

## Relevance of Christianity

Written by W.J.Pais

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HTML clipboard      Every now and then we get some writers writing articles on Christianity and other matters which are held in high regard by the believers. They pretend that they are informing us, ignorant public, who follow matters of our faith from our clergy without questioning them. Somehow they give the impression that they know better and as in the case of Da Vinci Code, they come out with various strategies to debunk the faith built over centuries. When someone writes without showing any detailed historical evidence, and reasons contrary to the beliefs, then one should take his input with a pinch of salt. In any case, those disposed to believe them will do so, as invariably they are the disaffected people. Those who are staunch believers who do not require any theoretical or historical perspective to reinforce their faith, will remain where they are. That is the reason it is very difficult to persuade those who have already made up their mind.

I for one, would like to know that what I believe has a sound foundation in logic and reason. If I trust someone, I should have reason to trust the credibility of the one speaking to me. When fundamentalists interpret the Bible to suit their arguments, I suspect them, as they may either be misguided or have their own agenda. Christ has foretold of false prophets.

Jews and the followers of Jesus Christ had their differences right from the beginning and it was said that Christ was the corner stone which the 'builders' rejected, but no one can deny that he has made greater impression than those who disagreed with him then, and who try to discredit him even to this day, with their writings, their media, their movies and the gullible swallow it and pontificate as if every thing that is rubbish is truth.

### Foundation of Faith.

Faith implies belief. It is a common phenomenon. A child believes its parents and does not question them as there is an implicit trust and the child knows that the parent has no evil intentions and has only his good at heart. In later years may be that child have other opinions, as an adult, implying that his parents were uneducated and gullible themselves. Rather than make a sound attempt to research the beliefs, many throw the baby with the bath. In the same way, a student takes what his teacher teaches as true. In later years he is taught to make his own research and establish the truth of the theories propounded.

If someone who is from NASA were to tell you something about the Space Program, would you question him, or quote him without thinking twice regarding the veracity of what he has said? In fact we quote them again and again and help in disseminating this information. How then can we say, that when the first Christian teachers taught about their faith, the faithful behaved in any different manner than those who follow the writings and teachings of the NASA scientists? How many of us take the trouble to double check what they say? This is the same when we speak of evolution, abortion, gay rights and other subjects which were taboo

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in the past generation. We thoughtlessly follow or reject them, just because we have other views. Let all express what they think and we take them at their word and dissect their findings.

It is this factor that the modern writers attack. They say that our beliefs are founded on inaccuracies. After two thousand years they come out rejecting the past. How much research have they done, and what authority they can provide to inform us that what they say is true ?

It is therefore in our interest to know that we are indeed standing on solid ground. As I mentioned that from the beginning of Christianity there was disagreement between the Orthodox Jews and those who followed Jesus, we have to know how the various events in history were affected by these differences, and how there was an attempt to 'misinform' right from the beginning. Each side had to prove that they did the right thing. If Christ was crucified, it was not the fault of the Jews, but that of the Romans. That is the stand taken by ADL today (ADL stands for Anti Defamation League - an organization of the Jews in America). Since the Jews own the major publications, TV stations, Hollywood Studios in USA and in the industrialized world, they have an edge and are able to carry out the so called re-education of the masses. Those who react to them do so with knee jerk responses.

So first we should start with the chronology of events.

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03738a.htm> is a serious document written by Christian authors which one can read to inform ourselves.

"The first requisite in any system of historical chronology is an era, that is to say a fixed point of time, the distance from which shall indicate the position of all others"

The writer starts his discourse with this statement. So we take the Christian Calendar, and in order to understand how it relates to the time of Christ, one needs to go a little further and understand how to place the various figures of history in the context. The Christian Calendar was introduced about the year 527 by Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian monk resident at Rome, who fixed its starting point in the year 753 from the foundation of Rome, in which year, according to his calculation, the birth of Christ occurred.

His system was adopted but gradually, first in Italy, then in other parts of Christendom. England would appear to have been among the earliest regions to have made use of it, under the influence of the Roman missionaries, as it is found in Saxon charters of the seventh century. In Gaul (present day France) it made its appearance only in the eighth, and its use did not become general in Europe until after A.D. 1000; accordingly in French the term *millésime* was frequently used to signify a date A.D. In Spain, although not unknown as early as the seventh century, the use of the Christian Era, as will presently be shown, did not become general until after the middle of the fourteenth century.

### BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

The date at which the year commenced varied at different periods and in different countries. When Julius Caesar reformed the calendar (45 B.C.) he fixed 1 January as New Year's Day, a character which it seems never quite to have lost, even among those who for civil and legal purposes chose another starting point. The most common of such starting points were 25 March (Feast of the Annunciation, "Style of the Incarnation") and 25 December (Christmas Day, "Style of the Nativity"). In England before the Norman Conquest (1066) the year began either on 25 March or 25 December; from 1087 to 1155 on 1 January; and from 1155 till the reform of the calendar in 1752 on 25 March, so that 24 March was the last day of one year, and 25 March the first day of the next. But though the legal year was thus reckoned, it is clear that 1 January was commonly spoken of as New Year's Day. In Scotland, from 1 January, 1600, the beginning of the year was reckoned from that day. In France the year was variously reckoned: from Christmas Day, from Easter eve, or from 25 March. From 1564 the year was reckoned in France from 1 January to 31 December. In Germany the reckoning was anciently from Christmas, but in 1544 and onwards, from 1 January to 31 December. In Rome and a great part of Italy, it was from 25 December, until [Pope Gregory XIII](#) reformed the calendar (1582) and fixed 1 January as the first day of the year. The years, however, according to which papal Bulls are dated still commence with Christmas Day. .

**Jesus Christ** <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08374c.htm>

Here the authors consider the character of Jesus as manifested first in His relation to men, then in His relation to God. The Incarnation is the mystery and dogma of the Christian Faith.

Thus the belief of Incarnation is something taken by Christians in trust. First in the trust they have in the word of Jesus Christ as propounded by the writers who witnessed Jesus during his life time. Such a belief does not hold up to scientific scrutiny. It comes from the belief that God who is the creator has done so many things in the visible creation, which man still struggles to understand. Reproduction of a species which this Created System can do with all ease, is a monumental task for the petty human to undertake. He brags a lot about creating life in a petrie dish. A God who could make such a magnificent range of things with such detailed organic methodology, could also contemplate creatures which man can not conceptualize. Thus the incarnation falls under such a realm where a deep faith in the ability of the Creator can only explain the nature of this belief. The belief gets re-enforced when one sees in one's own life the results of this faith and miraculous situations from which he comes out unscathed. The believer considers this faith as a gift given by the Creator to those whom he deigns to give. When someone is disposed, he acts within him and enlightens him to see the reasonability of this faith. As people of different faiths seem to have similarly certitude in their own beliefs, this Creator has the power to surpass the situations they find themselves in and depending on their sincerity reaches out to them and does not inform the others what he does. Jesus himself has told his followers not to judge their neighbors, as they do not know what God does in them.

Thus when I try to figure out my own belief, I do not expect others to be convinced in what I say. But perhaps they too will sense the situation and be curious to know further and pray that God gives them a chance to understand the truth, so that they too are assured that they walk on a steady ground and will not stumble and fall. <http://www.newadvent.org/catechism/07706b.htm>

### **Disputes about the Christian Faith.**

The Acts of the Apostles which is a record of events that occurred after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and written by Luke the author of one of the Gospels and a contemporary of the Apostles. Luke was a Physician and an educated Jew. While Josephus the Hebrew historian focused on the history as recognized by the Orthodox Jews, Luke and the other Evangelists wrote what the followers of Jesus believed and the reasons they had to do so. Those who cast doubt on the Evangelists can also do the same on the writings of Josephus the Jewish historian or Pliny the Roman historian. Researchers have their tools to verify the historical veracity of the writings. In this one has to take into consideration the various things that took place in that particular time, and find a link to the motivation of each individual. Romans were the most powerful, then came the Orthodox Jews who were in power in Palestine with whom the Romans interacted and the least powerful were the followers of Jesus, who were ordinary people, the 'ignorant' ones. Now a days, the adversaries of Christianity say, that these 'ignorant' common people

organized a religion like Christianity and it makes one to wonder how they managed it. Christians believe that it was not their work but that of the Creator himself who confounded the wise and mighty. The Babe of Bethlehem, whose parents had no place at the inn, is a standing monument to that fiction.

In the early evolution of the Christian faith, we see the followers of Jesus leaving Palestine to the various spots on earth, where Jews had settlements. Their primary aim was to give the good news to the Jews. They spoke of the Messiah of the Jews. Jews were taken into captivity by the Babylonians, who were the ancestors of the present day Iraqis. They were liberated and sent back to Palestine, by the Persians, the ancestors of the present day Iranians. And the irony of the history of the world is that these very people are now at logger heads with the modern day descendants and the modern day ignoramuses have no idea at all.

These historical tensions have never withered away with the advance of time and it is at the root of the understanding of the modern day historical conflicts and the constant allegations at the stupidity of Muslims and the Christians in their beliefs. The only people who are not tackled among these ancient faiths are those of the Jews. Ever wondered why? Anti-Semitism which the Jews constantly refer to their experiences

in Europe through the time of their dispersal after their banishment in 70 AD is the result of these conflicts, and few people like to go in to it. That is at the root of their quest for a homeland and security amidst hostile surroundings. In the past the European monarchs were their patrons and guardians. Even the Muslim kings and rulers protected them. The Zoroastrian kings liberated them. Today the successors of the British and American Empires are backing them up. All have taken their pound of flesh and that is by way of money in which the Jews have the best mastery.

**If we have to deal with Anti Muslim, Anti Jew and Anti Christian tirades, we have know what happened.**

Up till the time of Christ, the Jews had no competition for their Faith. Jesus Christ brought about a new outlook and his followers accepted Non-Jews as members of their Congregations. The Arabs call it Kanisa, the Jews have their Knesset, and the Latins have their Ecclesia, which translated into English is "The Church".. The Jews prayed in their Synagogues. The main center of worship in Jerusalem was called the Temple. The Romans too called their places of worship as Temples. The Christian place of worship somehow came to be identified as a "Church". Today, the Church is understood to be the living body of the faithful followers of Jesus, and less the building which houses the place of worship. When Christ spoke of building his Church on the Rock named Peter, it was this community of faithful. It was this community who had a head, and that was St. Peter.

This was the vision of Jesus, and it continued to be so , through the centuries, until the Protestants did not accept the successor of Peter, the bishop of Rome as heir head. They replaced him with the "Bible" and as this change was not envisaged by Jesus, they are all supposed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and they truly speak in different tongues and end of creating newer and newer denominations and sects and cults. How God will judge this should not concern us, as He is the only One, who can delve deep into the hearts of their leaders and their followers. Since God is merciful, He has enough love within Him and patience to understand the situation and guide them through their journey.

According to the plan of Jesus, he took unto himself twelve Jews whom people later called Apostles as they were the ones who were the custodians of the path shown by Jesus when on this earth. Those who are not familiar with the Christian history, may find more details [here](#).

The purpose of this article is to inform and not to persuade a change of one's present faith. It is not my job but that of the Creator. He knows best what is good for each one of us. With information we start to understand one another. Half of today's problems are because of engineered information meant to achieve one's national goals of self interest. There is no self interest of humanity as a whole, but the self interest

of individual countries and races. We leave the Creator out of our plans and then enter into mine fields like the hurricane Katrina. Let us build bridges and not destroy what we already have but, not build structures suitable to some in order to make more money.

### **Influence of the Roman Empire.**

Christianity is an off shoot of Judaism. Jews existed in Palestine from the time of Abraham, and as their scriptures show, they were taken into captivity by the Egyptians and were in Egypt for 400 years and they were led into freedom by Moses and settled in Palestine, which according to their beliefs, God had promised them that it would be where they would live for generations. But five hundred years before Jesus Christ, they were taken into captivity by the Babylonians who ruled the present day Iraq. They were liberated by the Persians, the ancestors of present day Iranians. However, soon they came under the influence of the Greeks who ruled them from Syria and their rule was followed by that of the Romans. So when Jesus came, Palestine was under Roman rule.

### **Motivations of the Conquerors.**

Conquerors from time immemorial have waged wars and confiscated lands of the vanquished. It has been an accepted formula to consider these possessions as legally owed to the

Conquering parties. This was possible because of the asymmetrical nature of their individual forces. This led David Hume to claim that there was a link between Rights and Might. Only the mighty had the right and the vanquished were bound into subjugation to fulfill the needs of the mighty.. So it begs the question, as to the reason of the various parties who found it necessary to wage wars and conquer territories.

In primitive times, it was the need to have lands for grazing of their live stocks. Not all movements of population were as a result of wars. Natural calamities like earth quakes, floods and the ice age might have forced people to seek new lands to live in. The early migrations of people from Central Asia to lands to the south, as far as India might have been due to weather changes in the north. With each arrival of a new people, old settlers tended to get displaced and that led to skirmishes and ultimately to wars. In early times the weapons used were primitive until the discovery of the gun powder and that tilted the balance in favor of the people having access to it. The Europeans got the technology from the Chinese, after the visit of Marco Polo to that Land..

The Middle East was predominately populated by the Semitic people until the arrival of the Greeks, Before that the Hebrews moved from Iraq via the north route of Kurdistan, Syria, Lebanon into Palestine. They were pastoral people

and as told in the story of Abraham, lot of negotiation took place during his sojourn in Palestine. He bought a burial place for his wife, from the locals. So the dealings were peaceful. They became violent, after the Jews came back from Egypt. The quarrels were primarily due to the needs arising from the grazing of the sheep and their live stock and from beliefs sustained by their Faith. The land possessed by the Jews was always a bone of contention and the regional powers in Egypt, Syria and Iraq always eyed this land and waged intermittent wars with the Hebrews. In 500 BC they were taken into captivity and when they were finally freed by the Persians, they came under the rule of the Greeks and then the Romans. So it is interesting to study the motives of the Greeks and the Romans.

**Alexander the Great**, Macedonia, went about his conquests as a means of augmenting his power among the Greeks. The Greeks were philosophers and learned people.

### **Romans**

who were originally located in a small area around Rome on the other hand, due to trade, became a maritime force, and to man their ships they got needed man power by subjugating people in the North. They tried to have trade ties with Egypt but rivalries led to war and conquest. Egypt was well connected to Palestine, Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Assyria (Syria) even in those days and so the Romans had to bring these dominions too under their power so that they could have a large market place for their trade. To maintain discipline

within their subjects they followed ruthless methods and punishments were meted out according to their Law. This over bearing attitude was a thorn in the side of the Jews who wanted to get rid of their rule and the Jewish leaders tried to rope in Jesus as he had a large following among the ordinary Jews. He was not interested, He was having a different agenda which the politicians of the day failed to understand and finally events that followed after the crucifixion of Jesus led to their downfall. Jewish wars on 70 AD and 130 AD finally forced the Romans to banish them from that area, and they were able to come back only after the end of World War I.

During the intervening years, the Jews suffered many indignities as they refused to merge with the other people for their religious reasons. The followers of Jesus and the successors belonged to all communities of the Roman Empire and the Hebrew identity was drowned by the majority community and these people came to be known as Christians.

This antagonized the Jews who considered Christians as a schismatic sect and became manipulative. As a consequence the Jews were banished from Europe and in 1897 they set up an movement called Zionism to enable the Jews to return to Palestine.

By this time, the British had managed to acquire dominion of a large part of the Earth and became the greatest Empire after

the demise of the Roman Empire. The British too built an Empire primarily for the trade benefits it gave. To preserve the advantage they too learnt to divide and rule the people which became the hall mark of their rule. The Jews due to their unique situation became famous as bankers and supported trade and were indispensable and this helped them through their Zionist movement to put pressure to get their objectives.

At the end of the Nineteenth Century, Palestine was under the Muslim Ottoman Empire and if the Jews had to get it they had to defeat them and as they could not do it themselves, they used the power of their money and used the forces of the British Empire to do the job. This set a precedent, with both parties scratching one another's backs and becoming inter-dependant. The Ottoman territories in the Middle East were divided into different countries by the British Parliament and the boundaries were set by them to suit their goals of keeping the oil reserves in different countries which they could then control. According to a survey conducted by the BBC the Iraq, Kuwait and Iran boundaries were deliberately contrived to allow the entrance to Iraq by keeping two other countries like Kuwait and Iran from where it could be blocked in case of trouble. This eventually led to the war of 1990.

The two world wars bankrupted Great Britain, and they divested

their colonies and continued to depend on the oil revenue of their Middle East territories. They brought in people from their colonies and gave them jobs and citizenship and rebuilt their industrial might after the war. After the Second World War, USA became a power and benefited from the bankrupt Europe which they managed to re-float with their money which they had generated by the War Industry which flourished as a result of the two Wars. The Jews who were expelled from Germany settled down in Great Britain and USA and used their money to fuel growth, and their political clout. They invested in the various industries that were coming up. They had a hold on the Movie Industry which was very useful for propaganda, as also the Print Media, and later the Television.

Once Jews managed to get back to Palestine, the farmers who tilled those lands for the Turks got displaced as many of the lands had been bought by the Jews from the Turks. The Palestine Arabs had never known any political power all through the centuries, as they were always at the receiving end, first from the Romans and then the Ottomans and now the Israelis. I mentioned before that the Victor and the Vanquished arise because of their asymmetrical power. This may be acceptable for legal purposes, but where emotions are concerned the loser will carry the grievances for generations and when the Victor becomes weak, the Loser will take his revenge and the tables will be turned.

For the general public, it is difficult to understand the compulsions of the US President to fight the losing battle, which is thrust on him by circumstances, manipulation of powers to be, and money power. The reason why the US and British needed Israel in the midst of the Arabs was because the assets (oil) which they needed most for their survival were in Arab Lands and they were lived far away from it. So they needed an Agent who would always be dependant on them for its survival, and both would scratch one another's backs in order to get what they wanted. This is the reason why no US government can go against Israel and Israel can not help it if they want to exist in this land with all these neighbors. The Judaic ideal is isolation from other people, as enjoined on them by Moses. The situation is not very different from what it was 500 years before Christ.

The Asymmetrical power equations force the weaker party to have recourse to unconventional methods not accepted by the Law of the Strong, established over centuries of Conquest.

In my Web News Archived, I am giving various events that are happening on this downward spiral of the power game, which will sooner or later turn the tables and the power balance will shift. Since the opposing sides profess different faiths, the Victor claims Christian heritage, even if they may give lip service to the Faith, and the Vanquished believe in the Islamic

Tradition, which is also a derivative of the Judeo Christian heritage, but uses Arabic as its language of Scriptures. It is being portrayed as a clash of Civilizations. No faith that believes in a merciful God endorses hatred and violence, It is the Military Code of the parties that permits it, the Christians call it Just War and the Muslims call it Jihad. These are philosophical conclusions that evolved later on. It is the compulsion of the human beings who resort to it as a means to an end. after all reasonable avenues have been blocked The stronger party wants the weaker one to succumb, so that the damage can be controlled. Cruelty is a trait found on all sides. You see it in Abu Guraib as well as in Afghanistan or Iraq. Just to use 9/11 as an excuse compounds the problem.

The strong side wants its national interest to be safeguarded without showing any concession to the weak. May be concessions on the terms of the strong. Here comes survival of the fittest, the Darwinian Theory. If that is accepted as principle, then one should take it with equanimity, when the tables are turned and the Mighty becomes the Vanquished and the same treatment or may be worse is applied to them.

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