



Research article

## MIGRATION IS THE CORE OF THE GOSPEL

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Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.54513/BSJ.2022.4105>

### ARTICLE INFO



**Article history:**

Received 14-02-2022

Accepted 18-03-2022

Available online: 31-03-2022

**Keywords:**

*Migration, Gospel, Middle East, Church.*

### ABSTRACT

Bible is enriched with migratory stories. The salad pages of the Genesis of the Bible expose the story of the Migration of Adam and Eve from their divinely granted habitat, and the closing pages of the Book of Revelation restore man from the migratory phenomenon.

This article proposes to enhance how the spiritual community comprehends the modern challenges of the migrant world, especially with Middle East migration. This paper adopts an Interpretive Phenomenological Approach (IPA) where the experience can be a source of information providing detailed examinations of personal lived experience.



“Migration is not only a social reality with profound implications but also a way of thinking about God and what it means to be human in the world, which can become an important impetus in the ministry of reconciliation and a compelling force in understanding and responding to migrants and refugees”.<sup>1</sup>Daniel Groody

## Introduction

The modern migratory world presents both embarrassing and amazing reports. As per the world migration report of 2020, the following are some general facts of modern migrations. During the last two years, migration and displacement events increased, and it caused great hardship and loss of life. In addition, millions of people forcefully choose Migration due to religious conflict or severe economic and political instability. Several studies have explored the genotype and phenotype reflection towards the migration issues.

Nevertheless, the church and spiritual community should not exclude the migrants and their life issues from the main stream’ biotic activities. Therefore, this article proposes to enhance how the spiritual community comprehends the modern challenges of the migrant world, especially with Middle East migration.

## General reasons for Migration

There are many reasons for Migration, and this work evaluates the major elements of both voluntary and involuntary Migration and its socio missional impact on the Middle East contact and how far the ecclesiastical community on this truce land fruitfully has involved in the sufferings and life’s struggles of the ‘betterment seekers’.

Planned migration/relocation and displacement have been the result of environmental and climate change. Climate and weather-related hazards triggered the relocation as of 2018 and 2019. <sup>2</sup>The people's migratory nature is highly pampering by globalization and international opportunity for skilled laborers, resulting in modern scientific advancement. The number of international migrants is estimated to be almost 272 million globally, with nearly two-thirds

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Groody, “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees,” Theological Studies 70, no. 3 (2009): 642.

<sup>2</sup> McAuliffe, Marie Dennison and James, Khadria (editors) World migration report 2020, International Organization for Migration. [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr\\_2020.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf), accessed February 11, 2022, p.2.



being labor migrants—3.5% of the world’s population<sup>3</sup>. Of course, the flying nature for crossing the horizons is the genuine desire of the men and women but still, “96.5% are estimated to be residing in the country in which they were born”<sup>4</sup>. The report states that “52 percent of international migrants were male; 48 percent were female 74 percent of all international migrants were of working age 20–64 years. India had the largest number of migrants living abroad (17.5 million)”<sup>5</sup>.

## **Theology of Migration.**

“Gulf countries have some of the largest numbers of temporary labor migrants in the world. Driven by oil wealth, GCC countries have undergone remarkable economic development over the last few decades, drawing both skilled and semi-skilled workers to various sectors, including construction and maintenance, retail and domestic service”<sup>6</sup>. However, the significant flow of all kinds of labor to the Middle-East; Bible-believing community's response needs a solid theology, which can spread its wings towards humanity, a civilization of love, and a culture of life.

## **Theology includes the poor**

Migration theology for the Middle East context-oriented towards the marginalized temporary migrant laborers. Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxis have found their absolute meaning when the life of theology meets with Depression. Alister Mc Grath; notifies that “In fact that God is on the side of the poor lead to further insight: the poor occupy a position of especial importance in the interpretation of the Christian faith. All Christian faith must begin with the view below “with the sufferings and distress of the poor”<sup>7</sup>. The above statement must be an added guideline at the time of construction of the migratory theology.

## **Class distinction**

Whether the unskilled, semi-skilled, or skilled, the secular interpretation behind Migration is the monetary motive. Even though all the migrants are in the same boat; the motivation of

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.p.3.

<sup>6</sup> MarieDennison McAuliffe, Khadria James, and International Organization for Migration Binod, *World Migration Report 2020*, 2019, 83, [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr\\_2020.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Op,cite McGrath,90.



embracing the temporary Migration is life betterment; it is embarrassing that the armed chair clergy, Middle and upper-class emigrants have the sole control over the so-called administration. The low waged are excluded from the day to day business of the church, which has the similarity with the Dalit ecclesiastical life in India as Peniel Rajkumar quoting in his *Dalit Theology and Dalit Liberation: Problems, Paradigms, and Possibilities*; Nora and Godwin Shiri, “the infiltration policy culminated in the formation of a fractured Christian community where Dalits remained largely a marginalized group: ‘This resulted in a dualism manifested in many ways: ... Upper caste converts were being given places of prominence, offered opportunities including leadership positions’”<sup>8</sup> which is found factual but as in the form of the class instead of caste. They have no bargaining power anywhere.

### **Bridging theology**

The lacuna of a common platform for the common cause leads to disunity and weakens the mission. The church needs to restore its identity, and migratory theology may serve as the morning star for the diaspora Christian sojourners. All functions, which includes the administration of spiritual church without declaring solidarity with the poor, needy, marginalized, oppressed, and downtrodden of the society; which is misfunctioned and churches are aloof from its divine and genuine call that is compromised with the world from her God-given mission. T.F Torrance warns the church about the “vulnerable to corruption and distortion through an improper immersion in the world—and immersion which could compromise its God-given mission”<sup>9</sup>. A theology with migration sense and essence keeps the spiritual community running the race in the divinely orchestrated track and for Torrance church identity and its ministry closely interlinked. “He found that the church was placing its identity in the way it did ministry, in its method for doing ministry”<sup>10</sup> or on the other hand, ministry reflects the identity of the church.

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<sup>8</sup> Peniel Rajkumar, *Dalit Theology and Dalit Liberation: Problems, Paradigms and Possibilities*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2016), 29, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315575803>. (32<sup>nd</sup> Foot Not)

<sup>9</sup> “Thomas Forsyth Torrance | Christian History | Christianity Today,” accessed July 3, 2021, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/theologians/thomas-forsyth-tf-torrance.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



## Old Testament theology of Migration.

Abraham is an exemplary example for a novice to learn the practical and series of complexities of a migratory journey. The migratory nature becomes intensive when external living conditions pressurize someone. Abraham's life and experiences of leaving his homeland to journey among strangers. When his wife Sarah dies, Abraham tells the Hittites, "I am stranger and an alien residing among you; give me property among you for a burying place, so that I may bury my dead out of my sight" (Gen. 23:4 cf. Heb 11:13). Abraham's migratory journey was divinely observed, providing an inclusive insight of all the sojourners on this diaspora.

## Foreigner, Stranger. Alien, Migrant.

Distinct words and phrases are used in the Old Testament to denote the migration status. For example, Sojourner, temporary dweller foreigners, and foreign residents are the words to point out people from another country.

Anna Barnau; explains three different words to identify even the micro distinction.

1. *noḵrî* -the foreigners are excluded from worshipping Israel's God, especially eating the Passover (Ex 12:43).

2. *gēr* who "in reality had also come from afar, but has severed the connection with his former country" and attempts "to become a member of the new community. (Gen 23:4)

3. The term *tôšāb*, which is often translated as "stranger" or "foreign resident," describes a person who originally came from some other land and has become resident in Israel (Lev 16:29, 17:8-6, 22:18)<sup>11</sup>

God's divine concerns and generosity to the strangers exposed throughout the page of the Old Testament "You shall not wrong or oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex 22:20; 23:9) is an exemplary example for it which is an exhortation to the Bible-believing community also.

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<sup>11</sup> Anna Barnau, *Exodus, Migration, Borders: Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Migration*, ResearchGate

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330245355\\_Exodus\\_Migration\\_Borders\\_Biblical\\_and\\_Theological\\_Perspectives\\_on\\_Migration](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330245355_Exodus_Migration_Borders_Biblical_and_Theological_Perspectives_on_Migration), accessed on February 2022.p,



Old Testament gloriously imparts eschatology and hope through the prophets of God that He orchestrates the secessions of alienation and through the divine guidance and Zion placed as the destination where the eternal joy and bliss without otherness or rather feeling of ownership. “But the Lord will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their land, and aliens will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob” (Is 14:1).

History is the record of past events. Wolfhart Pannenberg; argued that the future comes to the present through Christ, and Israel expected further fulfillment. “Eschatologically oriented insofar as Israel expected further fulfillment based on the promise and beyond all historically experienced fulfillments”<sup>12</sup>. The ultimate revelation of the glory of God will be only at the end, in the eschatological future of the world, which will reveal God as loving Creator<sup>13</sup> is the final and culmination of Migration.

## Migration and Christ Event

We need a systematic migratory theology since the Middle East is the largest migratory nest from almost two hundred nations. One of the identifying natures of science is systematically arranging the knowledge, and theology is considered the queen of science; since it studies the revelations on God, who is the source of knowledge. “In whom are hidden the all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col.2.3). The Christian understanding of God is not the source of knowledge only, but He created a new Anthropology, Soteriology, and glorious Eschatology through His son Jesus Christ’s Migration to this earth and stauris event. For Groody, “For me, theology is not simply about “faith seeking understanding” (St. Anselm) but also about generating knowledge born of love. Migrants, for the most part, do not care what I know but want to know that I care<sup>14</sup>—the above statement guide an insight towards the theology of Migration.

<sup>12</sup> Pannenberg, “Redemptive Event and History,” in Basic Questions in Theology, Collected Essays, trans. George H. Kehm, vol. 1, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), 15-80, 23.

<sup>13</sup> Op.cite, Anna Barnau, *Exodus, Migration, Borders: Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Migration*.

<sup>14</sup> Groody, A Theology of Migration: A new method for understanding a God on the move | America Magazine, <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/763/article/theology-migration,accessed> on february 2022.



## History of Migration.

Jonathan Y. Tan; *Migration in Asia and Its Missiological Implications: Insights from the Migration Theology of the Federation of Asians Bishops' Conferences (FABC)* begins the Asian migration history with nomadic tribes. For him;

The phenomenon of Migration in Asia has a long, varied, and complex history stretching back thousands of years. Beginning with the nomadic tribes that wandered the vast expanse of the Asian continent in search of water and grazing lands, the trade caravans that traveled on the famed Silk Routes across vast stretches of Asia, and the invading armies that displaced peoples and communities from their ancestral lands, Migration has always defined the Asian continent in every age. While nomadic tribes and trade caravans have come and gone, large-scale Migration continues unabated in Asia<sup>15</sup>.

## Temporary Status

The old caravan trade route modernized with the fastest mode of transportation and flying nature of man voluntarily choose the Migration is the visible reality of this age. Middle East countries are the easy and feasible destination for the Indian unskilled laborers. The Middle countries largely use the Indian workforce for nation-building. The evergreen dreams accelerate Migration, and the unique nature of the Middle East Migration status is 'temporary'.

## Health is wealth, and if health is lost?

Participant-1 leaving home for good after twenty-seven years of migrant life. "I am from South India, and long twenty-seven years I worked as labor now I am unfit for the employer, so I am leaving"<sup>16</sup> Middle East has thousands of stories of 'use and throw' culture which is an unattended life struggle of Migrants where the spiritual community of the diaspora should not come bypass. The observation of Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan in their Introduction: *Migration and Christian Theology* found meaningful "however, Christian churches are still

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<sup>15</sup> Tan, Jonathan Y. *Migration in Asia and Its Missiological Implications: Insights from the Migration Theology of the Federation of Asians Bishops' Conferences (FABC)* Mission Studies, p.46.

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a6h&AN=ATLA0001903476&site=ehost-live>

<sup>16</sup> participant, 1.



far from achieving an adequate understanding of and a comprehensive program for migration”<sup>17</sup>.

## Etymology of term

The term “migration,” from the Latin *migrare*, is used in this volume to refer to any movement<sup>18</sup>. This is its primary understanding, but in its wider application, the term conveys the primary meaning of crossing the boundaries for betterment seeking for a long time, even maybe with no return status. Elaine Padilla and Peter C; placing a wider suggestion which includes temporary or permanent, voluntary or forced, of individuals and groups which have various impacts for them, “whether temporary or permanent, voluntary or forced, of individuals and groups of people crossing territorial boundaries. Migration in this sense is directly linked with globalization because of its international effects, though it also impacts the national and local sectors of society”<sup>19</sup>.

## Chasing the Dream

Various reasons penetrate for Migration worldwide. The migratory nature is penetrated by inspirational stories like economic or social reasons. Modern education largely facilitates scientific invention, fueling Migration. The rainbow colors of the migratory stories through fiction or film and other social relations make the wings of dreams come true.

The last decade witnessed a large amount of Migration due to civil or any other war. Religious reasons also elevate the breadth and width of forceful Migration.

Indians’ migration Gulf countries, at the bottom level; economic reasons. *Gulf migration study: employment, wages, and working conditions of Kerala emigrants in the United Arab Emirates*, the author's present push and pull factors for people seeking the temporary status in the Middle East. “Reasons for Migration can be explained by push and pull factors behind the migration process. A combined effect of these two factors created a favorable situation to

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<sup>17</sup> Padilla, Elaine and Phan, Peter C. Introduction: Migration and Christian Theology.p.2.

[https://www.google.com/search?q=migration+theology&rlz=1C1CHBF\\_enAE853AE853&oq=migration+theology&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i22i30.5809j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=migration+theology&rlz=1C1CHBF_enAE853AE853&oq=migration+theology&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i22i30.5809j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8). Accessed 2021-November.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



move the workers from Kerala to the Gulf countries”<sup>20</sup>. The major push factor is unemployment in the land of origin, and wide employment opportunities even for the unskilled laborers are the pull factor to the gulf migration<sup>21</sup>.

## **The unique feature of the gulf migration**

The epistemology of this paper experienced basis, and without experiences, any science is meaningless “we should never forget that our knowledge of the world, including our scientific knowledge, arises from a first-person perspective, and that science would be meaningless without this experiential dimension”<sup>22</sup>. A phenomenological exploration of experience would assist in intruding into the other side of Oasis.

## **Culture of Silence**

Middle East countries are structured on a religious basis where the religious Holy book directs human rights. The system muted any social involvement of political parties like democratic countries. The public appearance of any Pressure, Peer Groups, Lobbying, Political parties is ineffective or inactive in its practical spectrum. Feedback system seldom entertains any suggestions towards the discussions making.

Cairo Declaration on Human Rights is the final word on human rights, and its source of interpretation is the religious data’s is the scenario of Middle East nations. “The major purpose of our migration to this country is win bread and not on politics and western countries grading freedom but restricting the permit to enter like financially poor and not well qualified”<sup>23</sup> is the common explanation for their silence. For participant 1, the presence is not mandatory, but once we are here, we must obey the nation's rules, and we are here for the job<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Zachariah,k., Prakash,B.A.,Rajan,s,i., *Gulf migration study : employment, wages and working conditions of Kerala emigrants in the United Arab Emirates*,p,1.

paper/Gulf-migration-study-%3A-employment%2C-wages-and-of-in-Zachariah-Prakash/f13015837162b66b0f76f8f32cfcd8bc04d0056, Accessed on 2021-May

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>22</sup> Groenewald,Thomas; *A Phenomenological Research Design Illustrated*,p,664.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/160940690400300104>, Accessed on 2021-March.

<sup>23</sup> Participant.3.

<sup>24</sup> Participant,1.



## Investor-Friendly

Cairo Declaration of Human Rights is theocentric and placed God and His words at the beginning as the source of rights. “All human beings form one family whose members are united by their subordination to Allah and descent from Adam”<sup>25</sup> and placing Shariah as the final authority of interpretation of human rights. “All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic Shari'ah”<sup>26</sup>. Culture of silences largely promoted both legitimately and politically where the system highly observes social harmony and mutual respect. Any protest, strike, or lockdown is a serious offense to the nation and will bring immediate legal consequences, making the nation investor-friendly. The rigid nature of the law and its judicial executions are making the employee and employer conscious about their rights and duties.

## Youthful labor market

“Experience in migration and the loyalty of the migrants to their employers may have provided further opportunities for their kin and kith to obtain employment in the Gulf regions”<sup>27</sup> is the right observation on the job security. The employer's favor and benevolence are the assurance of job security. The administrative systems of the state adopted certain rigid measures for job security. The majority of the labor market workers are young blood due to the nature of the work. Sound health needs to maintain the complete target that the job provider assigns. To accommodate with extreme climate and bear the work pressure of the Middle East, maintain a sound physic hard nut to crack. Here the comment of the participant,<sup>3</sup> is the voice of mass “the food which serves are may not necessarily meet the vitamins to maintain the minimum health, but the youthfulness enables us to continue it, and I know after the age of forty or above the deficiency become the Willian of our health”<sup>28</sup>. The migratory society is generally aware of its health status due to its working culture.

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<sup>25</sup> Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, Aug. 5, 1990, U.N. GAOR, World Conf. on Hum. Rts., 4th Sess., Agenda Item 5, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.157/PC/62/Add.18 (1993) [English translation]  
<http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instate/cairodeclaration.html>, Accessed on 2021-September

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Op.cite. *Gulf migration study: employment, wages and working conditions of Kerala emigrants in the United Arab Emirates*, p.2.

<sup>28</sup> Participant,3.



## Hybrid Christian leadership

Middle East Christian leadership has a multi-focal lifestyle since most entrepreneurs employ them. Pastoring or being a Christian leader is the extra mile, and serving two masters is the hybrid nature due to the residency permit and other legal formalities. Here employer and church are the two masters, which is an oxymoron. The assigned workload from the employer and feeding the flock are the major concerns of the leadership in this context. Traffic congestion meeting the need of family and church are the pressure hiking agents in the migratory life. Enthought during all the life issues, it is right to state that God chooses one to bear the blessing to another. The particularity of choice reflects both the personal character of God and the social character of a human being.

## The Role of Migratory Church

The terminology ‘missionary church’ became prominent and central to ecclesiology in this temporary migration context. Understanding the church and its mission was based on the work of Jesus and taking into account the work of the Father and the Spirit. The mission of Christ and the church in the context of the work of the Triune God. Understanding, the church is missionary by its very nature. The mission is not one of the many tasks of the church. The mission is not secondary to its being. Rather mission is essential to the church’s being. Diaspora missionary identity in terms of three ends, first one about God, second about the Migrants life and the final one is to the world.

The Bible believes the community should have a ‘shock absorber’ role since the church has social duties to perform. Elaine and Peter observe that the general attitude of the Christian leaders towards the migrants is true even though the Christian leaders of the Middle East are migrants. “The majority of church leaders have been slow in recognizing how the migrants have changed the face of Christianity worldwide and devising ways to meet the manifold challenges of Migration. Officially, mainline churches have begun to address the issue of migration”<sup>29</sup>. Here a Migrant Theological ethnography demands to emerge from the heart, and the head of the spiritual community and its reflection will enhance the life of migrants.

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<sup>29</sup> Op,cite. *Introduction: Migration and Christian Theology*,



### **‘Migration’ is the Core message of the Gospel**

A migrant theology that is contextually formed can substantially contribute and serve as the foundation of mission activities. The basic idea of Migration can widely communicate the incarnation of The Word of God. Daniel G. Groody rightly stated that “In brief, my theological method is based on the Incarnation—the belief that God migrated to humanity so all of us, in turn, could migrate back to God,”<sup>30</sup>.which is the core of gospel message, and it emits the glorious hope to this depressed and tensioned mind.

Does the church have any role in diaspora church life?

Around one-fifty nations gather for a common cause, winning the bread.

The church is the foretaste of heaven and salt of the earth. So, it is inevitable to be partakers in the nation-building processes. Therefore, the church must prepare and motivate its members to contribute divine wisdom to nation-building's great endower.

### **Migration theology of the diaspora Ecclesiastics.**

Ontology of Ecclesiastic should not spare the migration theology since the human life issues are inseparable mission agenda of church life. Exploitation and oppression are tangible realities in the diaspora world. Favoritism, nepotism, discrimination, partiality have variant forms which remain unaddressed since the culture of silence is legitimized expectancy from the migrants. Therefore, the church must be the spokesperson and voice of the voiceless since the church does not withdraw herself from work for the total welfare of all humanity.

The church is the carrier of hope for the depressed world since the church is the body of Christ. Therefore, the church must exercise its prophetic role in the world and function as the conscience of society. This involves proclaiming God’s concern for the poor and the marginalized and warning them against all forms of an oppressive system and any exploitation. The church is the manifestation platform for God’s precepts of love, peace, justice, equality, compassion, service, and sacrifice and where equality and human dignity are honored.

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<sup>30</sup> Daniel G. Groody; *A Theology of Migration: A new method for understanding a God on the move* | America Magazine, <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/763/article/theology-migration>. Accessed on 2021, September.



The church has a significant role for the social transformation as Loder, James, commented in 'Educational Ministry in the Logic of the Spirit' "in the church, when socialization structures can no longer protect the people under oppression, the relational reality of Christ reconstitutes and empowers the convicted congregation to be more than they ever were before"<sup>31</sup>. Churches are not only the agent of the transformation; moreover, the watch and ward of social evil and diaspora spiritual community need to perform this duty more vigilantly since the observation of Padilla and Phan is sharply taken place where the investors are profit motive.

We face multinational corporations that can increase production and financial gain using low-wage labor either in or from developing countries. Those with the power to purchase these forms of cheap labor stand to benefit the most. They are granted permission to use and abuse human and nonhuman resources<sup>32</sup>. The low-income group is marginalizing, and their voices are feeble enough to draw the attention of the politically conscious. The unceasing invigilation on migratory matters does matter in social, economic, and anthropological attire.

### **Migration can be a signboard**

In their 'Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology', Padilla and. Phan, quoting Daniel Groody, how the Migration helps the migrants recollect the divine part. "Migration is not only a social reality with profound implications but also a way of thinking about God and what it means to be human in the world, which can become an important impetus in the ministry of reconciliation and a compelling force in understanding and responding to migrants and refugees"<sup>33</sup>. The phenomenological exploration exposes those thousands of souls who encounter their Creator due to the hardships and stiffness of the migratory life. God has his ways, and he generously granted multiple ways to the life of the people, and wilderness experiences are one among them as Hosea 2.14 says, "Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her".

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<sup>31</sup> Loder, James E. . Educational Ministry in the Logic of the Spirit (p. 212). Cascade Books, an Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers. Kindle Edition.

<sup>32</sup> Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan, *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, Christianities of the World (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 3.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid,5.



From interviews with immigrants, the overseas lives become active agents in the divine revelation and redemptive plan more than churches' strategized mission or evangelism plans. Diaspora Christian commonality of the Middle East blessed with testimonies of divine encounters. The presence of proper and well-defined migration theology will reflect in the mission life of the churches as Stephen B. Bevans comments, "A theology that responds to the challenges of migration needs to create a new culture, be prophetic, and offer a loving witness to the Christian faith and life of God"<sup>34</sup>.

International Christian theological platform needs to address the present absence of solid theology with mission reflection. But unfortunately, the existing evangelism and mission life is more on 'embargo' due to the "tolerance nature' towards the other faith by the religious consciousness of the Middle East.

### **Authorities for the formation of Migration theology**

Theology is understood to be primarily a descriptive discipline concerned with exploring the normative foundations of the Christian tradition, which are meditated through the scriptural narrative of Jesus Christ<sup>35</sup>. And McGrath continues that truth can be, at least in part, equated with fidelity to the distinctive doctrinal traditions of the Christian faith<sup>36</sup>.

Both statements enable to extract the following authorities

Christian tradition, scripture. Faith and doctrine of the church. The essence of the law and culture need to configure alone with the testimonies.

Several studies have taken place on the role of churches in a migratory land. Do churches have any role? Yes, the church was never excluded from social issues at any age and time. Churches are important spaces for migrants beyond the religious aspect, providing symbolic resources for positive self-identification and opportunities for interaction with others and crucial services<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 8

<sup>35</sup> McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Wiley – Blackwell, London, 2011, p.93.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> "The Importance of Churches in Migrant Experiences | MIGRANTCHRISTIANITY Project | Results in Brief | H2020," CORDIS | European Commission, accessed February 14, 2022, <https://cordis.europa.eu/article/id/242295-the-importance-of-churches-in-migrant-experiences>.



The law of the land granted the range of churches in the life of the Middle East is constrained only on the spiritual issues of the migrant's life. Therefore, the horizon of the church's freedom is limited inside the premises of the church building, which is the primary fact that needs to be honored when analyzing the role of the church in the life of the migrants in the Middle East context. But the church's role is to adopt the Christlike attitude of humility as Jurgen Moltmann narrates Gutierrez's concern for the church, which is relevant all the time within any frame of reference.

### **Migration theology, salt with the saltiness**

“Gutierrez is urging the church to adopt the Christlike attitude of humility. Our interest here is what Gutierrez says about Christ. The formula seems to be: Jesus, who is God, identifies with man's sinful condition and thus enters into solidarity with the oppressed, and that this is a redemptive (liberative) mechanism”<sup>38</sup>.

If the church lost its Christlikeness, it would have the equal grade of salt loss its saltiness. “Salt is good, but how can you make it salty again if it loses saltiness? Therefore, have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other”- Mark 9:50, (NIV) here the Master Jesus Christ assigning his community to be at peace with each other.

Anxiety, Depression, exploitations, hopelessness, peace lessness, loneliness, oppression, work pressure are some of the major psychological concerns of the temporary migrants. The specific ways in which migrants are incorporated into post-industrial labor markets and affected by unemployment are central to their experiences of marginalization and prospects for social mobility<sup>39</sup>, and here the church has to perform its Christ-like role to intrude into the life of people since Christ community bearing Christ who is the hope of glory (Colossians 2;14)

### **Conclusion**

It is important that every age understands and redefines what Christian mission means for their time and age in their context. The theology of Migration underwent redefinitions throughout the history of the church. With a large population living in the culture of crossing borders, the experience of Migration has shaped the world today. The presence of solid

<sup>38</sup> Jurgen Moltmann, “The Vindication Of Christ: A Critique Of Gustavo Gutierrez, James Cone,” N.D., 16.

<sup>39</sup> Op.Cite., The Importance Of Churches In Migrant Experiences



migration theology can examine mission ecclesiology elaborating the relation of the church to the mission of God, its nature and calling, and its religio-cultural context. 'Formation of a Migration theology for the Middle East diaspora Ecclesiastical community will be a call to rethink the Middle East context's Missiology, Eschatology, and church practice.

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