

+St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church

Antiochian Archdiocese of North America
Metropolitan Saba of New York and all North America
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Dn. Nicholas Adranly

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 01, 2024

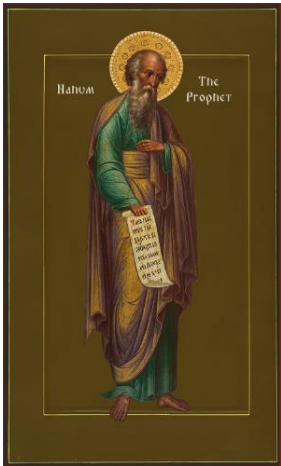
**TONE 6 / EOTHINON 1; TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST &
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE**

THE HOLY PROPHET NAHUM; VENERABLE PHILARET THE ALMSGIVER OF AMNIA; MARTYR ANANIAS THE PERSIAN

The Holy, Glorious Prophet Nahum

On December 1 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the holy and glorious Prophet Nahum.

Nahum was born of the tribe of Simeon in a place called Elkosh on the far side of the Jordan. He lived about seven hundred years before Christ and prophesied the destruction of Nineveh about two hundred years after the Prophet Jonah had warned the Ninevites. Because of Jonah's preaching, the Ninevites had repented, and God had spared them and not destroyed them. In time, however, they forgot God's mercy and again became corrupt. The Prophet Nahum prophesied their destruction, and since there was no repentance, God did not spare them. The entire city was destroyed by earthquake, flood and fire, so that its location is no longer known. The Prophet Nahum lived for forty-five years and entered into rest in the Lord, leaving us a small book of his true prophecies.



On this day, we also commemorate the Venerable Philaret the Almsgiver of Amnia; and Martyr Ananias the Persian. By the intercessions of Thy saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

THE EPISTLE

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, O my God.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (2:4-10)

Brethren, God, being rich in mercy, through His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through the trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you are saved—and raised us up together with Him, and made us to sit together with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He would show the exceeding riches of His grace, in kindness toward us, in Christ Jesus. For by grace you are saved through faith, and that is not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

الرسالة

حَاصِنُ يَا رَبُّ شَعْبِكَ وَبَارِكْ مِيرَاتِكَ. إِلَيْكَ يَا رَبُّ أَصْرُخُ، إِلَهِي.

فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِّيسِ بُولُسَ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى أَهْلِ أَفَسُسَ. (2:4-10)

يَا إِخْوَتِي، إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَكُونَهُ غَنِيًّا بِالرَّحْمَةِ، وَمِنْ أَجْلِ كَثْرَةِ مَحَبَّتِهِ الَّتِي أَحَبَّنَا بِهَا حِينَ كُنَّا أَمْوَاتًا بِالزَّلَّاتِ، أَحْيَانَا مَعَ الْمَسِيحِ - فَإِنَّكُمْ بِالنِّعْمَةِ مُخَلَّصُونَ - وَأَقَامَنَا مَعَهُ، وَأَجَلَسْنَا مَعَهُ فِي السَّمَاوِيَّاتِ فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ. لِيُظْهَرَ فِي الدَّهْرِ الْمُسْتَقْبَلَةِ قَرْبَ غِنَى نِعْمَتِهِ بِاللُّطْفِ بِنَا فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ. فَإِنَّكُمْ بِالنِّعْمَةِ مُخَلَّصُونَ بِوَسِطَةِ الْإِيمَانِ. وَذَلِكَ لَيْسَ مِنْكُمْ، إِنَّمَا هُوَ عَطِيَّةُ اللَّهِ. وَلَيْسَ مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ لِئَلَّا يَفْتَخِرَ أَحَدٌ. لِأَنَّ نَحْنُ صُنْعُهُ، مَخْلُوقِينَ فِي الْمَسِيحِ يَسُوعَ لِلْأَعْمَالِ الصَّالِحَةِ الَّتِي سَبَقَ اللَّهُ فَأَعَدَّهَا لِنَسَلِكَ فِيهَا.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (18:35-43)

At that time, when Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

الإنجيل

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لَوْقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ وَالتِّلْمِذِ الطَّاهِرِ. (18:35-43)

في ذلك الزمان، فيما يسوع بالقرب من أريحا، كان أعمى جالساً على الطريق يستعطي. فلما سمع الجمع مجتازاً سأل: «ما هذا؟» فأخبر بأن يسوع الناصري عابر. فصرخ قائلاً: «يا يسوع ابن داود، ارحمني!» فرجّره المتقدّمون ليسكت، فازداد صرخاً: «يا ابن داود، ارحمني!» فوقف يسوع وأمر أن يُقدّم إليه. فلما قرب سأله: «ماذا تريد أن أصنع لك؟» فقال: «يارب أن أبصر!» قال له يسوع: «أبصر. إيمانك قد خلّصك». وفي الحال أبصر، وتبعه وهو يُمجّد الله. وجميع الشعب إذ رأوا سبّحوا الله.

Love Your Neighbor

December – Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

Leading the fight to end hunger, in partnership with our community and in service of our neighbors in need. We distribute food directly to low-income people at community sites and make food available for other nonprofit organizations serving the ill, needy and infants.

Rose Bake Sale

It is that time of the year for the Christmas Rose bake sale. Ladies: Please contact Denise Dudum at 925 360-3350 and let her know of your special sweets which you will bring for the bake sale, also those who suggested to bring already baked and boxed cookies to also inform Denise. Thanks!

Archdiocese Comptroller Job Posting

The Archdiocese of North America is seeking a full-time Comptroller. Under the direction and supervision of the CFO-Treasurer, the Comptroller shall work closely with CFO-Treasurer and other archdiocesan staff members to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the financial records and reports, as well as lead the day-to-day financial and accounting operations, financial reporting, budgeting, and compliance with applicable regulations. Please share the [job description](#) with anyone who may be interested in applying.

If you have questions about this email, please write to me at communications@antiochian.org. I wish you, your families and your parishes a happy Thanksgiving.

In Christ,

Deacon Peter Samore, Director of Communications Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Upcoming Events

Every Sunday at 7pm	St. Anastasia Fellowship Meeting.
December 8th	General Parish Meeting after Divine Liturgy to entertain the idea of obtaining a loan to finish the fellowship hall.

Coffee Hours

December 1st	Siham Mitry in memory of her brothers, sisters & nephews who have passed away
December 8th	Fairouz Freij in memory of Angel & Emily. Also for the good health of the Freij family and Rania Shuhaiber and family.
December 15th	Rose's Bake Sale – No Coffee Hour
March 2nd	In memory of Sal Freij (20 yr.) May his memory be eternal!

Holy Oblations

This week, Holy Oblations are offered by:

- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Nick Nicola, George Messih, Henriette Hilal and Aida Youakeem**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Sam Nassab**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Fairouz Freij**. Many years!
- † Rocky and Nada Dudum for the good health of **Sandy Dudum Bennett**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **George Wahbeh**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of **Ron Jeha**. Many years!
- † St. John Parish Family for the good health of Yasmeeen Kasouf oh her name's day. Many years!
- † Marina Khalaf and family in memory of **Shawqi Khalaf** (5 yrs.) May his memory be eternal!

Candles for the altar table and in front of the icons of Christ and the Theotokos offered by:

- † Ibrahim Fasheh in memory of Hanada Fasheh for one full year. May her memory be eternal!



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- † Altar Servers: Nathan Sweis, Clayton Morgan, Elias Freij, Angelo Freij, Andrew Freij, Mazyn Haddadin, James Dudum, John Dudum, David Evans, Evan Kawar, Mason Kawar, Jonathan Juha, Maron Juha and Zaiden Karanikola

Building Committee Update:

As discussed in our Parish meeting a couple weeks ago, the Building Committee is actively involved with Petra, our contractor, to determine final costs and schedules to complete the building. Once this information is finalized, it will be distributed to the parish at large.

In the meantime, some work on the building is being completed. This includes the playground fencing, the PG&E electrical transformer along with distribution to the existing buildings on campus, and the stair handrails and guardrails - which are currently being manufactured and will be delivered and installed soon.

At that point, the building fund will have been depleted (as was expected and explained at the beginning of the project 2 years ago), and with the exception of funds raised at the fundraising gala, work will need to conclude until further funds are raised. Again, as discussed at the recent parish meeting, the Parish Council is recommending increasing our loan amount with Summit Bank by \$1 Million. Without this loan, or some other source of funding, work will cease on the project.

The building is close to 90% complete, but the remaining items are critical to the use of the hall, and include, but are not limited to: kitchen, bathrooms, acoustic ceiling finishes, flooring, paint and finalizing mechanical, electrical and plumbing fixtures.

It is important to note, that even with certain changes made to the plans for the betterment of the campus at large, the project is still within budget!

JOLLY CHRISTMAS CARS

DECORATE THE TRUNK OF YOUR CAR FOR ALL TO ENJOY

1 DECEMBER
SUNDAY AFTER LITURGY

BRING A TREAT TO PASS TO ALL THE KIDS

PRIZE FOR THE MOST FESTIVE CAR!

TO PARTICIPATE PLEASE CONTACT: RANIA KASHOU

St. John Financial Snapshot

Year to Date Actual Finances as of 10/31/2024

INCOME	2024 Year To Date	% of Total Income	2023 Year to Date	
Membership Pledges	\$ 129,504	29%	\$ 164,774	-\$35K difference vs. 2023 YTD. -\$20K difference vs. YTD Budget.
Tray Collections	\$ 11,528	3%	\$ 9,534	
Preschool Contribution*	\$ 231,995	53%	\$ 248,081	Includes transfer of preschool net income in October 2022 to date, to support hall loan payments
Crab Feed and Festival	\$ 48,625	11%	\$ 17,166	
Ladies Contribution	\$ -	0%	\$ -	
Other**	\$ 17,520	4%	\$ 18,171	
Total Income	\$ 439,172	100%	\$ 457,725	
Total Expenses	\$ 439,172		\$ 206,145	
YTD Net Income	\$ -	0%	\$ 251,580	

* In addition to the above, preschool payments to the church include \$400 per month to offset expenses paid by the church and \$4,883.33 per month towards the building fund (deposited directly into building fund)

**Other includes bookstore, candles, flowers, palms, coffee hour, memorials, Amazon Smile program, weddings, prior year pledges

Building Fund Balance **\$ 387,236.57**

Those who wish to see the full financial statement should contact Parish Council Treasurer Matthew Simon

St. John Orthodox Church
501 Moraga Way
Orinda, CA 94563

You could use this QR code for your donation



الكتاب المقدس زاد المؤمن، الجزء الثاني المتروبوليت سابا (اسبر)

فما هو هذا الكتاب حقيقةً؟

إنه، أولاً وآخراً، كتاب لاهوت، أيّ كتاب يقدم سرّ الله للبشر بطريقة عمليّة لا نظريّة. فالله، الذي لا يُدرَك سرّه، يكشف عن نفسه للبشر شيئاً فشيئاً، وبطريقة تدريجيّة. يرافق الله البشر بطول أناة مذهلة حتّى يفتح أذهانهم إلى فهمه ومعرفته، كما هو، لا كما يظنّونه. وكثيراً ما أخطأوا (وما يزالون) في فهمه، وألصقوا به أهواءهم وتصوّراتهم مشوّهين صورته وماسخين إيّاه. خطيئة البشر الدائمة أن يجعلوا الله على قياسهم بدلاً من أن يرتفعوا، ليصيروا هم على قياسه. وهكذا ارتضى الله أن يعرّفهم عن نفسه بنفسه مستعيناً ببعض من دعاهم بشكل خاصّ، ونسمّيهم نحن أنبياء ورسلاً. لكنّه بدأ يكشف عن ذاته عملياً عبر مرافقته الجماعة التي اختارها، لكي يكشف شخصه لها. من إبراهيم أبي الآباء وحتّى يسوع المسيح، صبر الله حوالي ثمانية عشر قرناً حتّى تنكشف صورته على حقيقتها أمام البشر، ومع ذلك لا يزالون يريدونه على صورتهم ويحمّلونه أفكارهم وتفسيراتهم.

هو كتاب إلهي إذًا، يتدرّج في كشف حقيقة الله باستخدام الأسلوب البشري، الذي يفهمه البشر الذين يكشف لهم عن ذاته. فإذا تحدّث الكتاب عن التاريخ فلن يظهر عمل الله فيه، وتالياً صفة هذا الإله. ولنأخذ مثلاً على هذا:

عندما يتواجه شعبان في حرب، كانت آلهة هذين الشعبين تشارك في الحرب مع شعوبها، بحسب مفهوم شعوب الشرق القديمة (أليس هذا ما نراه في تفكير الناس الديني حتّى اليوم؟). فعندما ينتصر شعبٌ يُعتبر إلهه الأقوى فتقدّم الشعوب المغلوب العبادّة له. بينما تقدّم الشعب الغالب الشكران. على هذا المنوال، كان شعب العهد القديم يظنّ أنّ الله يحارب معه حينما يغلب، لكنّه، وعكس جميع الشعوب القديمة (وهنا العمل الإلهي في الكتاب المقدّس)، يعتبر أنّ الله إلهه قد تركه بسبب خطايا الشعب، عندما ينكسر في المعركة وينهزم. فعليه، إذًا، أن يتوب ويعود إلى طاعة وصايا إلهه حتّى يغلب ويتحرّر.

هكذا أظهر الله ذاته إلهاً سيّداً للتاريخ. استعمل الله التاريخ مسرحاً، ليكشف عن صفاته عبره. فإذا ما روى الكتاب المقدّس حدثاً تاريخياً، فهو لا يفعل ذلك تاريخياً،

بل لاهوتياً، أي لا ينبغي أن يسجل وثيقة تاريخية في كيفية حصول الحدث، بقدر ما يسجل نظرة دينية للإله الذي يُروى الحدث التاريخي من أجل التعرّف إليه. فبطل الحدث ليس النبي أو الملك أو القائد، بل الله المستتر وراء ما يحدث في التاريخ، لا بل بالأحرى الذي يحرك خيوط التاريخ، ويمسكها كلها بيديه.

وعلى هذا المنوال، يجب أن نقرأ الكتاب المقدّس كرسالة من الله موجهة إلينا شخصياً. رسالة تقول لنا إنّنا محبوبون عنده، وأنّ معنى حياتنا ووجودنا فيه وبه ومعه، وإنّنا مدعوّون إلى إزالة غبار الخطايا المتراكم علينا، من أجل أن نعاين حقيقة الله كما هو.

من اختبر مقدار خطاياها التي تحجبه عن الله، يدرك جيّداً معنى أن يلوّث البشر صورة الله ويشوّهونها. عمل الله المستمر في الكتاب المقدّس كان أن يكشف عن ذاته باستمرار وفي كلّ مرّة، بالمقدار الذي يستطيع الناس أن يعوه ويدركوه، حتى "حان ملاء الزمان"، وانكشف بكليته أمامهم في شخص الابن الوحيد، يسوع المسيح. "والكلمة صار جسداً وحلّ بيننا ورأينا مجده مجدداً كما لوحيده من الآب" (يو ١: ١٤).

الله لم يتمّم هذا الكشف وحده، بمعزل عن الإنسان. أي لم يكن الله هو الفاعل فقط والإنسان هو المتلقّي فقط. بل احتاج الإنسان إلى النمو في معرفة الله حتّى يستطيع الله أن يكشف عن ذاته أكثر فأكثر. هكذا نشأت سياسة تربية أرادها الله لأنها لمصلحة الإنسان. اقتضت سياسة الله هذه رفع سوية الإنسان الروحية تدريجياً. حتّى يصير في المستوى الذي يسمح له بمعرفة الله معرفة حقّ. لم يكن باستطاعة الإنسان الساقط والخاضع للخطيئة والمستعبّد للشيطان والعاجز عن أن يتمتّع بنعمة الله، الإنسان الذي أظلم ذهنه، وانقسم على ذاته وعلى أخيه، وعلى الطبيعة، الذي يحنّ إلى أصله لكنّه لا يعرفه ولا يستطيع الوصول إليه، لم يكن هذا الإنسان قادراً على البدء في السير في الطريق الصحيح. كان الحلّ بيد الله وكانت المبادرة منه.

نداؤه كان إلى إبراهيم أولاً. وهكذا عرف إبراهيم إلهاً يعد ويفي بوعوده؛ عندما وعده بحبل سارة. إنّه إله لا يرضى ذبائح بشرية، بل يطلب عوضاً منها ذبائح حيوانية؛ ذبيحة إسحق (تك ٢٢: ١-١٩). إله يختلف عن غيره من الآلهة. يكمن برّ إبراهيم في أمانته لله. لم يغيّر الله في عادات إبراهيم ومفاهيمه الأخلاقية كثيراً، اكتفى فقط بأن يكون إلهاً لإبراهيم، وأن يكون إبراهيم أميناً له ولتعاليمه. وهكذا عرف الله أولاً بإله

إبراهيم. ثم، ومع نسل إبراهيم، صار إله إبراهيم وإسحق بعد ذلك أضيف يعقوب. وهكذا عُرف بإله آبائنا.

لم يكن الأمر غريباً عن مفاهيم تلك الأيام. فلكل قبيلة إلهها. ولكل عشيرة إلهها. وكثيراً ما كان للعشيرة أكثر من إله. أمّا إله آبائنا، فكان مختلفاً لأنه لا يقبل إلهاً آخر معه. وهو إله غيور، إله لا شيء يحدّه: لا صنم ولا صورة ولا مكان. إله يبادر ويأمر فيطاع. إله يقيم عهداً مع الإنسان ويبقى وفياً لهذا العهد، طالما بادلته الإنسان هذا الوفاء. وعندما ينقض الإنسان عهد الله، وكثيراً ما فعل، ويفعل حتى اليوم، يكون ردّ الله أن يتركه حتى يتوب ويعود إليه، فيقبله سريعاً ويعود إلى التزاماته. ثمّة هدف تربويّ حتى في هجران الله للإنسان وقتياً. علاقة حيويّة وحيّة كهذه لم يعرفها تاريخ الأديان. إله ينادي وإنسان يستجيب. عهدٌ كثيراً ما يترجرج ويضطرب من جهة الإنسان، ومع ذلك يبقى الله بانتظار أن يُصلح مخلوقه التزامات ذلك العهد، حتى يتابع المسيرة معه إلى إتمام الخلاص. إله يصبر ألف وثمانمائة سنة على قساوة الإنسان وضيق أفضقه وجهله. إله كهذا لم يكن صنيعه إنسان لأنّ البشريّة ما كانت قادرة على التفكير في إله كهذا.

The Holy Scriptures: Nourishment of the Faithful, Part Two

By His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

What, in reality, is this book?

The Bible is, first and foremost, a theological book, presenting the mystery of God to humanity in a practical, not theoretical, manner. God, whose mystery cannot be comprehended, reveals Himself to humanity little by little, progressively. God accompanies humans with astonishing patience to open their minds to understand Him as He is, not as they imagine Him to be. Often, people misunderstood Him (and still do), attributing their whims and perceptions to Him, distorting and desecrating His image. The perpetual sin of mankind is to restrict God according to its measure, instead of raising itself to the measure of God. Therefore, God chose to reveal Himself by using those whom He designated, those to whom we refer as prophets and apostles. However, He began to practically reveal Himself through accompanying the people to whom He chose to reveal Himself. From Abraham, the father of the fathers and the father of many nations, to Jesus Christ, God patiently waited over eighteen centuries for His image to be truly revealed to humanity – yet people still want to perceive Him in their own image and superimpose onto Him their ideas and interpretations.

The Bible is, therefore, a divine book, gradually unveiling the truth of God using the style that is understood by those to whom He reveals Himself. If the book speaks of history, it is to show God's work within it, thus revealing His nature. Let us use the following image as an example of this:

According to the understanding of the peoples of the Near East, when two ancient peoples confronted each other in war, their respective gods were believed to take part in the war alongside them – isn't this what we see in the religious thinking of people even today? So, when one people is victorious, their god is deemed as the strongest; thus, the defeated people worship him, while the victorious offer him thanks. In this manner, the believers of the Old Testament believed that God fought on their side when they won; but when they were defeated, unlike all of the other ancient peoples (and herein lies the divine work in the holy scriptures), they understood it that their God abandoned them because they had sinned. Therefore, they had to repent and return to obeying their God's commandments to win and be liberated.

Thus, God revealed Himself as the Master of history. God used history as a stage to reveal His attributes. When the holy scriptures narrate a historical event, they do so

not historically but theologically – meaning that the purpose is not a historical record of the event, but a religious perspective on the God Who is revealed through it. The protagonist of the event is not the prophet or the king or the leader, but God, Who is hidden behind what is happening in history, or rather, moves the strings of history while holding them all in His hands.

In this way, we should read the holy scriptures as a message from God addressed to us personally – a message telling us that we are loved by Him; that the meaning of our lives and existence is in Him, with Him, and through Him; and that we are called to remove the dirt of sins accumulated on us to see the truth of God as He is.

Anyone who has experienced the extent to which his sins conceal him from God realizes well the way in which human beings pollute and distort the image of God. God's continuous work in the holy scriptures was to constantly reveal Himself each time to the extent that people could understand and comprehend until "the fullness of time" arrived, when God fully revealed Himself to them in the person of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14).

God did not complete this revelation independently, apart from man. That is to say, God was not solely the actor and man solely the receiver. Man needed to grow in the knowledge of God so that God could reveal Himself more and more. Thus, an educational program was initiated by God for the benefit of man. This divine program required the gradual elevation of man's spiritual level until it could rightly come to the knowledge of God. The fallen, sinful man, enslaved to Satan and incapable of enjoying the grace of God – whose mind was darkened and divided against himself, his brother, and nature – longed for his origin but did not know it and could not reach it; he could not begin to walk the right path. The solution was in God's hands, and the initiative came from Him.

His first call went to Abraham. Thus, Abraham knew a God Who makes and fulfills His promises, as when He promised him that Sarah would conceive. He is a God Who does not accept human sacrifices, but as seen in the narrative of the sacrifice of Isaac, instead asks for animal sacrifices (Gen. 22:1-19). He is a God different from other gods. Abraham's righteousness lies in his loyalty to God. God did not change much about Abraham's habits and moral concepts, but was content to be Abraham's God, and for Abraham to be merely loyal to Him and His teachings. Thus, God was first known as the God of Abraham. Then, with the descendants of Abraham, He

became the God of Abraham and Isaac, and later Jacob was added. Thus, He was known as the God of our fathers.

This was not strange to the concepts of those days. Each tribe had its god, each clan had its deity, and often a clan had more than one. However, the God of our fathers was different because He did not accept any other god beside Him. He is a jealous God, restricted by nothing: no idol, no image, no place. He initiates and commands, and He is obeyed. He is the God Who makes a covenant with man and remains loyal to this covenant, so long as man reciprocates this loyalty. When man breaks God's covenant, as he often did and still does today, God's response is to leave him until he repents and returns to Him – then He accepts him quickly and resumes His commitments. Even in God's temporary abandonment of man, there is an educational objective. Such a dynamic and vital relationship is unknown in the history of religions: A God calls, and a man responds. Man often falters and disrupts this covenantal relationship, yet God waits for His creation to recommit to the terms of that covenant and resume the journey with Him towards the completion of its salvation. Ours is a God who endured for eighteen hundred years the harshness of man, his narrow-mindedness and his ignorance. Such a God could not be the creation of human beings because humanity was not capable of contemplating such a God.