PREFACE

The history of human rights is a history of human struggle for human dignity, liberty, and security for decent living, and to alleviate human suffering in the world. The existential roots of human rights can be found in different cultures of the world, thus making human rights relevant to human suffering all over the world. The human rights which are encapsulated in ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ were accepted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10th December, 1948 CE.

The ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ has traversed successfully for sixty years, transforming societies, influencing judiciary, and legal systems all over the world. The ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights,’ has responded to the aspirations of different sections of the society, especially in the context of intense and widespread human rights violation. Various attempts are made to provide cultural legitimacy to the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights,’ to make it more appealing and acceptable in different cultures of varied philosophical thoughts and religious beliefs. Consequently, in the present research, an attempt is made to investigate how the major ethical teachings in the Bible support the concerns expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, the research is
limited to selected passages in the select books of the Bible that represent different genres of books in the Bible.

The First chapter presents the overview of origin and development of human rights. It also delves into the key debates of contemporary human rights discourse. The chapter also highlights the significance of the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ and grapples with the debates and challenges for the implementation of the same. The Second chapter deals with human rights violation across the world, highlighting on human rights violation in authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. In addition, the chapter discusses human rights violation due to racial discrimination, international terrorism, ethnic cleansing, and forced displacement.

The Third chapter is focussed on human rights violation in contemporary Indian context, underlining the human rights issues concerned with the ‘Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes’. This chapter discusses the human rights violation of ‘Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes’ in socio-economic and political arenas. The Fourth chapter delves into the ethical values inherent in the legal codes of the first five books of the Bible, commonly called as ‘Pentateuch. Based on the literature of the
Pentateuch, the chapter surveys the early history of Israel and its society, in which the legal codes of Pentateuch were developed and institutionalized.

The Fifth chapter discusses the rise of monarchy in Israel and abuse of monarchical powers and consequent prophetical judgment on ethical conduct of the monarchs. This chapter also discusses the ethical values inherent in the teachings of prophets in prophetical books- Isaiah and Amos. In addition, ethical maxims in the books of proverbs are examined.

The Sixth chapter explores the ethical teachings of Jesus presented in the New Testament of the Bible. In addition, this chapter examines how the social ethics of Old Testament reverberates in the teachings of Jesus. It also attempts to study how Apostle Paul supplements Jesus’ teaching on love towards fellow human beings. The Seventh chapter summarizes the discussion of all the chapters, and attempts to examine to what extent the ethical teachings of selected books of the Bible endorse the concerns expressed in the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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