

## PREFACE

This thesis “**A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE LAWS OF THE BIBLE RELATING TO CRIMES**” is humbly submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Law conforming to the Ph.D. Degree regulations of **ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY**.

What inspired me to attempt this study is the **Bible** itself. Seminal ideas in relation thereto were laid in my heart and soul during the year 2005 when I was invited to an international seminar on Advanced Leadership Training in Evangelism held by the reputed Haggai Institute in Singapore. The seminar lasted for thirty days spanning partly July and August months of 2005. Participants from 31 developing countries took part in the seminar. By then I had received medical treatment of chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma a type of cancer and I was physically weak. Yet I was mentally strong by divine strength. Media reports on the escalation of global crime rate saddened my heart. The words recorded by **Prophet Isaiah 46:9** from the **Bible** flashed through my mind. They are these: “***Remember the former things of old***”. Yes – there is life in these words. When the latest fails – it is good and pleasant to remember life sustaining things of old. The **Bible per se** is a library of **66 books**. It sets me to thinking – how to carve out the criminal laws from the pages of the **Bible**? The **Bible** is not a systematic treatise on the laws of crime though it is a cistern or reservoir of all branches of knowledge.

However, the reference tools like James Strong’s – ‘The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the **Bible**’ and Robert Young’s – ‘Analytical Concordance to the **Bible**’ are found to have been rich resource manuals and

indispensable for a **Bible** scholar. I am no exception. I choose to restrict the scope of the study to the views as they are found in the **Bible** and to what extent they are useful to the people in the world today. Though general reference is made to today's penal codes, it is outside the scope of the study to deal with every aspect of today's penal laws. Sky is the limit for legal research through the **Bible**. It is therefore expedient to confine the scope of the thesis to the original laws found in the **Bible**, of course with general observations as to how they are useful to the needs of the present day society. At the present time legal reform movement is interrupted by modernism, while materialism encroaches daily on the foundational thoughts and wisdom of ancient days.

I have endeavored to cull out the legal knowledge – relating to crimes which is scattered across the pages of the **Bible** – ‘here a little, and there a little’ – and classified into seven chapters. **Chapter-I** deals with a general introduction on the **Bible** and **TORAH** (Hebrew word for ‘Law’) as found in Pentateuch – the first five books of the Old Testament (first of the two parts of the **Bible**) traditionally ascribed to Moses, an important **Bible** character. In this part, I have made an attempt to synthesize the factual data on the **Bible** which constitutes an interesting and stimulating reading. Hundreds of factual details are loaded into it. It is thus a major chapter offering a general introduction on the theme of the subject chosen for research as per the elements stated in the chapter contents.

Then four chapters would follow. They are designed to deal with 4 types of crimes. They are these: 1. **CRIMES AGAINST THE PUBLIC**; 2. **CRIMES OF IMMORAL ACTS**; 3. **CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS**; and 4. **CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY**. Particular crimes under each head are listed based on biblical scripture references. Details of penalties backed by scripture references are added

wherever provided. Thus these four chapters and the introductory chapter make up five chapters.

Thereafter **Chapter-VI** is exclusively set apart for laws pertaining to infliction of Punishments and Damages. Methods of punishments backed by biblical scripture references are added. Finally in **Chapter-VII** summary conclusions and suggestions as a sequel would follow.

One rider may be added. Scripture text references are quoted mainly from the Authorized or King James Version of 1611 of the **Bible** unless otherwise stated. That apart more than 15 different English translations of the **Bible** are used with the sole purpose of supplying clarity. These versions are enlisted towards the end of the introductory chapter.

In this humble attempt, care had been taken to the best of my ability. However, it is open to future scholars to make further in-depth research towards developing legal studies, in other branches of law, from the biblical point of view.