 7:5) Many words are in flagrant contradiction one to each other in their attempt to shape the image of God; on the one hand is the image of a God feared and revengeful, and on the other hand the image of a loving God, image that transcends both Old and New Testaments. "You shall not take revenge or bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord." (Leviticus 19:18)

If the first image has the role of psychological protection and justification of all the violence and terror Jews have ever used in their attempt to take over Canaan, 'the promised land', the second one reveals another, peaceful aim of the elected people, spreading the true name of Yahweh—"However, I have let you live for this purpose: to show you My power and *to make My name known in all the earth.*" (Ex. 9:16) This is the real meaning of election and the mission of those who were elected to receive the revealed meaning of Yahweh, spreading this word and faith all around, starting from the Canaan. And instead of getting this idea in the perspective of Abraham, their father whose merit was that they were blessed with God's entrustment of His work, they have mixed politics and self-centrism with the religiousness leading to a wrong, misunderstood religion. "I've been very zealous for the LORD God of the Heavenly Armies," he replied. "The Israelis have abandoned your covenant, demolished your altars, executed your prophets with swords, and I that's right, just me! I am the only one left. Now they're seeking my life, to get rid of me!" 1 Kgs 19:10, 14.

After all ...

In conclusion the abolishment of Judaic religion made by Christ was not because it was fulfilled, for everything in the OT was only a preparation of the real deal, the NT, or for the fact that all the so-called religious rules 'of God' given in the OT were to expire when

Christ would come. Considering this, there is no wonder that the Jews did not accept Christ's mission as the Messiah, the Rescuer, and fails to do it even today. The true explanation, highlighted in this article, is that the old religion of the Jews, did not contained only Jehovah's revelation, but also the amount of religious impressions and memories of Jews from captivity and exit combined with their desire for revenge and take over. A more obvious way of accepting the Rescuer–Christ is to accept the fact that all other words, besides later prophets' and Christ's, were merely human projection of a God feared and revengeful, an image inconsistent with the revelation of the god of love. Same God who loves you, even at your most sinful stage, cannot hate other more or less sinful.

So, was Judaism went wrong and grew a humanly religion instead of a revealed one? The answer is ya, sure is! It is said by Jeremiah and several other prophets in the real side of revelation that Jews have followed their own mind and will, and not God's at all. "When I delivered your ancestors out of Egypt, I never said anything to them about wanting burnt offerings and sacrifices as such. But I did say this, commanded this: "Obey me. Do what I say and I will be your God and you will be my people. Live the way I tell you. Do what I command so that your lives will go well."

This assertion still have to answer to one crucial question: if OT is full of writings and thoughts that are not corresponding to the same God revealed in NT by Christ, how come that Apostles and Christian Church after have considered that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3.16)? Well, these true words are not necessarily opposed to everything I've said here, for the OT has two separate realities, the *Prophetism* and the *religiousness of Jewish* people, one from Egypt exodus, that was affected by time, social context, ego and nationalism, religious background inherited from Mesopotamia and Egypt, and so on. Therefore, OT has two kinds of images of God, the genuine one expressed by the 'voice of God' in prophecies and Decalogue, and that 'image of Yahweh' pictured by a people long been deserted among other peoples and which has needed a protective–God image to succeed take over them. The OT is thus saw by St. Paul as

given by inspiration and not that all its content is revealed by God, namely that everything has to be put in God's account. The writings of OT are perhaps inspired to do not deviate from the historical and prophetic truths; therefore, the historical books unveil the reality of Jewish people, one that has projected an image of a God vengeful and fierce for his protection and as a psychological shield for their violent behavior against peers from other nations. Against this self-projected image are all the circumstances in the prophetic books and the whole NT.

“But do you think they listened? Not a word of it. They did just what they wanted to do, indulged any and every evil whim and got worse day by day. From the time your ancestors left the land of Egypt until now, I've supplied a steady stream of my servants the prophets, but do you think the people listened? Not once. Stubborn as mules and worse than their ancestors!'. “Tell them all this, but don't expect them to listen. Call out to them, but don't expect an answer.” (Jeremiah 7:24–28).

NOTES

¹ I would like to record my gratitude to Professor Diane L. Moore of *Harvard Divinity School* who—through the course on *Religious Literacy* which she teaches—helped me clarify several obscure aspects of religion.

² A key-concept of the course already mentioned is “situatedness”, a term used by Deleuze. Guattari, introduced into cultural situatedness in the contemporary United States by David Simpson, and by Donna Haraway in the Feminist study—where I discovered it from. Donna Haraway, *Situated knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*. In “Feminist studies” vol. 14, no. 3 (1988), 575–599. It provides an alternative for the modern subject who was considered unified, rational, and independent. Viewing the human being as this kind of lone thinker resulted in a host of binaries (mind vs. body, individual vs. society, etc.) Such philosophy became increasingly useless and inaccurate for thinking about social life. On the contrary, the theory of situatedness intervenes is the context that provides the multiple perspectives needed for understanding that permits all voices to be heard in good faith. Cf: <http://wikis.la.utexas.edu/theory/page/situatedness> (Last accessed on April 8, 2016)

³ Cf: <http://biblia.com/books/message/Mal3.6> (Last accessed on April 10, 2016)

⁴ NIV (The New International Version) version of translation is „*Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit*”.

⁵ How else can be understood a habit took from Egypt and used as the Yahweh's new Law way of punishment? For example, before even getting the Law from Yahweh on Sinai's mountain (Ex. 20), Moses was afraid that Jews will use this punishment over him, Exo 17.4: “And Moses made outcry unto Yahweh saying, *What am I to do, with this people? Yet a little, and they will stone me.*”

⁶ G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. 49 et.al. See: https://books.google.ro/books?id=znB4gOMlb3AC&pg=PA49&lpg=PA49&dq=stoning+saqal&source=bl&ots=TqZz8XoZ3v&sig=F3EML25Wkh_FNBV7FcK6fs0sLRE&hl=ro&sa=X&sqi=2&ved=0ahUKEwibqcXWrfjLAhVInQ4KHcb_CKUQ6AEIQTAG#v=onepage&q=stoning%20saqal&f=false (Last accessed on April 2, 2016.)

⁷ More about “God Commanded Punishment” from *Talmud* in Carol A. Valentine, “Death Penalty and Talmud Law”, 2003. Cf: http://www.come-and-hear.com/editor/capunish_1.html (Last accessed on April 8, 2016.)

⁸ Barbara A. Somervill, *Empires of Ancient Mesopotamia*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 2001, 114.

⁹ *Babylonian Talmud: Tractate Sanhedrin*, Folio 49a, Soncino 1961 Edition, 332–334. Cf: http://www.come-and-hear.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin_49.html#49b (Last accessed on April 8, 2016)

¹⁰ Geoffrey Robinson, “The *Motif* of Deafness and Blindness in Isaiah 6:9–10: A Contextual, Literary, and Theological Analysis,” *BBR* 8, 1998, 176. Also relate to Torsten Uhlig, *The Theme of Hardening in the Book of Isaiah: An Analysis of Communicative*. See: https://books.google.ro/books?id=9MLo0TP0ShkC&pg=PA7&lpg=PA7&dq=Robinson,+%E2%80%9CMotif,%E2%80%9D&source=bl&ots=LuYx9wQOAAQ&sig=uUCc57XqXIM_3oyDi5jwRLm5xRk&hl=ro&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiD_Je_-ubLAhXFJw4KHQemCk4Q6AEINzAG#v=onepage&q=Robinson%2C%20%E2%80%9CMotif%2C%E2%80%9D&f=false (Last accessed on March 30, 2016.)

¹¹ *The Amplified Bible* (AMP), the first Bible project of *The Lockman Foundation*, 2015.

¹² *The Holman Christian Standard Bible* (HCSB) is a trusted, original translation of God's Word. A team of more than 100 scholars from 17 denominations pursued two ideals with every translation decision: each word must reflect clear, contemporary English and each word must be faithful to the original languages of the Bible, 2009.