English

إنجليزي

My Great Love for Jesus Led Me to Islam

حبي العظيم للمسيح عليه السلام قادني إلى الإسلام



Simon Alfredo Caraballo
A. Mary. A

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Mercy@myloveforjesus.com
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Simon Alfredo Caraballo

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A. Mary. A

Abridged Edition

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sam@myloveforjesus.com

myloveforjesus@hotmail.com

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Contents

Introduction	4
My Experience in the United States of America	9
The Gospels	14
The Authenticity of the Qur'an	23
The Life and Mission of Jesus	58
Prophet Muhammad	68
Doctrines of Christianity and Islam	86
The Trinity	87
The Divinity of Jesus	91
The Divine Sonship	101
The Original Sin	102
Islam: The Monotheistic Religion of All the Prophets	110
My Final Step toward Islam: The Influence of Jesus on My Conversion	115
How Islam Affected My Life	118
How My Conversion Affected Others' Lives	126
When Religion Is Inculcated by Compulsion	129
An Open Invitation to the Pope and Other World Leaders	138
Appendix – Comparison Chart	142

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Introduction

As a Catholic, I was led to believe that Catholicism was the only true religion and that Judaism was only a preparation for Christianity. Hence, the other religions were all false. In fact, I only heard about Islam for the first time in 1978. I had learned that Muslims believed in the divine origin of Christianity and Judaism. The Qur'an indicates that Allah (the proper name of God in the Arabic language)[1] had sent prophets to every land in

[1]"Allah" is the same word that Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews use for God. It is a unique word grammatically, since it does not have a plural form or a gender (i.e., masculine or feminine), which is consistent with the Islamic concept of God. Allah, who is worshipped by Muslims and who commands all mankind to worship Him alone, is the same God mentioned in the Old Testament, whom the Jews erroneously call Jehovah (יְהוָה) even though Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did not know Him by this name, as in Exodus 3/6. He is also the same God mentioned in the New Testament, whom the Christians mistakenly call the Father. He is indeed the One, True God whose Lordship, Divinity and His beautiful names and glorious attributes have been confirmed by the holy books which are sanctified by more than 4 billion people (namely, the Qur'an, the Old Testament and the New Testament), even though these books, with the exception of the Qur'an, mention things which do not befit Him. The corresponding Aramaic form is Elah (אלה), but its emphatic state is Elaha (אלהא). It is written as ܐܠܗܐ (ʾĔlāhā) in Biblical Aramaic and ܐܲܠܳܗܳܐ (ʾAlâhâ) in Syriac as used by the Assyrian Church, both meaning simply "the True God". Biblical Hebrew mostly uses the plural (but functional singular) form Elohim (אלהים), but more rarely it also uses the singular form Eloah (אלוה). (see, *NIV Compact Dictionary of the Bible*, Douglas, p. 42) According to *Aramaic Lexicon*, we find that Word Number 904 is pronounced AaLah, which refers to the name of the One, True God. This is confirmed in the manuscript of the *Aramaic Peshitta Translation of the Holy Bible*, which dates back to 400 CE. It is also confirmed in the Biblical Texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran, as well as in the *Gospel of Judas*. Renowned Hebrew theologian Adam Clarke stresses that the Arabic word "Allah" is the very word from which the Hebrew word for God (אלה, Elohim) is derived. This name is still being used by Muslims as well as Arab Christians and Jews and pronounced by them in the same manner, as in Daniel 3/26, 4/2, 4/17, 6/20, 6/25, 5/18, 5/21 and 7/25. However, this name is not retained as it is in its original form. Even though names must not be translated, this particular name has been translated as The Most High God. To illustrate, we read in Daniel 6/20, "

" וכמקרבה לגבא לדניאל בקל עציב זעק ענה מלכא ואמר לדניאל דניאל עבד **אלהא** חיא אלהך די אנתה פלחה־לה בתדירא היכל לשיזבותך מן־אריותא".

order to guide people to the path of truth and righteousness.

In order to carve the Christian message into the depths of my subconscious, the Catholic Church designed a program which, when applied from childhood, had a very high probability of retention. This program affected people's beliefs and their behavior for the rest of their lives. In this scheme the central figure is Jesus, and the rites are mostly related to events surrounding his birth, supposed death and resurrection; from his birth, assumed to be in December, to his alleged crucifixion on Easter. These religious rites were introduced by human beings many centuries after Jesus' departure rather than by divine revelation.

According to tradition in Venezuela, at midnight on December 24th I used to wait for the arrival of Jesus to bring the gifts that I had requested in my yearly wish list. Being from a poor family and having several brothers and sisters, I understood that it was very difficult for the "Child Jesus" to bring me what I had asked for. But I was often confused and puzzled because if

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(And when he came to the den, he cried with a grieved voice unto Daniel: and the king spoke and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the **living God**, is your God, whom you serve continually, able to deliver you from the lions?) *Strong's Hebrew Dictionary* Number H427 matches the Hebrew (*'allah)*, which occurs 1 times in 1 verses in the Hebrew concordance of the KJV. American theologian, minister and writer Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843 – 1921) confirms this fact in *Scofield Bible Reference*, which he authored in collaboration with eight leading theologians. In fact, numerous Biblical texts stress the importance of knowing and understanding the name of God. These include Isaiah 52/6, **"Therefore my people shall know my name."**; Psalm 91/14, **" … I will set him on high, because he has known my name."**; Isaiah 12/4, **"…Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his deeds among the people, make mention that his name is exalted."**; and Exodus 20/7, **"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain."**; John 17/6**. "I have manifested your name unto the men..."**; John 17/26**, "And I have declared unto them your name,.."**); Mathew 6/9, **"Hallowed be your name."**; Acts 15/14, **"Simeon has declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name."** Prophesies of Jesus of the coming of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon them both, include, **"For I say unto you, you shall not see me again, till you shall say, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 23/39)**

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Jesus had performed so many miracles, as I had learned from nuns and priests, why was he not able to bring me a tricycle? Wasn't that request easier for Him than bringing dead people back to life? Thus, for several years the concept of the "Child Jesus" left me disappointed.

As Easter was approaching, I used to watch televised stories of how Jesus was abused until he was allegedly put on a cross to be crucified. I really wanted to climb inside the TV set and help him somehow. I asked God to help him and not to let His "son" be crucified. In the end, I would hide and cry because I was taught that "men do not cry". I could not understand why such brutality was inflicted on such a good man. As a child, this incident cultivated in me an intense love for this great prophet of God. As for other children, perhaps the toys they received on Christmas – as an answer to their wishes – was the cause of their affection toward Jesus.

If the objective of the Church was to somehow infuse a feeling of reverence for Jesus, in my case they were successful. I learned to love Jesus more than my own parents. However, while still a child, I started to question the power of God. The concept that I had about God was that He could do whatever He wanted. He had created the universe, the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, and human beings. I wondered why He could not save Jesus from dying on the cross. In order to resolve this dilemma, I climbed, on one occasion, a small wall in the backyard of my house and challenged God, or so it seemed to me, saying, "If You are really so powerful and can do whatever You like, then make me fly when I jump from this wall. Otherwise, I will not believe that You are so powerful because You could not save Jesus from the cross either." Fortunately, the wall was not so high and I fell to the ground. With every attempt to fly I became more and more convinced that God was not so powerful after all. A childish analysis indeed!

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When I started high school, my parents allowed me to work with a photographer, a man whom I accompanied to many places. It turned out that he was also a very famous fortuneteller. Wherever we went, many of his female clients asked him about events that would happen in their future. For this task he used to smoke brown tobacco, and as it was being consumed and the ashes fell, he would "reveal" information to his clients. I also learned that he used to hypnotize people in order to learn hidden things about their lives and would then respond to their queries.

All of these experiences were stored in my subconscious at a very early age. During this period, my parents were attending a center that specialized in parapsychology, a field of study concerned with the investigation of paranormal and psychic phenomena. I accompanied them several times to see what was happening, and it was in this center that I learned about the concepts of meditation, spirits, possession and what I thought was dead people speaking to the living.[2] Here I learned to pray twice daily at a small altar that my father had built with great care and dedication. At one of the gatherings I attended, the leader of the session prepared a talisman for me, which he said would protect me, so I took it with me wherever I went.

Meanwhile, I continued to think about the alleged crucifixion of Jesus. At the time, my father had a book that he read frequently. It was entitled *The Life of Jesus Dictated by the Lord Himself.* He once told me that according to this book, Jesus had traveled to places away from Jerusalem, which made me a little optimistic about finding an answer to my question regarding his crucifixion.

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[2]The dead do not actually talk to the living. In fact, the devils imitate the voices of the dead and communicate through the living. It is noteworthy that praying to Allah and reciting the Qur'an and some of the supplications of Prophet Muhammad are all very effective in exorcising evil spirits, by Allah's leave. The fact that any Muslim can do this provides clear evidence as to the miraculous nature of the Qur'an. What happens when those who claim they can exorcise demons by reading out words from the Bible or any other book or by calling upon other than Allah—even if those called upon are some of God's prophets, such as Muhammad and Jesus, peace be upon them—is that this is no more than an agreement with those evil spirits or seeking the assistance of other demons to exorcise them.

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When I graduated from high school, I was awarded a scholarship to study engineering in the USA, which I happily accepted. However, before traveling in 1977, I had a bad experience that negatively affected my belief in Christianity. I saw two Christian men helping another man who was undergoing an epileptic seizure on the street. After that, they searched his wallet and stole some of his money.[3] It is true that individual acts cannot be considered a criterion whereby to determine whether or not a religion is true and that these men do not truly represent that type of the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) who are honest and trustworthy,[4] but this incident affected me deeply. Perhaps this event might seem insignificant to many people, but I had seen my father punish my brother severely when he once brought home the equivalent of twenty-five cents he had found on the street and failed to provide him with a satisfactory explanation as to where he had brought it.

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[3] Biblical texts clearly forbid stealing and other evil acts, as in the Ten Commandments: **"And God spoke all these words, saying, 'I am the Lord your God… You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above… You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God… You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain… Honor your father and your mother… You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife… nor anything that is your neighbor's.'"** (Exodus 20/1-17) These texts constitute a section of the Bible that is in line with the Qur'an; however, their impact on people's lives has almost vanished due to the existence of other texts in the Bible that clearly contradict them. God, in His infinite mercy, revealed the Qur'an, His final revelation to all mankind, to confirm the truth of whatever there still remains of earlier revelations and to determine what is true therein.

[4] Allah Almighty describes that type of the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) who are honest and trustworthy as follows, **"And among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is he who, if you entrust him with a great amount [of wealth], he will return it to you."** (Qur'an 3/75)

My Experience in the United States of America

In 1977, I arrived in the United States to begin my university studies. First, I had to go to a school to learn English, and there I met many people of different beliefs from various parts of the world. At an English language school in Seattle, Washington, I had a roommate by the name of Fouad from Saudi Arabia who was doing his master's degree. One day he asked me if it was all right for him to pray in the room. I told him that I did not have a problem with that at all. I was surprised, since it was the first time I saw a Muslim perform his prayers. Before engaging in prayer, he performed ablution. He washed his hands, rinsed out his mouth, cleaned his nose, washed his face and forearms, wiped his head and ears and washed his feet[5] in the small sink in our room. It was the first time I had seen someone wash his feet in a sink which was meant for washing the hands. Then I observed the movements of his prayers. He stood up, bowed, resumed the standing position and prostrated. At that point I remembered how we used to pray in the church by only kneeling down, but what Fouad did was different. A short while later, he left the institute, and for several months I did not see another Muslim pray.

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[5]Islam attaches great importance to the issue of cleanliness. For example, it considers cleanliness of one's clothing, body and the place where one intends to perform prayers, in addition to making ablution, prerequisites for the validity of these prayers. Ablution is also recommended before recitation of the Qur'an and before going to bed. Washing the entire body is an obligation after sexual intercourse and is a commendable act before attending the Friday congregational prayer. Islam commands such acts as washing the mouth, brushing the teeth, trimming the nails and the moustache, removing pubic and armpit hair, wearing perfume, keeping public places clean and removing harmful objects from the way of others. It also prohibits polluting public places, such as shady areas, roads and water sources, and consuming filthy foods or those animals that consume them, such as pigs. In fact, it considers all this acts of worship that are bound to bring one nearer to God and for which one will receive divine reward. No other religion comes anywhere near Islam as far as cleanliness of the body and the soul is concerned.

During recess at the English institute, foreign students from various countries used to meet and discuss a variety of topics. I clearly remember that on one occasion, as we were discussing the origin of religions and prayers, I told them, "You pray the way you do because that is the way your ancestors used to pray." I went on to tell them that their ancestors used to worship the sun, the moon and the stars, and since then that tradition has been transmitted through all the generations up to the present. I had even started to have doubts about the origin of belief in God. However, due to my deep Christian roots, I did not become an atheist.[6]

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[6] It is well known that most naturalists believe in God, contrary to what atheists attempt to make others believe (See, for instance, *50 Nobel Laureates and Other Great Scientists Who Believe in God*). In fact, numerous present-day leading advocates of atheism have abandoned atheism altogether. These include renowned English philosopher Professor Anthony Flew, who led the global atheist movement for more than half a century. After turning eighty, Flew published his 'spiritual' autobiography, *There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*, in which he stated that he declared his belief in God based on the facts reached by modern science and based on cogent evidence. Francis Sellers Collins, an American physician-geneticist noted for his discoveries of disease genes and his leadership of the Human Genome Project, also abandoned atheism. His works include *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*, a bestselling book in which he advocates theistic evolution. Renowned Paul C. Vitxz, a one-time atheist, declared his belief in God in his famous book *Faith of the fatherless: The Psychology of Atheism*. In one of his statements, he said, "I assume that the major barriers to belief in God are not rational but—in a general sense—can be called psychological. I do not wish to offend the many distinguished philosophers—both believers and nonbelievers—in this audience, but I am quite convinced that for every person strongly swayed by rational argument there are many, many more affected by non-rational psychological factors." John Paul Sartre, a French philosopher, playwright, novelist, political activist, biographer, and literary critic, as well as one of the key figures in the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology and one of the leading figures in 20th-century French philosophy and Marxism, also abandoned atheism shortly before his death. French writer and philosopher Voltaire, who also was an atheist, said before his death, "I die adoring God, loving my friends, not hating my enemies, and detesting superstition." In his book *On the Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin writes, "Another source of conviction in the existence of God, connected with the reason and not with the feelings, impresses me as having much more

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weight? This follows from the extreme difficulty or rather impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man with his capacity of looking far backwards and far into futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity. When thus reflecting I feel compelled to look to a First Cause having an intelligent mind in some degree analogous to that of man; and I deserve to be called a Theist." Richard Dawkins, the world's most notorious atheist, admitted he did not know everything, and therefore allowed for the possibility that he was wrong. In a TV interview, he said he was less than 100 percent certain of his conviction that there is no creator and admitted he could not be sure that God does not exist. Atheists do not have evidence to prove God does not exist. They only conjecture, as the Qur'an (45/24) states, **"They say, There is nothing but our life in this world: we die, we live, nothing but time destroys us. They have no knowledge of this; they only follow conjecture."** The burden of proof falls upon the one who denies the existence of God and not upon the one who believes in Him. If a group of people see a watch in a forest, they will surely admit it has a maker, and thus anyone of them who denies this will bear the burden of providing evidence to prove his claim. Therefore, atheists, and not the faithful, are required to produce evidence as to the non- existence of God. Sir Fred Hoyle, an English astronomer and cosmologist, primarily remembered today for his contribution to the theory of stellar nucleosynthesis, once noted, "The chance that higher life forms might have emerged in this way is comparable to the chance that a tornado sweeping through a junkyard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein." It is strange indeed that atheists deny the existence of the Creator when they did not witness their own creation nor that of the heavens and the earth. As the Qur'an (18/51), **"I did not call them to witness the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor in their own creation. I do not seek the aid of those who lead people astray."** It also says, **"Allah brought you out of your mothers' wombs devoid of all knowledge, and gave you ears and eyes and hearts, so that you may give thanks."** (16/78) Modern science has dealt successive blows to atheism after the confirmation that the universe has a beginning and the collapse of the theory that matter is real and eternal following the promulgation of the Big Bang Theory and the second law of thermodynamics; the rise of the Intelligent Design (ID) movement which pointed out various deficiencies in the theory of evolution and undermined theories upheld by atheists; the clear evidence of the expansion of the universe; and the existence of the soul, as has been scientifically proven by Wilder Penfield, the founder of the Montreal Neurological Institute and one of the greatest neuroscientists who ever lived, among other scientists. the discovery of DNA and its complex nature, has also undermined atheism, in addition to the recognition that proteins and other cellular subcomponents all possess exceedingly complex structures, proving the impossibility that such structures emerged after inanimate and unconscious atoms came together by chance to form such complex structures. Paleontology has also proven the hollowness of atheism and the concept of its principle and so has the anthropic principle, the philosophical consideration that observations of the physical universe must be compatible with the conscious and sapient life that observes it. The more science progresses, the more evidence of the existence of the Creator increases, which clearly refutes the atheists' erroneous notions they are propagating.

One day I went to visit a mosque and I observed many people praying the same way that I had seen Fouad pray previously. After the prayer they all remained seated on the floor to listen to a sermon. Since the rest of the people were sitting, I joined them and listened to all that the *imam*, the man who leads the prayer in the mosque, had to say. His name was Jamil Abdur-Razzaq from Iraq, and he was talking about backbiting in English. I remember that his voice was high-pitched and emotional. As he spoke, he looked around the audience as if somebody had spoken ill of someone else, but he did not point out anyone specifically. I think his objective was to instill a feeling of guilt in those involved in backbiting.

That same day someone sent me an envelope with some booklets comparing Islam and Christianity. It took me a long time to read them, as I was then busy starting as a freshman at Oklahoma State University. It was through the comparative booklets that I learned that Islam and the message of Jesus were both revelations from God. Jesus said that the message he was conveying was not his but God's: **"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak."** (John 12/49) Likewise, the revelation that Prophet Muhammad conveyed to the rest of humanity was sent by God through Angel Gabriel: **"Truly, it is revelation sent down by the Lord of all the worlds. The Faithful Spirit (i.e. Gabriel) has brought it down upon your heart [O Muhammad] that you may be of the warners."** (Qur'an 26/192-194)

Therefore, the truth of every religion and the proof of its divine origin depends fundamentally on the accuracy with which the original revelation from God was preserved and transmitted to the rest of humankind. The level of deviation and uncertainty depends on the degree of precision with which every word

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revealed to the prophets was transmitted to others. If these words have not been accurately transmitted and have instead suffered adulteration, it is highly likely that the essence of the original message would be lost forever. Consequently, in order to make a just and unbiased comparison between Christianity and Islam, it is necessary to determine the extent to which the original Gospels and the Qur'an have been kept free from adulterations, additions or deletions. And because the objective is to convey the truth to the esteemed reader, and considering that, at times, a personal account of events does not appeal to some people, what follows in this book is a brief comparison between Christianity and Islam – the two most influential religions in the world with the highest number of followers from all races and nations, and the two most closely associated faiths. After that, I will go on to narrate events from my personal experience. I hope that, by the will of God, this book will assist seekers of truth in their search for the true religion.

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The Gospels

The Gospels provide an account describing the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which were written by a number of people based on what they had heard about him or on information which was available to them about him. While there is no conclusive evidence, rumors have always circulated that the Canonical Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which came to be accepted as part of the New Testament, were written between 70 CE and 125 CE, and biblical scholars are not generally agreed regarding this. "Before 140 A.D.," we read in the introduction to the French New Testament, p. 9, "there was, in any case, no account by which one might have recognized a collection of evangelic writings." Some scholars of textual criticism of the New Testament mention that the Gospels were written in the second century based on oral traditions and some documents which were later lost. Then they were attributed to famous people who were not the actual writers of the Gospels in order to win people's approval. These were preceded by Paul's Epistles and the Q document. The first written gospel was the Gospel of Mark,[7] followed by the Gospel of Matthew[8] and then by the Gospel of Luke,[9] commonly known as the Synoptic Gospels because they include many of the same stories, often in a similar sequence and in similar wording. It is obvious that the authors of Mathew and Luke had Mark's work open in front of

[7] According to Dennis Eric Nineham, a British theologian and academic, there is no one with such a name who was in close relationship with Jesus or was famous in the First Church.

[8] Professor Herring denies St. Matthews authorship by saying, "The Gospel of Matthew was not written by Matthew but rather by individual who had chosen to remain anonymous for some reason." Faustus, a Manichean bishop who wrote towards the close of the fourth century, seems to have been the only one in ancient times who denied St. Matthews's authorship, by saying, "Matthew did not write that Gospel." Saint Williams hold the same opinion and so does Le Pere Didon in his book *the Life of Christ*.

[9] When reading the introduction of the Gospel of Luke, it seems very clear that he is not really claiming to be inspired by God or anything. Dr. Bacon, *American Journal of Theology*, Jan. 1918, denies the authorship of Luke and is more skeptical about the primitive character of the source or sources lying behind chapters i-xiv.

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them when they wrote their versions, a fact easily established by comparing the texts. Mathew incorporates about 90% of Mark, and Luke retains over 50%. Matthew and Luke have other material in common that does not appear in Mark. German bible critics have posited the existence of a Q document to which they must have had access. The M document, a hypothetical textual source for the Gospel of Matthew, is that special material of the Gospel of Matthew that is neither Q-source nor Mark. Luke also took for his sources a collection of material called the L (for Luke) source. John's Gospel,[10] which is generally considered to be the last of the four canonical Gospels to be written, reflects a Christian tradition that is different from that of the other gospels.

The Gospels were composed after the first followers of Jesus had been divided into several sects. It can be confirmed that they were written in order to reflect the conceptions of their respective writers. Although traditional sources were used for writing the Gospels, the writers, who only cared about their personal interests, did not exercise great care to keep the original content free from additions, deletions and other forms of corruption. This fact was confirmed by numerous Christian authorities[11] and even mentioned by the Qur'an over 14 centuries ago.

Therefore, the four Gospels, in addition to the Epistles and the Old Testament, for that matter, were not divinely inspired. Rather, they were written by unknown people, on uncertain dates and in unknown locations, even though they were in large part based on a real historical nucleus of divine revelation.

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[10] This John is not John the Apostle. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica,* which was co-written by 500 Christian scholars, "As for the Gospel of John, it is undoubtedly fabricated."

[11] According to *Encyclopedia Britannica,* "Important intentional changes, such as the insertion and addition of whole paragraphs, took place…" vol. 2, pp. 519-521. In the introduction to the *Catholic Bible*, p. 13, it is stated that the copyists had clearly inserted things over the centuries that were not part of the Scriptures, and as a result of that the text that we have now has reached us pregnant with all kinds of corruption, which is manifest in all copies. Also, in the preface to the *RSV,* produced by 32 Christian scholars backed up by 50 consultative bodies, we read, "Yet, the King James Version has grave defects…and these defects are so many and so serious…"

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It is worth mentioning that the four Gospels were not the only documents written in the centuries following the departure of Jesus. There were many others, which were recognized by some Fathers of the Church, such as the Gospels of Jacob, Peter, Thomas, Philip and Barnabas, in addition to the Gospel of the Hebrews, a syncretic Jewish-Christian gospel which survives only as brief quotations by the early Church Fathers. This was written in Aramaic, the same language spoken by Jesus and was used by the Nazarenes who denied his divinity and considered him no more than a great prophet. In the fourth century CE, the Gospels According to Mark, Matthew, Luke and John were included in the body of the main Biblical text, and the Church declared the remaining existent documents heretical. However, additional changes continued to be made in these Gospels even though they had already been declared to be "the Word of God". As years passed by, the same Gospels appeared with different texts from their predecessors, which is undisputed evidence of the kind of corruption affecting these books. A simple comparison between the Douay–Rheims Bible, published in 1582, and King James Bible, published in 1611, for instance, would conclusively show the great changes that have taken place. Subsequent publications show yet numerous changes.

The following are some of the many factors to be considered when analyzing the veracity of the Four Canonized Gospels and the authenticity of the Epistles that came along with them:

1. The original Gospel as was revealed to Jesus and is mentioned in the Qur'an[12] as well as in the contemporary Gospels does not exist today.[13]

2. The first records about the sayings of Jesus which were made shortly following his ascension to Heaven have been lost.

3. The Gospels were written between 70 and 115 CE, decades after Jesus' departure, and were based on lost documents. As a consequence, there was a loose manipulation of the content.

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[12]God said about Jesus **"...And We gave him the Gospel, in which was guidance and light."** (Qur'an 5/46)

[13]**"Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the whole world, what this woman did will also be spoken of as a memorial to her." (**Mark14/9 and Matthew 26/13) Therefore, whoever wishes to learn about the original teachings of Jesus should read the Qur'an.

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4. None of the Gospels' authors saw Jesus or heard him speak. Hence, they were not eyewitnesses.

5. The Gospels were written in the Greek language, while Jesus spoke Aramaic.

6. The present Gospels and most of the Epistles were not chosen and validated until the fourth century CE, when a resolution by a minority of the Council of Nicea was enforced in 325 CE. Before this date the Gospels did not have any canonical authority and were changed by writers of different sects in order to comply with their personal interests and desires. Up to the present day, the practice of tampering with the text is still prevalent.

7. The largest part of the New Testament is composed of the writings of Paul and his students. Paul, who never saw or heard Jesus speak, was initially one of the most prominent enemies of Jesus' ministry. He killed many followers of the Messiah and imprisoned them (Acts 8/3, 9/1-2) He afterward forced them to confess to lies against Jesus (Acts 26/11) However, when Saul (later called Paul) supposedly converted, **"he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles."** (Acts 9/26-27) This event occurred after Paul claimed that Jesus appeared to him and spoke to him on the way to Damascus. He bore witness for himself[14] without presenting any evidence establishing the truth of his claim. (Acts 9/3-8) Surprisingly, he suddenly became the chief spokesman in the name of Jesus, claiming that he was appointed by Jesus to preach to the world. (Acts 9/3-6)[15] Paul also accused those who "believed not that he

[14]There was no eyewitness to support Paul's claim. Testifying on one's own behalf is not valid and is rejected by the Bible itself. As John 5/31 states, **"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true."** Besides, there are many other contradictions in the various versions of the narrative. For example, in Acts 9/7, **"And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one,"** while in Acts 22/9, we read, **"But they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me."** With this baseless claim that has no evidence to support it, Paul managed to achieve what he could not achieve by force.

[15]According to 1 John 4/1, **"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."** Paul himself admitted lying in his preaching, **"For**

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was a disciple" of erring concerning the faith. (1 Timothy 6/20-21) He described Barnabas, who had been good to him, as **"carried away with their hypocrisy."** (Galatians 2/13) Paul even gave himself the right to propagate teachings that were contradictory to those taught by Jesus Christ and went against "the law" which Jesus came to fulfill.[16] (Acts 21/20 and Romans 7/6) Thus, we find: **"And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him."** (Acts 19/30) He also declared: **"All those in Asia have turned away from me."** (2 Timothy 1/15) and **"No one stood with me, but all forsook me."** (2 Timothy 4/16)

8. The oldest Biblical manuscripts we have access to are Codexes Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus, all dating back to between the 4th and 5th centuries CE. The extent of alteration to which the Gospels were subjected prior to these dates can hardly be determined, considering that the language of the Gospels was Greek while Jesus spoke Aramaic.

9. There are many discrepancies in several places between the fourth and fifth century manuscripts.[17]

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if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory; why am I also still judged as a sinner?" (Romans 3/7)

[16] According to Matthew 5/17-18, Jesus said, **"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."** Paul sought to gather round himself as many followers as possible, even if this was at the expense of the pure teachings of Christ or his way of propagating the truth which he adopted at all costs and under all circumstances. Paul himself confesses to horrendous acts of cheating, lying and deceit to achieve his purposes. In 1 Corinthians 9/19-23, we read, **"For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you."**

[17] Some Biblical scholars point to the existence of thousands of manuscripts from the Gospels, but what is the true value of these manuscripts if amongst the thousands we cannot find two that are identical?! According to the *International Translation of the New Testament,* "All the versions of the New Testament that reached us were not similar."

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10. The Gospels, seen as a whole, together with the Epistles, contain many errors and contradictions.[18] There is also great uncertainty among Biblical scholars as to who the authors of the Gospels actually were.

These facts are mentioned here as evidence that the Gospel of Jesus as revealed by God has not reached us in its original form. In this way, it can be affirmed that the four Gospels included in today's Bible and the Epistles that accompany them can in no way be similar or equivalent to the Gospel revealed to Jesus. As proof of this assertion, the following information is presented.

The New Testament, on which modern Christian doctrines rest, has undergone radical changes and almost every new edition differs from the others. Some of the changes that are now being implemented are so fundamental that they strike at the very foundations of Christianity. For example, the only two references to the ascension of Jesus that were found in the Gospels of Mark and Luke have now been deleted from the *Revised Standard Edition,* 1952. These passages contained evidence cited to support Jesus' ascension as follows: **"So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God."** (Mark 16/19) **"Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven."** (Luke 24/51) The aforementioned verse from Mark 16/19 has been removed along with a number of other verses that immediately preceded and succeeded it. As for Luke 24/51, the words, **"carried up into heaven"** were removed.

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[18]The numerous errors contained in the Bible led Robert Kehl-Zeller to say in his book *The Authenticity of the Holy Bible* that no other book ever suffered as many changes, errors and corruptions as the Holy Bible. This is in clear contrast to William Muir and Laura Vaglieri's statements about the Qur'an.

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In Matthew 16/27-28, we read, **"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."** As this prophecy never came true, it can only be concluded that it was a fabrication ascribed to Jesus Christ who was a true prophet of God and whose prophecy cannot be mistaken.

The Gospel of Matthew contradicts itself on the same page when talking about Peter: **"Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you… That you are Peter… And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'"** (Matthew 16/17-19) Matthew 16/23 stands in total contrast to all this, as it states, **"But He [Jesus] turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.'"**

Concerning the alleged crucifixion events, Matthew 27/44 says, **"Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing."** Here the two thieves are mentioned as acting together. However, Luke 23/39-40 states, **"Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, 'If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.' But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?'"** In the latter example, the two thieves are not acting together; rather, they are in opposition to each other.

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Changes, alterations and contradictions are found not only in the New Testament but also in the Old Testament.[19] For example, in 2 Kings 8/26 we are told, **"Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king."** This contradicts 2 Chronicles 22/2, which states, **"Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he became king."** Another contradiction found in 2 Kings 24/8 is, **"Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months."** when compared to 2 Chronicles 36/9, which states, **"Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days."**

2 Samuel 6/23, which says, **"Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death"** clearly contradicts 2 Samuel 21/8, which reads, **"So the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite."**

In the *New Standard American Version* of 1973, the name *Michal*, as in 2 Samuel 21/8, which appears in both *King James Version* and the *New World Translation* of Jehovah's Witnesses, was replaced by *Mirab* to conceal the contradiction. Addressing the issue of seeing God as stated in both the Old and New Testaments, John 1/18 tells us, **"No one has seen God at any time."** This is also confirmed by 1 John 4/12. However, Genesis 32/30 tells a different story: **"And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: 'For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.'"**

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[19]The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, known informally as Vatican II, (1962-65) admitted to the existence of errors in the Old Testament: "Now the books of the Old Testament, in accordance with the state of mankind before the time of salvation established by Christ, reveal to all men the knowledge of God and of man and the ways in which God, just and merciful, deals with men. These books, though they also contain some things which are incomplete and temporary, nevertheless show us true divine pedagogy." In *Providentissimus Deus* "On the study of Holy Scripture", issued by Pope Leo XIII on 18th November 1893, we read, "It is true, no doubt, that copyists have made mistakes in the text of the Bible." It remains to be said, then, that confession is the best evidence.

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Strangely enough, this is also confirmed by Exodus 33/11, which says, **"So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend."** And in Exodus 24/9-11, we are told: **"Then Moses went up, also Aaron… So they saw God, and they ate and drank."**

We also read in John 3/13, **"No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven."** This again contradicts Genesis 5/24, which states, **"And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him,"** as well as 2 Kings 2/1, which reads: **"And it came to pass, when the Lord was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind..."**

Thus, was it only Christ who was taken up to heaven or Enoch and Elijah as well? Additionally, there are numerous conflicting versions of the Old Testament (Hebrew, Greek, Samarian, etc.) whose authors are in many cases unknown to Biblical authorities. The same situation applies to "the great majority of authors and editors of the books of the Bible, who were presumed to be God's representatives by their people and were also anonymous," according to the French version.

Islam's position relative to the Bible is one of fairness and unbiased judgment. It views the Bible as clearly a book that contains some truth and that some falsehood has tainted its noble origin. The Islamic criteria for distinguishing truth from falsehood are the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (*Sunnah*). In simple terms, whatever contents of the Bible that are in agreement with the Qur'an and *Sunnah* are acceptable, and whatever statements contradicts them is rejected. Other statements in the Bible are neither accepted, nor rejected. As for the original scriptures that God revealed to His prophets, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus, among others, a Muslim must have firm belief in them, as doing so is among the pillars of faith; otherwise. He is not considered a Muslim.[20]

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[20] See Bart Ehrman, final statement on the reliability of the Gospels. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sacqnmc9jfA.

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The Authenticity of the Qur'an

The Qur'an, the final scripture God revealed to humankind over 1,400 years ago, has stood the test of time and remained unaltered and free from any human omissions and deletions that have crept into other scriptures. This is to confirm God's promise to preserve it against any form of corruption. As the Qur'an (15/9) says, **"It is We Who have sent down the Reminder (i.e., the Qur'an), and We will certainly preserve it."** Indeed, the version of the Qur'an we find in Makkah and Madeenah, is the same version that is read anywhere else in the world, whether in Africa, America, Europe, China, India, the desert, jungles and in faraway islands. It is also the same version that that is broadcast on TV and on the radio around the globe.

This final divine message was revealed to Prophet Muhammad during a period of almost twenty-three years. It was revealed in segments of different lengths. As soon as he received a segment, he recited it to his companions, who wrote it down and memorized it. In addition, the Prophet indicated to his scribes the precise location where each segment should be placed in the body of the text. In this way, the Qur'an in its entirety had been written and memorized by hundreds of Muhammad's Companions during his lifetime. They not only recited it as an act of worship but also spread it in every direction.[21]

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[21] God protected the Qur'an through the Arabic language in which He revealed it. This clearly give Islam an advantage over Christianity in that the language used in two main sources of legislation in Islam, namely the Qur'an and the Prophet's *Sunnah*, is a living language that is spoken by millions of people worldwide. Besides, if a translator makes a single mistake in the translation of these sources into another language, the error can be readily rectified by simply referring to the original Arabic text. This is not the case with Christian sources which were not written even in Aramaic, now a dead language, which was spoken by Jesus Christ and his apostles. Rather, they were written in Ancient Greek whose speakers are very few taking into account the number of people in the world today.

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Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, assigned Zayd ibn Thaabit the responsibility of compiling the first copy of the Qur'an in a single text after the Prophet's death. Then, following the orders of the third Caliph, Uthmaan, Zayd later prepared seven copies which were sent to the different centers of the Islamic world.

The existence of the Qur'an in its original Arabic text, the existence of millions of people who memorized it verbatim in different parts of the world throughout the succeeding generations, and the complete uniformity of all its copies and manuscripts[22] since the first century of the Hegira[23] testify to the authenticity of the final revelation sent as guidance to humankind. The entire Qur'an is the literal word of God without the least addition or omission.[24] When God says in the Qur'an, **"Say, 'He is Allah, [who is] One,'"** Prophet Muhammad, the conveyor of the message, would not have been able to change a single letter or a word from that divine statement. He had to say what he was commanded to: **"Say, 'He is Allah, [who is] One,'"** without omitting the imperative verb "say".[25]

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[22]In his book, *The Life of Mohamed,* Scottish Orientalist Sir William Muir states in reference to the Qur'an, "There is probably no other book in the world which has remained twelve [now over fourteen] centuries with so pure a text."

[23] The San'a' palimpsest is one of the oldest Qur'anic manuscripts in existence. Comprising 40,000 pages, it was found in Yemen in 1385 AH (1965 CE) during the renovation of a wall in the attic of the Great Mosque of San'a', Yemen. The manuscript, which dates back to the first, second and third centuries of the Hegira (seventh and eighth centuries CE), perfectly match today's copy of the Qur'an.

[24] One can easily notice the huge difference between the style of the Qur'an and that used by Prophet Muhammad in his traditions, let alone that used by other people.

[25]Dr. Laura Veccia Vaglieri states in her book, *Apologia dell' Islamismo,* "But there is another proof of the divinity of the Qur'an: it is the fact that it has been preserved intact through the ages since the time of its revelation till the present day. And so it will always remain, by God's will, as long as the universe exists."

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Besides, the Prophet's *Sunnah*,[26] which represent the second source of Islamic legislation and was also revealed by God in meaning but not necessarily in word, was recorded and kept separate in the books of *hadeeth.* The Bible, in contrast, cannot claim such an untarnished existence, being a mixture of words allegedly said by God, others ascribed to the prophets, while still others spoken by people.

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[26] *Sunnah*, which is the second type of revelation in Islam, next only to the Qur'an, serves to explain the Qur'an and detail its rulings. Of the many things that distinguish Islam from other religions is the discipline known as *'ilm al-hadeeth*, or studies of the Prophet's traditions which constitute the corpus of the reports of the teachings, deeds and sayings of Prophet Muhammad. Biographical evaluation, one of the branch of this discipline, is concerned with the evaluation of the *hadeeth* narrators in order to distinguish authentic and reliable traditions from the unreliable ones, and thus establish the credibility of the narrators, using both historical and religious knowledge. In fact, every tradition (*hadeeth*) has a *sanad*, which is the information provided regarding the route by which the *hadeeth* has been reached. It consists of a 'chain' of the narrators, each mentioning the one from whom they heard the *hadeeth* until mentioning the originator of *hadeeth* itself. The first people who received *hadeeth* were the Prophet's Companions, so they preserved and understood it, knowing both its generality and particulars. They conveyed it to those after them as they were commanded. Then the generation following them, the Followers, received it and then conveyed it to those after them, and so on. *Hadeeth* scholars know a great deal about all the narrators of the *hadeeth* despite the fact that they are in their thousands! No wonder Professor David Samuel Margoliouth (1858-1940), an English scholar who was Professor of Arabic at the University of Oxford from 1889 to 1937 and whose pioneering efforts in Islamic studies won him a near-legendary reputation among Islamic peoples and Oriental scholars of Europe, declared that Muslims should feel proud of their achievement in the science of *hadeeth*. If we consider the Prophet's Companions alone, who were 114,000 in number, as has been confirmed by Abu Zur'ah Ar-Raazee, a leading Muslim jurist, and Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdaadee in his book *Al-Jaami'*, vol. 2, p. 293, we will notice how God Almighty has preserved the Prophet's *Sunnah*. Even though Jesus Christ's apostles were only twelve in number, we find, for instance, Matthew 10 / 1-4 and Mark 3/16 contradicting Luke 6/14 regarding the eleventh disciple of Jesus Christ as to whether he is or Lebbaeus, (also known as Thaddeus), or Judas, son of Alphaeus and brother of James!

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Anyone who reads the Qur'an will find that it focuses entirely on the oneness of God. It does not depict the life of Prophet Muhammad or his heroic acts, as some people tend to believe. Anyone who reads the Qur'an will clearly see that it mainly calls to declaring that God is one, glorifying Him, following His commands, and avoiding what He has forbidden. The Qur'an (3/144) refers to Muhammad as a messenger of God, like all the other messengers who preceded him: **"Muhammad is only a messenger. Messengers passed away before him. If he should die or be killed, will you turn back on your heels? Those who turn on their heels will not harm Allah in the least. Allah will reward the grateful."**

It also describes him as being unable to benefit anyone, including himself, without the permission of God: **"Say, 'I myself have no power to benefit or do harm, save as Allah pleases. If I had knowledge of the unseen, I would have availed myself of an abundance of good, and no harm would have touched me. I am but a warner and a bearer of good tidings to those who believe.'"** (Qur'an 7/188)

In fact, there are even some verses that reproach the Prophet for certain actions. There is an incident where a blind man interrupted him as he was calling a group of influential pagans to Islam, pleading with the Prophet to give him some religious knowledge. In his eagerness to guide others, the Prophet frowned and ignored him, for he knew that the blind man was of strong faith and that there would be no harm if he waited until he finished his meeting. However, the Prophet was reproached by God in the Qur'an (80/1-11): **"He frowned and turned away because the blind man came to him. But how do you know [O Muhammad]? Perhaps he wanted to purify himself? Or receive some [Qura'nic] advice which would benefit him? As for him who thinks himself self-sufficient, to him you attend, though it is not your concern if he does not purify himself. But as for him who comes to you eagerly and he fears [Allah], you pay no heed to him. No indeed! Truly it is a reminder."**

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The Qur'an also contains verses that warn Prophet Muhammad in strong terms and even threaten him with death if he were to fabricate any saying in the name of God. Verses 69/44-47 read, **"Had he (i.e., Muhammad) falsely attributed some statements to Us, We would have seized him by the right hand; then We would have cut off his aorta; and not one of you could have protected him."**

The pagan Arabs at the time of the Prophet accused him of forging the Qur'an, so God revealed to him various verses in which He challenged them to produce a book similar to it. In17/88, we read, **"Say, 'If men and jinn combined to produce a book akin to this Qur'an, they would surely fail to produce its like, even if they helped one another as best they could.'"** We also read in 52/33-34, **"Or do they say, 'He has forged it (i.e. the Qur'an)?' No, the truth is they have no faith. Let them then produce a discourse like it if they are telling the truth."** They were not able do so. The challenge was later reduced to producing ten chapters, as is clear in 11/13: **"Or do they say, 'He has forged it?' Say, 'Then produce ten invented chapters like this, and call on anyone you can besides Allah if you are telling the truth.'"** Again, they failed to do so. The challenge was finally reduced to producing a single chapter. In 2/23-24, we read, **"If you have doubts about what We have sent down to Our servant (i.e., Muhammad), then produce a chapter like it, and call your witnesses, besides Allah, if you are telling the truth. If you do not do that — and you will not do it — then fear the Fire whose fuel is people and stones, prepared for the unbelievers."** We also read in 10/38, **"Or do they say, 'He has invented it'? Say, 'Then produce a chapter like it and call on anyone you can besides Allah if you are telling the truth.'"** They again failed to do this.

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It is true that when many Arabs heard the Qur'an the first time, they embraced Islam. Their instincts convinced them that such a noble and impressive discourse could only be a divine diction, not a human creation, for it was far more sublime and solemn than all their literature put together. Those among them who stubbornly rejected the Qur'an failed in their attempt to produce anything like it even though they were known for being very meticulous in their choice of words and very specific in their speech, vying each other in their ability to be fluent and eloquent, adoring oratory, diction and effective communication, and being skillful in the articulation of finer thoughts and the expression of ideas. Had they really been able to rise to the challenge, they would have spared themselves the time and effort which they wasted in a futile attempt to put an end to Islam.

Unlike the Bible, the Qur'an is free from errors, inconsistencies or statements which are not compatible with reason and science:[27] **"Will they not ponder on the**

[27] In his book, *The Bible, the Qur'an and Modern Science*, North American Trust Publication, Indianapolis, IN, 1979, p. viii, French doctor Maurice Bucaille writes, "It was in a totally objective spirit, and without any preconceived ideas that I first examined the Qur'anic Revelation. I was looking for the degree of compatibility between the Qur'anic text and the data of modern science. I knew from translations that the Qur'an often made allusion to all sorts of natural phenomena, but I had only a summary knowledge of it. It was only when I examined the text very closely in Arabic that I kept a list of them at the end of which I had to acknowledge the evidence in front of me: the Qur'an did not contain a single statement that was assailable from a modern scientific point of view. I repeated the same test for the Old Testament and the Gospels, always preserving the same objective outlook. In the former I did not even have to go beyond the first book, Genesis, to find statements totally out of keeping With the cast-iron facts of modern science. On opening the Gospels, one is immediately confronted with a serious problem. On the first page we find the genealogy of Jesus, but Matthew's text is in evident contradiction to Luke's on the same question. There is a further problem in that the latter's data on the antiquity of man on Earth are incompatible with modern knowledge." He further states on page 119, "These scientific considerations, which are very specific to the

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Qur'an? If it had not come from Allah, they would have surely found in it many contradictions." (4/82) It is amazing that the Qur'an, which Allah revealed to His unlettered prophet over fourteen centuries ago, mentions scientific facts that scientists have only discovered recently through the use of highly sophisticated equipment and after conducting advanced scientific research. It is worth mentioning here that the Qur'an is essentially a book of guidance, which guides to the truth and shows man the way to happiness in this world and eternal bliss in the hereafter. It mentions some of these scientific facts only to encourage people to turn to the truth. The following are a few brief examples:

The Qur'an (23/12-14) speaks vividly about the phases of human embryonic development: **"We have created man from an extract of clay. Then We placed him as a [a drop of] sperm**

Qur'an, greatly surprised me at first. Up until then, I had not thought it possible for one to find so many statements in a text compiled more than thirteen centuries ago referring to extremely diverse subjects and all of them totally in keeping with modern scientific knowledge. In the beginning, I had no faith whatsoever in Islam. I began this examination of the texts with a completely open mind and a total objectivity. If there was any influence acting upon me, it was gained from what I had been taught in my youth; people did not speak of Muslims, but of 'Muhammadans', to make it quite clear that what was meant was a religion founded by a man and which could not therefore have any kind of value in terms of God. Like many in the West, I could have retained the same false notions about Islam; they are so widely-spread today, that I am indeed surprised when I come across anyone, other than a specialist, who can talk in an enlightened manner on this subject. I therefore admit that before I was given a view of Islam different from the one received in the West, I was myself extremely ignorant." On page 120, he further says, "My approach was to pay special attention to the description of numerous natural phenomena given in the Qur'an; the highly accurate nature of certain details referring to them in the Book, which was only apparent in the original, struck me by the fact that they were in keeping with present-day ideas, although a man living at the time of Muhammad could not have suspected this at all." He also writes on page 125, "How could a man, from being illiterate, become the most important author, in terms of literary merit, in the whole of Arabic literature? How could he then pronounce truths of a scientific nature that no other human being could possibly have developed at the time, and all this without once making the slightest error in his pronouncements on the subject?".

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in a firm lodging. Then We made the sperm into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators." Modern science has verified the validity and accuracy of these stages of human development and has acknowledged that the Qur'an is the first text that describes such development in great detail.[28] Of course, no one denies the next stage, that of death, which follows these stages: **"Then after that you will most surely die."** (Qur'an 23/15) Just as these stages are true, as mentioned in the Qur'an, the stage which follows death is also true: **"Then surely on the Day of Resurrection you shall be raised."** (Qur'an 23/16)

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[28] In 1981, during the Seventh Medical Conference in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, Professor Emeritus Keith L. Moore, one of the world's most prominent scientists in the fields of anatomy and embryology and the author of *The Developing Human*, said, "It has been a great pleasure for me to help clarify statements in the Qur'an about human development. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God, because almost all of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad must have been a messenger of God." During one conference, also stated, "....Because the staging of human embryos is complex, owing to the continuous process of change during development, it is proposed that a new system of classification could be developed using the terms mentioned in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* (Prophet Muhammad's statements, actions and tacit approval). The proposed system is simple, comprehensive, and conforms to present embryological knowledge. The intensive studies of the Qur'an and *hadeeth* (Prophet Muhammad's sayings) in the last four years have revealed a system for classifying human embryos that is amazing since it was recorded in the seventh century CE. Although Aristotle, the founder of the science of embryology, realized that chick embryos developed in stages from his studies of hens' eggs in the fourth century B.C., he did not give any details about these stages. As far as it is known from the history of embryology, little was known about the staging and classification of human embryos until the twentieth century. For this reason, the descriptions of the human embryo in the Qur'an cannot be based on scientific knowledge in the seventh century. The only reasonable conclusion is: these descriptions were revealed to Muhammad from God. He could not have known such details because he was an illiterate man with absolutely no scientific training."

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The Qur'an (53/45-46) informs us that it is the man's sperm that determines the baby's gender: **"And that He creates the pairs, male and female, from a [drop of] when it is emitted."** According to modern science, at conception, gender is determined by chromosome characteristics and it is the male's sperm that dictates whether the baby will be a boy or a girl. Prior to conception, the unfertilized egg carries an **X** chromosome while the sperm can carry either an **X** or a **Y** chromosome. The gender of the baby comes down to one simple event: If the sperm carrying an **X** chromosome fertilizes the egg, a **girl** will be conceived. If the sperm carrying a **Y** chromosome fertilizes the egg, a **boy** will be conceived.

The Qur'an (39/6) also mentions the three layers of darkness surrounding the human embryo: (i) the anterior abdominal wall, (ii) the uterine wall; and (iii) the amniochorionic membrane: **"...He creates you stage by stage in your mothers' wombs in a threefold darkness..."**

The Qur'an (96/15-16) says, **"No indeed! If he does not desist, We will grab him by the forelock, a lying, sinful forelock."** This verse was revealed as a warning to a cruel, oppressive tribal leader named Abu Jahl who lived during the time of Muhammad. God does not call this person a liar, but calls his forehead (the front part of the brain) 'lying' and 'sinful', and warns him to stop. This verse is significant for two reasons. The first is that the front part of our brain is responsible for voluntary movement.[29] This is known as the frontal lobe. *Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology*, a book which includes the results of research on the functions of this area states,: "The motivation and the foresight to plan and initiate movements occur in the anterior portion of the frontal lobes, the prefrontal area.[30] The part of the brain that is responsible for movement is said to be seized if the man does not stop. Secondly, numerous studies have shown that this same region (frontal lobe) is responsible for the lying function of the brain.[31]

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[29] See http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2289137.

[30] See generally Rod R. Seeley, *Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology*, McGraw-Hill Higher Education, Idaho State University Trent D. Stephens, Idaho State University Philip Tate, Phoenix College, 2005.

[31] See http://cercor.oxfordjournals.org/content/20/1/205.full.pdf.

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In one study at the University of Pennsylvania in which volunteers were asked questions during a computerized interrogation, it was found that when the volunteers were lying there was significantly increased activity in the prefrontal and premotor cortices (frontal lobe region). The front part of the brain is responsible for movement and lying. The Qur'an links movement and lying to this area. These functions of the frontal lobe were discovered with medical imaging equipment which was developed in the 20th century. Modern science has discovered that the front of the head is responsible for judging and for directing human behavior, especially in matters relating to truth, falsehood, right and wrong.[32]

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[32] According to the Qur'an (96/16), the word *naasiyah* of a human being is (or can be) a lying sinful one! Do forelocks lie and sin!? Of course not! In Arabic, *naasiyah* means forehead. The Qur'an, however, seems to employ the term in a second sense, which forms part of the Qur'an's [en]cephalic nomenclature. When employed singularly, this word connotes what we call the Frontal Cortex; or to be more precise, the Prefrontal Cortex (PFC), i.e. the anterior part of the frontal lobe, which is located in the very front of the brain, just behind the forehead. As insinuated in the Qur'an, and as confirmed by modern neuroimaging studies, the Prefrontal Cortex does indeed play a predominant role in both lying and moral cognition. In the words of Dr. Keith L. Moore, "The information we now know about the function of the brain was not mentioned throughout history, nor do we find anything about it in the medical books. Should we survey all the medical literature during the time of Prophet Muhammad and several centuries thereafter, we would find no mention of the function of the frontal lobe (*naasiyah*), or an explanation of it or a statement about it except in this Book (the Holy Qur'an), which indicates that such information is of the Knowledge of Allah, the Almighty, Who knows everything, and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger." The function of the frontal lobe was (officially) known for the first time in 1842, when an American railway worker was hit with a bar that pierced his forehead. That affected his behavior leaving the other functions of his body intact. Only then did doctors came to know the function of the frontal lobe of the brain and its bearing on human behavior. Doctors, up to then, had thought that this portion of the human brain was a mute region with no function. The Qur'an mentioned this over fourteen centuries ago.

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The Qur'an (4/56) says, **"As for those who reject our Signs, We shall soon cast into the Fire. Every time their skins are burned off, We will replace them with new skins so that they can taste the punishment. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise."** For a long time, it had been thought that the sense of feeling and pain was dependent on the brain. However it has been discovered that there are pain receptors present in the skin, without which a person may not be able to feel pain at all.[33]

The Qur'an (57/25) also says, **"And We sent them down iron, wherein is mighty strength for war, and various advantages to mankind…"** The word '*anzalnaa*', translated as "sent down" and used for iron in the verse, could be thought of having a metaphorical meaning to explain that iron has been given to benefit people. But, when we take into consideration the literal meaning of the word, which is, 'being physically sent down from the sky', as in the case of rain and Sun rays, we realize that this verse implies a very significant scientific miracle. Because, modern astronomical findings have disclosed that the iron found in our world has come from giant stars in outer space.[34] Not only the iron on earth, but also the iron in the entire Solar System, comes from outer space, since the temperature in the Sun is inadequate for the formation of iron. The sun has a surface temperature of 6,000 degrees Celsius, and a core temperature of approximately 20 million degrees. Iron can only be produced in much larger stars than the Sun, where the temperature reaches a few hundred million degrees. When the amount of iron exceeds a certain level in a star, the star can no longer accommodate it, and it eventually explodes in what is called a 'nova' or a 'supernova'. These explosions make it possible for iron to be given off into space.[35]

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[33] See generally Michael Darmon, *Molecular Biology of the Skin: The Keratinocyte*, Academic Press, Salt Lake City, 1993.

[34] Kazi, 130 Evident Miracles in the Qur'an, 110-111; and www.wamy.co.uk/announcements3.html.

[35] *Ibid.*

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One scientific source provides the following information on this subject: There is also evidence for older supernova events: Enhanced levels of iron-60 in deep-sea sediments have been interpreted as indications that a supernova explosion occurred within 90 light-years of the sun about 5 million years ago. Iron-60 is a radioactive isotope of iron, formed in supernova explosions, which decays with a half-life of 1.5 million years. An enhanced presence of this isotope in a geologic layer indicates the recent nucleosynthesis of elements nearby in space and their subsequent transport to the earth (perhaps as part of dust grains).[36] This shows that iron did not form on the Earth, but was carried from Supernovas, and was "sent down", as stated in the verse. It is clear that this fact could not have been known in the 7th century, when the Qur'an was revealed. Nevertheless, this fact is related in the Qur'an, the Word of Allah, Who encompasses all things in His infinite knowledge. Astronomy has also revealed that other elements also formed outside the Earth. In the expression "**We also sent down iron**" in the verse, the word "also" may well be referring to that idea.

However, the fact that the verse specifically mentions iron is quite astounding, considering that these discoveries were made at the end of the 20th century. In his book Nature's Destiny, the well-known microbiologist Michael Denton emphasizes the importance of iron: Of all the metals there is none more essential to life than iron. It is the accumulation of iron in the center of a star which triggers a supernova explosion and the subsequent scattering of the vital atoms of life throughout the cosmos. It was the drawing by gravity of iron atoms to the center of the primeval earth that generated the heat which caused the initial chemical differentiation of the earth, the outgassing of the early atmosphere, and ultimately the formation of the hydrosphere. It is molten iron in the center of the earth which, acting like a gigantic dynamo, generates the earth's magnetic field, which in turn creates the Van Allen radiation belts that shield the earth's

[36] Priscilla Frisch, "The Galactic Environment of the Sun," American Scientist, January-February 2000, www.americanscientist.org/template/AssetDetail/assetid/21173?fulltext=true

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surface from destructive high-energy-penetrating cosmic radiation and preserve the crucial ozone layer from cosmic ray destruction…Without the iron atom, there would be no carbon-based life in the cosmos; no supernovae, no heating of the primitive earth, no atmosphere or hydrosphere. There would be no protective magnetic field, no Van Allen radiation belts, no ozone layer, no metal to make hemoglobin [in human blood], no metal to tame the reactivity of oxygen, and no oxidative metabolism.

This account clearly indicates the importance of the iron atom. The fact that particular attention is drawn to iron in the Qur'an also stresses the importance of the element. In addition, there is another hidden truth in the Qur'an which draws attention to the importance of iron: (Qur'an 57/25), which refers to iron, contains two rather interesting mathematical codes. The intriguing and intimate relationship between life and iron, between the red color of blood and the dying of some distant star, not only indicates the relevance of metals to biology but also the bio-centricity of the cosmos…[37]

Modern research has been used to demonstrate that the best treatment and primary prevention of bedsores and removing the pressure in patients with a medical condition that limits their ability to change positions or confines them to a bed for a long time is to redistribute pressure by regularly turning them. This method is seen as instrumental in changing nursing practices to effectively treat bedsores, which are generally caused by pressure against the skin that limits blood flow to the skin and nearby tissues.

As a matter of fact, the Qur'an made a reference of this over 14 centuries ago with regard to the story of a group of young believers who resisted the pressure from their people to worship others besides God, and took refuge in a cave, following which they fell asleep for a very long time. The Qur'an (18/18) says, **"You would have supposed them to be awake whereas in fact they were asleep. We turned them to the right and to the left, and, at the entrance, their dog stretched out its paws...".**

[37] Michael J. Denton, *Nature's Destiny*, New York: The Free Press: 1998, p. 198.

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The science of modern cosmology, observational and theoretical, clearly indicates that, at one point in time, the whole universe was nothing but a cloud of 'smoke' (i.e. an opaque highly dense and hot gaseous composition). The Qur'an (41/11) also mentions this fact: **"Then He turned to heaven when it was smoke and said to it and to the earth, 'Come willingly or unwillingly.' They both said, 'We come willingly.'"** Until recently, scientists called this 'smoke' cosmic dust. However, after analyzing a sample of it which laboratory studies showed that it is related to the early cosmos smoke, they realized that the best description for it is 'smoke',[38] just as the Qur'an calls it.

The Qur'an (27/88) says, **"You will see the mountains and reckon them to be solid; but they go past like clouds-the handiwork of Allah Who gives to everything its solidity. He is aware of what you do."** This verse stresses that the Earth not only rotates but also has a direction of rotation. The direction of movement of the main cloud masses at 3,500-4,000 meters high is always from West to East, hence the reason why it is generally the state of the weather in the West which is looked at in meteorological forecasts.[39] The main reason why cloud masses are pulled from West to East is the direction in which the Earth rotates. As we now know, our Earth spins from West to East, a scientific fact only recently established, but which the Qur'an stated more than 1,400 years ago, when the Earth was believed to be flat and resting on the back of an ox.

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[38]In an article entitled 'Smoking supernovae solve a ten billion year-old mystery,' Dr. Douglas Pierce-Price, from Science Outreach Specialist Joint Astronomy Centre, says, "Unlike household dust, cosmic 'dust' actually consists of tiny solid grains (mostly carbon and silicates) floating around in interstellar space, with similar sizes to the particles in cigarette smoke." See http://outreach.jach.hawaii.edu/pressroom/2003_casa/.

[39] "Effects of Rotation (Coriolis Effect)," The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. Available at: www.woodrow.org/teachers/esi/1998/p/weather/Corriolis.HTM

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While the Qur'an states that it is easy for Allah to bring man back to life after death, peoples' fingerprints are particularly emphasized: **"We are able to put together in perfect order the very tips of his fingers."** (75/4) The emphasis on fingerprints has a very special meaning.[40] This is because shapes and details on everyone's fingerprint are unique to each individual.[41] Every person who is alive or who has ever lived in this world has a set of unique fingerprints. Furthermore, even identical twins having the very same DNA sequence have their own set of fingerprints.[42] Fingerprints attain their final shape before birth and remain the same for a lifetime unless a permanent scar appears. That is why fingerprints are accepted as a very important proof of identity, exclusive to their owner. The science of fingerprints has been used as a non-erring identity determination method.

However, what is important is that this feature of fingerprints was only discovered in the late 19th century. Before then, people regarded fingerprints as ordinary curves without any specific importance or meaning. However in the Qur'an, Allah points to the fingertips, which did not attract anyone's attention at that time, and calls our attention to their importance. This importance has only been fully understood in our day.

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[40] The validity of the technique to establish identity by means of fingerprints (AFS) has been proven beyond any doubt and is a legally approved method. No technology of identity verification in our time gives such effective results as fingerprints. Using fingerprints to establish identity has been used in legal processes for the last 100 years and possesses international acceptance. In his book *Fingerprint Techniques*, Andre A. Moenssens analyses the way that each individual has a unique set of fingerprints, "No two fingerprints from different digits have ever been found to match exactly." "Is Fingerprint Identification a 'Science'?" www.forensic-evidence.com/site/ID/ID00004_2.html#ID1.

[41] Everyone, including identical twins, has unique fingerprints. In other words, people's identities are coded at their fingertips. This coding system may also be compared to the barcode system used today.

[42] See www.ridgesandfurrows.homestead.com/fingerprint.html.

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The Qur'an (21/31) also draws attention to a very important geological function of mountains: **"We placed firmly embedded mountains on the earth, so it would not move under them…"** The verse states that mountains perform the function of preventing shocks in the Earth. This fact was not known by anyone at the time the Qur'an was revealed. It was, in fact, brought to light only recently, as a result of the findings of modern geological research. Formerly, it was thought that the mountains were mere protrusions rising above the surface of the Earth.

However, scientists realized that this was not actually the case, and that those parts known as the mountain root extended down as far as 10-15 times their own height. With these features, mountains play a similar role to a nail or peg firmly holding down a tent. For example, Mount Everest, the summit of which stands approximately 9 km above the surface of the Earth, has a root deeper than 125 km. Mountains emerge as a result of the movements and collisions of massive plates forming the Earth's crust. When two plates collide, the stronger one slides under the other, the one on the top bends and forms heights and mountains. The layer beneath proceeds under the ground and makes a deep extension downward. Consequently, mountains have a portion stretching downwards, as large as their visible parts on the Earth. In a scientific text, the structure of mountains is described as follows:[43] "Where continents are thicker, as in mountain ranges, the crust sinks deeper into the mantle."[44]

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[43] Carolyn Sheets, Robert Gardner, and Samuel F. Howe, *General Science*, Newton, MA: Allyn and Bacon Inc., 1985, p. 305.

[44] Professor Siaveda, a world-renowned underwater geologist, made the following comment in reference to the way that mountains have root-like stalks attaching them to the surface: The fundamental difference between continental mountains and the oceanic mountains lies in its material... But the common denominator on both mountains are that they have roots to support the mountains. In the case of continental mountains, light-low density material from the mountain is extended down into the earth as a root. In the case of oceanic mountains, there is also light material supporting the mountain as a root... Therefore, the function of the roots are to support the mountains according to the law of Archimedes.

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Dr. Frank Press, former president of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, states in his book *Earth* that mountains are like stakes, and are buried deep under the Earth surface.[45]

In other verses, this role of the mountains is pointed out by a comparison with "pegs": **"Have We not made the earth as a bed and the mountains its pegs?"** (Qur'an 78/6-7) Another verse (Qur'an, 79/32) states that Allah **"made the mountains firm"**. The Arabic word '*arsaahaa*' in this verse means "was made rooted, was fixed, was nailed to the earth". Similarly, mountains extend to the surface layer joining lines on and below the surface and nail these together. By fixing the Earth's crust they prevent any sliding over the magma layer or amongst the layers themselves. In short, mountains can be compared to nails holding strips of wood together. The fixing effect of mountains is known as isostasy in scientific literature. Isostasy is the state of equilibrium between the upward force created by the mantle layer and the downward force created by the Earth's crust.

As mountains lose mass due to erosion, soil loss or melting of glaciers, they can gain mass from the formation of glaciers, volcanic explosions or soil formation. Therefore, as mountains grow lighter, they are pressed upwards by the raising force implemented by the liquids. Alternatively, as they grow heavier they are pressed into the mantle by the force of gravity. Equilibrium between these two forces is established by isostasy.

This balancing property of the mountains is described in these terms in a scientific source: G.B Airy in 1855 suggested that the crust of the earth could be likened to rafts of timber floating on water. Thick pieces of timber float higher above the water surface than thin pieces and similarly thick sections of the earth's crust will float on a liquid or plastic substratum of greater density. Airy was suggesting that mountains have a deep root of lower density rock which the plains lack. Four years after Airy published his work, J.H Pratt offered an alternative hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, rock columns below

[45] See generally Frank Press, and Raymond Siever, Earth, 3rd ed., San Francisco: W. H. Freeman & Company, 1982.

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the mountains must have a lower density because of their greater length than the shorter rock columns beneath the plains. Both Airy and Pratt's hypothesis imply that surface irregularities are balanced by differences in density of rocks below the major features (mountains and plains) of the crust. This state of balance is described as the concept of isostasy.[46]

Today, we know that the rocky external layer of the Earth's surface is riven by deep faults and split into plates swimming above the molten lava. Since the Earth revolves very quickly around its own axis, were it not for the fixing effect of the mountains, these plaques would shift. In such an event, soil would not collect on the Earth's surface, water would not accumulate in the soil, no plants could grow, and no roads or houses could be built. In short, life on Earth would be impossible. Through the mercy of Allah, however, mountains act like nails, and to a large extent, prevent movement in the Earth's surface. This vital role of the mountains, which has been discovered by modern geological and seismic research, was revealed in the Qur'an centuries ago as an example of the supreme wisdom in Allah's creation: **"… [He] cast firmly embedded mountains on the earth so that it would not move under you…"** (Qur'an, 31/10)

Modern Science has discovered that in the places where two different seas meet, there is a barrier between them. This barrier divides the two seas so that each sea has its own temperature, salinity and density.[47]For example, the Mediterranean Sea water is warm, saline and less dense, compared to the Atlantic Ocean water. When the Mediterranean Sea water enters the Atlantic Sea over the Gibraltar sill, it moves several hundred kilometers into the Atlantic at a depth of about 1000 meters with its own warm, saline and less dense characteristics. The Mediterranean Sea water stabilizes at this depth.[48]

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[46] M. J. Selby, *Earth's Changing Surface*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985, p. 32.

[47] Richard A. Davis, *Principles of Oceanography*, 2nd edition, Boston: Addison Wesley Longman Publishing Company, 1977, pp. 92-93.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 93.

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Although there are large waves, strong currents and tides in these seas, they do not mix or transgress this barrier. The Qur'an mentions that there is a barrier between two seas that meet and that they do not transgress. The Qur'an (55/19-20) says, **"He has set free the two seas meeting together. There is a barrier between them. They do not transgress."** But when the Qur'an speaks about the divider between fresh and salt water, it mentions the existence of "a forbidding partition" with the barrier. The Qur'an (25/53) says, **"He is the one who has set free the two kinds of water, one sweet and palatable, and the other salty and bitter. And He has made between them a barrier and a forbidding partition."**

One may ask, why does the Qur'an mention the partition when speaking about the divider between fresh and salt water but does not mention it when speaking about the divider between the two seas? Modern science has discovered that in estuaries, where fresh (sweet) and salt water meet, the situation is somewhat different from what is found in places where two seas meet. It has been discovered that what distinguishes fresh water from salt water in estuaries is a "pycnocline zone with a marked density discontinuity separating the two layers."[49]

This partition (zone of separation) has a different salinity from the fresh water and from the salt water.[50]This information has been discovered only recently, using advanced equipment to measure temperature, salinity, density and oxygen dissolubility, among other things. The human eye cannot see the difference between the two seas that meet; rather, the two seas appear to us as one homogeneous sea. Likewise, the human eye cannot see the division of water in estuaries into the three kinds: fresh water, salt water, and the partition (zone of separation).

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[49] M. Grant Gross, *Oceanography: A View of Earth*, 6th edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992, p. 242. See also Harold V. Thurman, *Introductory Oceanography*, 10th edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall; 2003, pp. 300-301

[50] M. Grant Gross, *Oceanography: A View of Earth*, p. 244, and Harold V. Thurman, *Introductory Oceanography*, pp. 300-301.

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The Qur'an sometimes uses imagery to covey its deep meanings. In one verse (24/40), it describes the state of the unbelievers as **"the darkness in a deep sea, covered by waves riding on waves, above which are clouds, being additions of darkness one over the other; when one stretches forth his hand, he is far from seeing it. For him whom God does not give any light, there is no light."** Contrary to popular belief prevalent before, oceanographers have now discovered that there are internal waves that take place below the surface of the ocean. These waves are invisible to the human eye, and can only be detected by special equipment.[51]

The Qur'an mentions darkness in a deep ocean above which are waves, above which are waves, then clouds above that. This description is significantly remarkable because it describes not only the internal waves in the ocean, but also darkness deep in the ocean. A human being can dive no more than 70 meters without breathing equipment. Light is present at that depth, but if we go down 1000 meters it is completely dark.[52] 1,400 years ago there were no submarines or specialist equipment to discover internal waves or the darkness deep inside the oceans.

Scientists have studied cloud types and have realized that rain clouds are formed and shaped according to definite systems and certain steps connected with certain types of wind and clouds. One kind of rain cloud is the cumulonimbus cloud. Meteorologists have studied how cumulonimbus clouds are formed and how they produce rain, hail and lightning. They have found that cumulonimbus clouds go through three steps to produce rain: 1) The clouds are pushed by the wind: Cumulonimbus clouds begin to form when wind pushes some small pieces of clouds (cumulus clouds) to an area where these clouds converge; 2)

[51] See generally M. Grant Gross, *Oceanography: A View of Earth*, 6th edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992.

[52] Danny Elder and Danny Elder, Oceans, *Oceans*, London: Beazley in association with IUCN, The World Conservation Union, 1991.

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Joining: The small clouds then join together, forming a larger cloud;[53] and 3) Stacking: When the small clouds join together, updrafts within the larger cloud increase. The updrafts near the center of the cloud are stronger than those near the edges.[54]

These updrafts cause the cloud body to grow vertically, so the cloud is stacked up. This vertical growth causes the cloud body to stretch into cooler regions of the atmosphere, where drops of water and hail formulate and begin to grow larger and larger.

When these water drops and hail become too heavy for the updrafts to support them, they begin to fall from the cloud as rain and hail.[55] The Qur'an (24/43) says, **"Have you not seen how God makes the clouds move gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a stack, and then you see the rain come out of it...."** Meteorologists have only recently found out about these details of cloud formation, structure and function by using planes, satellites, computers, balloons and other advanced equipment to study wind and its direction, to measure humidity and its variations, and to determine the levels and variations of atmospheric pressure. After mentioning clouds and rain, this verse speaks about hail and lightning: **"....and He sends down hail from mountains (clouds) in the sky, and He strikes with it whomever He wills, and turns it from whomever He wills. The vivid flash of its lightning nearly blinds the sight."** (24/43) Meteorologists have found that these cumulonimbus clouds that shower hail reach a height of 25,000 to 30,000 feet (4.7 to 5.7 miles),[56] like mountains, as the Qur'an says, **"...And He sends down hail from mountains (clouds) in the sky..."**

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[53] See Richard A. Anthes *et al.*, *The Atmosphere*, 2nd edition, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1978, pp. 268-269; and Albert Miller and Jack C. Thompson, *Elements of Meteorology*, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1970, p. 141.

[54] The updrafts near the center are stronger, because they are protected from the cooling effects by the outer portion of the cloud.

[55] See Richard A. Anthes *et al.*, *The Atmosphere*, p. 141; and Albert Miller and Jack C. Thompson, *Elements of Meteorology*, pp. 141-142.

[56] Albert Miller and Jack C. Thompson, *Elements of Meteorology*, p. 141.

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This verse may raise a question. Why does the verse say "its lightning" in a reference to the hail? Does this mean that hail is the major factor in producing lightning? In *Meteorology Today*, we read that a cloud becomes electrified as hail falls through a region in the cloud of super cooled droplets and ice crystals. As liquid droplets collide with a hailstone, they freeze on contact and release latent heat. This keeps the surface of the hailstone warmer than that of the surrounding ice crystals.

When the hailstone comes in contact with an ice crystal, an important phenomenon occurs: electrons flow from the colder object toward the warmer object. Hence, the hailstone becomes negatively charged. The same effect occurs when super cooled droplets come in contact with a hailstone and tiny splinters of positively charged ice break off. These lighter positively charged particles are then carried to the upper part of the cloud by updrafts. The hail, left with a negative charge, falls toward the bottom of the cloud, thus the lower part of the cloud becomes negatively charged. These negative charges are then discharged as lightning.[57] We conclude from this that hail is the major factor in producing lightning.

This information on lightning was discovered only recently. Until 1600 CE, Aristotle's ideas on meteorology were dominant. For example, he said that the atmosphere contains two types of exhalation, moist and dry. He also said that thunder is the sound of the collision of the dry exhalation with the neighboring clouds, and lightning is the inflaming and burning of the dry exhalation with a thin and faint fire.[58] These are some of the ideas on meteorology that were dominant at the time of the Qur'an's revelation, over fourteen centuries ago.

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[57] C Donald Ahrens, *Meteorology Today*, Boston, Massachusetts: Cengage Learning, 2006, p. 437.

[58] W. D. Ross, *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English: Meteorologica*, vol. 3, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928, pp. 369a-369b.

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The Qur'an (15/22) also says, **"And We send the fertilizing winds, then cause the rain to descend from the sky, therewith providing you with water [in abundance…"** Further information provided in this verse about the fertilizing quality of the wind is its role in the pollination of flowers. Many plants on Earth disperse their pollen by means of the wind in order to ensure the survival of their species. Several open-seeded plants, pine trees, palm and similar trees, seeded plants that produce flowers, and grass-like plants are entirely pollinated by the wind.

The wind carries the pollen from the plants to others of the species, thus fertilizing them. Until recently, the way that the wind was able to fertilize plants was unknown. When it was realized, however, that plants are divided into males and females, the fertilizing role of the wind was also discovered. This truth was already mentioned in the Qur'an (20/53), **"… [He] sent down water from the sky by which We have brought forth various different types of plants in pairs."**

For thousands of years, astronomers grappled with basic questions concerning the universe. Until the early 1920's, it was believed that the universe had always been in existence and that the size of the universe was fixed and not changing. However, in 1912, American astronomer Vesto Slipher made a discovery that would soon change astronomers' beliefs about the universe. He noticed that the galaxies were moving away from earth at huge velocities. These observations provided the first evidence supporting the expanding-universe theory.[59]

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[59]See generally Steven Weinberg, *The First Three Minutes, a Modern View of the Origin of the Universe*, 2nd edition, New York: Basic Books, 1993.

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In 1916, Albert Einstein formulated his General Theory of Relativity that indicated that the universe must be either expanding or contracting. Confirmation of the expanding-universe theory finally came in 1929 in the hands of the well-known American astronomer Edwin Hubble. By observing redshifts[60] in the light wavelengths emitted by galaxies, Hubble found that galaxies were not fixed in their position; instead, they were actually moving away from us with speeds proportional to their distance from earth (Hubble's Law). The only explanation for this observation was that the universe had to be expanding. Hubble's discovery is regarded as one of the greatest in the history of astronomy. In 1929, he published the velocity-time relation which is the basis of modern cosmology. In the years to come, with further observations, the expanding-universe theory was accepted by scientists and astronomers alike. Yet, astonishingly well before telescopes were even invented and well before Hubble published his Law, Prophet Muhammad used to recite a Qur'anic verse to the effect that the universe is expanding: **"And the heaven We created with might, and indeed We are [its] expander."** (Qur'an 51/47)

At the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, the word "space" was not known and people used the word "heaven" to refer to what lies above the Earth. In the above verse, the word "heaven" refers to space and the known universe. The verse points out that space, and thus the universe, happens to be expanding, just as Hubble's Law states. That the Qur'an mentioned such a fact centuries before the invention of the first telescope, at a time when there was primitive knowledge in science, is considered remarkable. This is more so considering that, like many people in his time, Prophet Muhammad happened to be illiterate and simply could not have been aware of such facts by himself. Could it be that he had received divine revelation from the Creator and Originator of the universe?

[60] This occurs when the light an object emits is displaced toward the red end of the spectrum. Astronomy Picture of the Day's Glossary, NASA. See http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/lib/glossary.html.

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In 1512, astronomer Nicholas Copernicus put forward his theory that the sun is motionless at the center of the solar system, and that the planets revolve around it. The belief that the sun is stationary was widespread amongst astronomers until the 20th century. It is now a well-established scientific fact that the sun is not stationary but is moving in an orbit around the center of our Milky Way galaxy.[61] The Qur'an (21/33) mentions the orbit of the sun: **"It is He who created night and day, the sun and the soon, each floating in its orbit."** The Qur'an would have been wrong according to astronomers just a couple of decades ago. But we now know that the Qur'anic account of the sun's motion is consistent with modern astronomy.

Dyspnea means difficulty in respiration, tightness of breast or constriction of the chest that occurs at high altitude. When a human being goes higher than ten thousand (10,000) feet above sea level, it does not cause him any serious problem, as the respiratory system can handle the height of 10,000 to 25,000 feet above sea level; however, if a person goes into outer space, the amount of pressure and oxygen decreases, causing the closing of the chest and dyspnea (shortness of breath). Then, the breathing process becomes difficult because of the lack of oxygen (oxygen starvation) and the respiratory system completely fails, causing death. The Qur'an (6/125) makes mention of this fact as follows: **"When Allah desires to guide someone, He expands his breast to Islam. When He desires to misguide someone, He makes his breast narrow and constricted as if he were climbing up into the sky. That is how Allah defiles those who have no faith."**

Another scientific fact mentioned in the Qur'an is in 86/11, which states, **"By the sky which returns."** The Qur'an (2/22) also states, **"[He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling…"** In the first verse, God swears by the sky[62]

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[61] See generally Lambert M. Surhone, Miriam T. Timpledon, Susan F. Marseken, *Orbital Period: Orbit, Sun, Earth, Conjunction, Orbital Node, Apsis, Semi-Major Axis*, Mauritius: Betascript Publishing, 2010.

[62] The Arabic word *as-Samaa'*, translated here as 'sky', includes earth's atmosphere, as indicated by 2/164.

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and its function of 'returning' without specifying what it 'returns'. In Islam, a divine oath signifies the magnitude of importance of a special relation to the Creator and manifests His majesty and the supreme truth in a special way. The second verse describes the divine act that made the sky a 'ceiling' for the dwellers of earth. According to modern science, the atmosphere is a word which denotes all the air surrounding the earth, from the ground all the way up to the edge from which space starts. It is composed of several layers, each defined because of the various phenomena which occur within the layer. Rain, for one, is 'returned' to Earth by the clouds in the atmosphere. *Encyclopedia Britannica* explains the hydrologic cycle thus, "Water evaporates from both the aquatic and terrestrial environments as it is heated by the Sun's energy. The rates of evaporation and precipitation depend on solar energy, as do the patterns of circulation of moisture in the air and currents in the ocean. Evaporation exceeds precipitation over the oceans, and this water vapor is transported by the wind over land, where it returns to the land through precipitation." [63]

Not only does the atmosphere return what was on the surface back to the surface, but it reflects back into space that which might damage the flora and fauna the earth sustains, such as excessive radiant heat. In the 1990's, collaborations between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Institute of Space and Astronautical Science (ISAS) of Japan resulted in the International Solar-Terrestrial Physics (ISTP) Science Initiative. Polar, Wind and Geotail are a part of this initiative, combining resources and scientific communities to obtain coordinated, simultaneous investigations of the Sun-Earth space environment over an extended period of time. They have an excellent explanation of how the atmosphere returns solar heat to space. [64]

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[63] Biosphere, Encyclopedia Britannica. http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/66191/biosphere/70871/The-cycling-of-phosphorus-and-other-essential-nutrients

[64] Weather and the Atmosphere. http://www-spof.gsfc.nasa.gov/stargaze/Sweather1.htm.

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Besides 'returning' rain, heat and radio waves, the atmosphere protects us like a ceiling above our heads by filtering out deadly cosmic rays, powerful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the Sun, and even meteorites on collision course with Earth.[65] Pennsylvania State Public Broadcasting tells us: "The sunlight that we can see represents one group of wavelengths, visible light. Other wavelengths emitted by the sun include x-rays and ultraviolet radiation. X-rays and some ultraviolet light waves are absorbed high in Earth's atmosphere. They heat the thin layer of gas there to very high temperatures. Ultraviolet light waves are the rays that can cause sunburn. Most ultraviolet light waves are absorbed by a thicker layer of gas closer to Earth called the ozone layer.

"By soaking up the deadly ultraviolet and x-rays, the atmosphere acts as a protective shield around the planet. Like a giant thermal blanket, the atmosphere also keeps temperatures from getting too hot or too cold. In addition, the atmosphere also protects us from constant bombardment by meteoroids, bits of rock and dust that travel at high speeds throughout the solar system. The falling stars we see at night are not stars at all; they are actually meteoroids burning up in our atmosphere due to the extreme heating they undergo."[66]

Encyclopedia Britannica, describing the role of Stratosphere, tells us about its protective role in absorbing dangerous ultraviolet radiation: "In the upper stratospheric regions, absorption of ultraviolet light from the Sun breaks down oxygen molecules; recombination of oxygen atoms with O2 molecules into ozone (O3) creates the ozone layer, which shields the lower ecosphere from harmful short-wavelength radiation…More disturbing, however, is the discovery of a growing depletion of ozone over temperate latitudes, where a large percentage of the world's population resides, since the ozone layer serves as a shield against ultraviolet radiation, which has been found to cause skin cancer."[67]

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[65] Atmospheric, Climate & Environment Information Program of the Manchester Metropolitan University. At http://www.ace.mmu.ac.uk/eae/Atmosphere/atmosphere.html.

[66] http://www.witn.psu.edu/articles/article.phtml?article_id=255&show_id=44

[67] http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/175962/Earth/54196/The-atmosphere.

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The mesosphere is the layer in which many meteors burn up while entering the Earth's atmosphere. Imagine a baseball zipping along at 30,000 miles per hour. That's how big and fast many meteors are. When they plow through the atmosphere, meteors are heated to more than 3000 degrees Fahrenheit, and they glow. A meteor compresses air in front of it. The air heats up, in turn heating the meteor.[68] Earth is surrounded by a magnetic force field — a bubble in space called "the magnetosphere" tens of thousands of miles wide. The magnetosphere acts as a shield that protects us from solar storms. However, according to new observations from NASA's IMAGE spacecraft and the joint NASA/European Space Agency Cluster satellites, immense cracks sometimes develop in Earth's magnetosphere and remain open for hours. This allows the solar wind to gush through and power stormy space weather. Fortunately, these cracks do not expose Earth's surface to the solar wind. Our atmosphere protects us, even when our magnetic field does not.[69] How would it be possible for an illiterate man to describe the sky in a manner so precise that only recent scientific discoveries have confirmed?

The Qur'an (13/3) also says, **"…And fruit of every kind He made in pairs…"** Fruit is the end product of reproduction of the superior plants. The stage preceding fruit is the flower, which has male and female organs (stamens and ovules). Once pollen has been carried to the flower, they bear fruit, which in turn matures and frees its seed. All fruits therefore imply the existence of male and female organs; a fact that is mentioned in the Qur'an. In certain species, fruit can come from non-fertilized flowers e.g. bananas, certain types of pineapple, fig, orange, vine, etc. They also have definite sexual characteristics.

The story of Moses holds many lessons for humankind. One part of the story in particular has intrigued people for centuries – the parting of the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptians.

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[68] http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/solarsystem/meteors-ez.html.

[69] http://www.firstscience.com/SITE/ARTICLES/magnetosphere.asp.

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All three major monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam tell relatively the same story, but the Qur'an seems to provide highly accurate information regarding this issue. While all versions include the parting of the Red Sea, the Qur'an (10/92) tells us that Pharaoh drowned and his body has been preserved for all time as a sign: **"Today We will preserve your body so you can be a Sign for people who come after you. Surely many people are heedless of Our Signs."**

It was actually this verse that convinced French medical doctor, member of the French Society of Egyptology and an author Maurice Bucaille (1920-1998), beyond any doubt that the Qur'an is the Word of God and paved the way for him to embrace Islam. After conducting a series of monumental and processing experiments on the mummified body pf Pharaoh in the late 80's, it was established that the remains of the salt stuck in his body furnished cogent evidence that he had drowned and that his body was retrieved from the sea swiftly after he drowned. However, the question as to how his body — to the exclusion of other mummified bodies of other ancient Egyptians — remained that intact although it was recovered from the sea puzzled him a great deal.

However, a member of the team he was leading whispered in his ear, saying "There is no need to rush about this issue, since the Muslims say that this Pharaoh did drown." At first, he vehemently rejected this and did not believe it, stating that such a discovery would be reached only through sophisticated, modern and accurate computers. Another person accompanying him surprised him more when he told him that the Muslims' Holy Book, the Qur'an, in which they believe narrates the story that says he drowned and that his body remained intact even after he drowned. He became more surprised and kept on asking, "Where did the Muslims' Qur'an quote this data from while the mummy was not discovered until 1898, i.e. about 200 years only, given that the Qur'an has been recited by Muslims for over 1,400 years, and given also that until a few decades ago the entire mankind including Muslims did not know that the ancient Egyptians had mummified their pharaohs?

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Maurice Bucaille spent the entire night gazing at Pharaoh's body, thinking deeply of what his fellow researcher told him about the Muslims' Qur'an explicitly establishing that this body was recovered after drowning, while the Christians' Gospel (Matthew and Luca) narrated only the story of Pharaoh when he was chasing Moses without mentioning the fate of his body at all. "Is it believable that Muhammad knew about this over 1,000 years ago while I have only just known it?" he thought. Maurice spent a sleepless night and asked for a version of the Torah. But it only furthered his astonishment; since even the Torah did not narrate that the body was recovered and remained intact due to the processing and restoration, which it had undergone. Later on, while attending a medical conference in Saudi Arabia, he revealed his discovery. At that point, one of the conferees opened the Qur'an and read out verse 10/92. In his excitement, Bucaille stood and loudly abounded his conversion to Islam. [70]

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[70] In his book, *The Bible, the Qur'an and Modern Science*, pp. 239-241, Maurice Bucaille writes, "In June 1975, the Egyptian high authorities very kindly allowed me to examine the parts of the Pharaoh's body that had been covered until then. They also allowed me to take photographs... What may already be derived from this examination is the discovery of multiple lesions of the bones with broad lacunae, some of which may have been mortal although it is not yet possible to ascertain whether some of them occurred before or after the Pharaoh's death. He most probably died either from drowning, according to the scriptural narrations, or from very violent shocks preceding the moment when he was drowned or both at once. The connection of these lesions with the deterioration whose sources have been mentioned above renders the correct preservation of the mummy of the Pharaoh somewhat problematical, unless precautionary and restorative measures are not taken very soon. These measures should ensure that the only concrete evidence which we still possess today concerning the death, of the Pharaoh of the Exodus and the rescue of his body, willed by God; does not disappear with the passage of time. It is always desirable for man to apply himself to the preservation of relics of his history, but here we have something which goes beyond that: it is the material presence of the mummified body of the man who knew Moses, resisted his pleas, pursued him as he took flight and lost his life in the process. His earthly remains were saved by the Will of God from destruction to become a sign to man, as it is written in the Qur'an. Those who seek among modern data for proof of the veracity of the Holy Scriptures will find a magnificent illustration of the verses of the Qur'an dealing with the Pharaoh's body by visiting the Royal Mummies Room of the

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The Qur'an (16/69) also makes mention of the beneficial and healing properties of honey: **"…From inside them comes a drink of varying colors, containing healing for mankind. There is certainly a Sign in that for people who reflect."** Nowadays, apiculture and bee products have opened a new branch of research in scientifically advanced parts of the world. Science today has proven the numerous benefits of honey: **a)** Because sugar molecules in honey can convert into other sugars (e.g. fructose to glucose), it is easily digested by the most sensitive stomachs despite its high acid content. It helps kidneys and intestines to function better; **b)** It rapidly diffuses through the blood and is a quick energy source **c)** It helps cleanse blood and supports blood formation by providing an important part of the energy needed by the body for blood formation; **d)** It does not accommodate bacteria and prevents bacteria growth due to the existence of hydrogen peroxide and antioxidants in it; **e)** It is antioxidant: Everyone who wants to live a healthier life should consume antioxidants;[71] **f)** It is a vitamin and mineral depot, containing, among other things, sugars like glucose and fructose and minerals like magnesium, potassium, calcium and iron;[72] **g)** It is used in healing all types of wounds and rapidly clears any existing infection from wounds. Unlike antiseptics and antibiotics, there is no impairment of the healing process through adverse effects on wound tissues.[73]

God commands us to do only those things which are beneficial and prohibits us to do only those things which are harmful. A Muslim shows obedience to God whether or not he is aware of the benefits or harm because He knows that God is All-Wise and Most Merciful. In one verse, God commands

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Egyptian Museum, Cairo!" See Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, the Qur'an and Modern Science*, Indianapolis, IN: North American Trust Publication, 1979.

[71] Honey A Source of Antioxidants. *Journal of Apicultural Research*, 1998, 37:221-5. See also Janet Raloff, "The Color of Honey," www.sciencenews.org/sn_arc98/9_12_98/Bob1.

[72] See generally "The Benefits of Honey in the Holy Qur'an," *International Journal of Pediatrics* (Supplement 5), Vol.2, N.3-3, Serial No.9, September 2014.

[73] See I. R. Jangharia, *An Alternative Decision*, Authorhouse UK, 2010, p. 55.

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mothers to **"nurse their children for two years for those parents who desire to complete the period of nursing…"** (2/233) Modern science has now discovered the numerous beneficial properties of breastfeeding. It has been proven that breastfeeding benefits toddlers and young children, both nutritionally and psychologically. Breast milk remains a valuable source of protein, fat, calcium, and vitamins well beyond two years of age.[74] Immunities in breast milk become more concentrated as nurslings mature; at the same time, the likelihood of allergies decreases.[75] Mothers who nurse past infancy derive benefits as well, including a decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancer the longer she continues nursing.[76] Breastfeeding is a warm and loving way to meet the needs of toddlers and young children. It not only perks them up and energizes them; it also soothes the frustrations, bumps and bruises, and daily stresses of early childhood. In addition, nursing past infancy helps little ones make a gradual transition to childhood. In fact, prolonged nursing is associated with better social adjustment.[77] Breastfeeding past infancy is as old as humanity. Still common in Western cultures as recently as a hundred years ago, the practice then underwent a sharp decline. Now, extended breastfeeding is becoming more popular, and medical professionals are beginning to recognize how valuable it is. While the American Academy of Pediatrics acknowledges the value of breastfeeding for the entire first year of life,[78] the US Surgeon General has stated that it is a lucky baby who continues to nurse until age two.[79]

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[74] Sally Kneidel, "Nursing beyond One Year," *New Beginnings* 6, no. 4 (July-Aug 1990), p. 100.

[75] *Ibid.*

[76] Center for Breastfeeding Information, "Breastfeeding Fact Sheet--1991," Franklin Park, IL: La Leche League International, 1991.

[77] Sally Kneidel, "Nursing beyond One Year," *New Beginnings* 6, no. 4, July-Aug 1990, p. 101.

[78] Committee on Nutrition, American Academy of Pediatrics, "Follow-up on Weaning Formulas," *Pediatrics* 83, 1989, p. 1067.

[79] Antonio Novello, MD, US Surgeon General, "You Can Eat Healthy," *Parade Magazine*, 11 Nov 1990, p. 5.

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The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes the importance of nursing up to two years of age or beyond.[80] Besides, the number of mothers currently nursing past infancy has created a nationwide market for a book on the subject, which includes an entire chapter on nursing past age four.[81] Some people are upset, if not shocked, to learn that children can nurse for so long. Curiously, these same people are hardly surprised to see kindergartners sucking their thumbs or fingers. The truth is that the need to suck, like many other dependency needs, does not disappear overnight, and often lasts longer than we as a society are willing to accept. Indeed, the average age of weaning around the world is 4.2 years.[82]

Meeting a child's dependency needs is the key to helping that child achieve independence. And children outgrow these needs according to their own unique timetable. Some youngsters who continue to nurse well into childhood are for many years nearly weaned. Actual weaning, says La Leche League, is a personal decision to be made by each mother, based on her particular family situation and individual circumstances.[83] Mothers instinctively know when the time is right.[84]

Following the development of the atomic theory of the Greek philosopher Democritus, people used to believe that matter consisted of minute, indivisible and indestructible particles known as atoms. However, advances in the study of atoms have refuted this notion. At the present time, modern science has revealed that the atom, previously regarded as the

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[80] "Innocenti Declaration on the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding" (1 Aug 1990), was adopted by 32 governments and 10 UN and other agencies at a WHO/UNICEF meeting cosponsored by USAID and SIDA.
[81] Norma Jane Bumgarner, *Mothering Your Nursing Toddler*, Franklin Park, IL: La Leche League International, 1990.
[82] Ester Davidowitz, "The Breastfeeding Taboo," *Redbook,* July 1992, p. 114.
[83]La Leche League International, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding, rev. ed.,* Franklin Park, IL: La Leche League International, 1991, p. 254.
[84] Elizabeth N. Baldwin, Esq., "Extended Breastfeeding and the Law", *Mothering Magazine*, 1993. Available at: http://www.lalecheleague.org/law/lawextended.html

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smallest particle, can actually be split. This fact only emerged in the last century, but was revealed in the Qur'an (10/61) over 1,400 years ago:**"…Not even an atom's weight eludes your Lord, either on earth or in heaven. Nor is there anything smaller than that, or larger, which is not in a Clear Book."**

These are but a few examples of scientific facts mentioned in the Qur'an. For such precise knowledge to reach Muhammad, an illiterate man,[85] more than 14 centuries ago is manifest proof that the Qur'an is the Word of God and that Muhammad was His Messenger. A number of scientific facts are also mentioned in the sayings of Prophet Muhammad. These include, among many other things, the health benefits of cupping, the amazing benefits and uses of henna, the seven layers of Earth, the different colors of flames, the importance of Quarantine to prevent epidemics from spreading, and the miraculous healing power of the black seed (also known as *Nigella sativa* seed).

Prophet Muhammad's instructions also contain numerous beneficial factors. These include the benefits of acts of worship, such as ablution performed before the prayer, the obligatory and optional ritual bath, the prayer and fasting. Whatever he commands or recommends his followers to do has been proven to be highly beneficial. This includes his instructions to them to sleep on the right side, prohibition of lying down on one's stomach, the benefits of taking a siesta, the health benefits of *siwaak*,[86]

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[85] God says in the Qur'an (29/48), **"Not before this did you recite any Book, or inscribe it with your right hand, for then those who follow falsehood would have doubted."**

[86] A *siwaak* is a natural toothbrush made from the twigs of the Salvadora persica tree. The end of the *siwaak* is generally shaped into a brush through biting or chewing, which serves to separate the fibers and release the healing herbal powers of the twig. According to a study published in 2007 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7103208.stm), researchers at the well-known Wrigley Company carried out tests on nine volunteers. Writing in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, they found mints laced with Magnolia killed 20 times more bacteria than mints without. After half an hour, the magnolia mint had killed more than 60% of the bacteria, compared to just 3.6% among those who had consumed a normal mint. Magnolia bark extract demonstrated a significant anti-bacterial activity against organisms responsible for oral malodor and can be incorporated into mints and chewing gum for improved breath freshening benefits.

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the benefits of circumcision and growing a beard for men, the Islamic method of slaughtering animals which involves cutting the trachea, the esophagus and the two blood vessels on either side of the throat; prohibition of consuming the meat of animals that eat dirt, such as human feces and dead animals; the prohibition of consuming the meat of meat-eating animals, predatory birds, such as falcons and eagles.

Prophet Muhammad also warned against drinking water while standing, excessive eating and drinking, having intercourse with one's wife during her monthly period, committing fornication, adultery and incest, having tattoos, and free mingling, due to the detrimental harm these are bound to cause.

In general, Islam declares anything that is good lawful and considers anything that is bad forbidden. As the Qur'an (7/157) states, **"Those who follow the Messenger, the Unlettered Prophet, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel, commanding them to do right and forbidding them to do wrong, making good things halal for them and bad things haram for them…"**

It is worth noting here, however, that the miraculous nature of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's saying are not restricted to science and health issues. They also cover numerous other aspects which reveal the wisdom of Islam behind whatever it commands or forbids. They all prove beyond any doubt that Muhammad is a prophet and testify to the truthfulness and credibility of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* (Muhammad's sayings and actions) which God revealed to him. As the Qur'an (25/6) states, **"Say [to them, O Muhammad], 'The One Who sent it down is He Who knows all hidden secrets in the heavens and earth. He is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.'"**

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The Life and Mission of Jesus

Very little is known about the early years of Jesus' life. The Virgin Mary gave birth to him in Palestine. All Muslims believe in and respect Jesus because of the numerous references to him in the Qur'an and the prophetic sayings which describe him as one of Allah's greatest prophets.

The essence of Jesus' teachings was based on the belief in a unique God and worshipping none but Him. In addition, he preached love and peace and performed several miracles, which he never attributed to himself. In fact, he always said that he had done all that by God's leave.[87] In John 5/30, Jesus is quoted as saying, **"I can of Myself do nothing."** Luke 11/20 reads, **"But if I cast out demons with the finger of God..."** Jesus used to pray to God, Creator of the heavens and earth. Upon bringing Lazarus back to life, John 11/41-42 states, **"And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.'"** Simon (Peter), a major disciple, says, **"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know."** (Acts 2/22) Even those people who witnessed those miracles knew that they were approved by God and that Jesus was a prophet of God. In the case of the widow's son, whom Jesus brought back to life by God's leave, those present proclaimed that **"a great prophet has risen up among us; and, God has visited His people."**(Luke 7/16).

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[87]In spite of all this, Christian preachers insist on going against the teachings of Christ by ascribing divine attributes to him due to the miracles he had performed. One may, therefore, ask: Why do you not consider Moses a god since he hit the sea with his staff and it parted (Exodus14/16-29) and threw his staff down and it turned into a snake (Exodus 4/2-5), all by God's leave? Why do you not consider Joshua a god as well although he ordered the sun and the moon to stop and they obeyed his command, by God's leave (Joshua 10/12-13)? Why do you not consider Elijah a god although he quickened the dead, by God's leave (1 Kings 17/20-22)? Elisha also brought the dead back to life, by God's leave, (2 Kings 4/32-35) so why do you not consider him a god? In fact, even a man was raised from the dead when his body touched Elisha's bones, by God's leave (2 Kings 13/20-21). Ezekiel (37/7-10) also brought a vast army of thousands of people back to life, all by God's leave. Still none of these is considered God or even a god.

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The Qur'an mentions Jesus, Son of Mary, by name 25 times, whereas it mentions the name of Prophet Muhammad only 5 times. The Qur'an (3/42-62) says, **"And [mention] when the angels said, 'O Mary,[88] indeed Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds. O Mary, be devoutly obedient to your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow [in prayer].' That is from the news of the unseen which We reveal to you, [O Muhammad]. And you were not with them when they cast their pens as to which of them should be responsible for Mary. Nor were you with them when they disputed. [And mention] when the angels said, 'O Mary, indeed Allah gives you good tidings of a Word[89] from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, Son of Mary, distinguished in this world and the hereafter and among those brought near [to Allah]. He will speak to the people in the cradle and in maturity and will be of the righteous.' She said, 'My Lord, how will I have a child when no man has touched me?' [The angel] said, 'Such is Allah; He creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, *'Be,'* and it is. And He will teach him writing and wisdom[90] and the Torah and the Gospel and [make him] a messenger to the Children of Israel, [who will say], 'Indeed I have come to you with a sign from your Lord in that I design for you from clay [that which is] like the form of a bird,[91] then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave.**

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[88]Maryam (Mary) is the only woman mentioned by name in the Qur'an. In fact, her name appears 34 times. In addition, there is no single chapter in the Bible bearing her name, whereas an entire chapter in the Qur'an is named after her. Indeed, no Qur'anic chapter mentions the names of Prophet Muhammad's mother, his daughters or his wives. It is owing to the great love Muslims have for Mary that many of them name their daughters after her.

[89]This refers to Jesus, who was conceived merely by God's command, "Be."

[90]That is, the teachings of the Prophets.

[91]This miracle and that of the table of food that descended from the heavens, among other miracles, are mentioned in the Qur'an but not in the Bible.

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And I cure the blind and the leper, and I give life to the dead – by Allah's leave. And I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses. Indeed in that is a sign for you, if you are believers. And [I have come] confirming what was before me of the Torah and to make lawful for you some of what was forbidden to you. And I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, so fear Allah and obey me. Indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is the straight path.' But when Jesus felt [persistence in] disbelief from them, he said, 'Who are my supporters for [the cause of] Allah?' The disciples said, 'We are supporters for [the cause of] Allah. We have believed in Allah and testify that we are Muslims [submitting to Him]. Our Lord, we have believed in what You revealed and have followed the messenger [Jesus], so count us among the witnesses [to truth].' And the unbelievers planned, but Allah planned. And Allah is the best of planners. [Mention] when Allah said, 'O Jesus, indeed I will take you and raise you[92] to Myself and purify you from those who disbelieve and make those who follow you [in submission to Allah alone] superior to those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me is your return, and I will judge between you concerning that in which you used to differ. And as for those who disbelieved, I will punish them with a severe punishment in this world and the hereafter, and they will have no helpers.' But as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, He will give them in full their rewards, and Allah does not like the wrongdoers. This is what We recite to you, [O Muhammad], of [Our] verses and the precise [and wise] message. Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam. He created Him from dust; then He said to him, 'Be,' and he was. The truth is from your Lord, so do not be among the doubters. Then whoever argues with you about it

[92]God saved Jesus and raised him to heaven alive, in body and soul and without any harm whatsoever having been inflicted on him.

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after [this] knowledge has come to you – say, 'Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then supplicate earnestly [together] and invoke the curse of Allah upon the liars [among us].' Indeed, this is the true narration. And there is no deity except Allah. And indeed, Allah is the Exalted in Might, the Wise."

In chapter 19, called *Maryam* (Mary), we also read, **"And mention, [O Muhammad], in the Book [the story of] Mary, when she withdrew from her family to a place toward the east. And she took, in seclusion from them, a screen. Then We sent to her Our Angel, and he represented himself to her as a well-proportioned man. She said, 'Indeed, I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you, [so leave me], if you fear Allah.' He said, 'I am only the messenger of your Lord to give you [news of] a pure boy [i.e., son].' She said, 'How can I have a boy while no man has touched me and I have not been unchaste?' He said, 'Thus [it will be]; your Lord says, "It is easy for Me, and We will make him a sign to the people and a mercy from Us. And it is a matter [already] decreed.'" So she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a remote place. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree. She said, 'Oh, I wish I had died before this and was in oblivion, forgotten.' But he called her from below her, 'Do not grieve; your Lord has provided beneath you a stream. And shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates. So eat and drink and be contented. And if you see from among humanity anyone, say, "Indeed, I have vowed to the Most-Merciful abstention, so I will not speak today to [any] man."' Then she brought him to her people, carrying him. They said, 'O Mary, you have certainly done a thing unprecedented. O the like of Aaron [in piety], your father was not a man of evil, nor was your mother unchaste.' She pointed toward him. They said, 'How can a baby in the**

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cradle speak?' He said, 'I am the slave of Allah, He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet. He has made me blessed wherever I am and directed me to perform prayer and pay *zakaat*,[93] **as long as I live and to be dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me a wretched tyrant. Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die and the day I am raised up again alive.' That is Jesus, Son of Mary, the word of truth about which they are in doubt. It does not befit Allah to take a son; exalted is He! When He decrees an affair, He only says to it, 'Be,' and it is. [Jesus said], 'And indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path.'"** (Qur'an 19/16-36)

The words of Prophet Muhammad also include references to Jesus. In one narration (*hadeeth*), he said, "Both in this world and in the hereafter, I am the nearest of people to Jesus, Son of Mary. The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different but their religion is one." (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 3370) He also said in another *hadeeth,* "When any human being is born, Satan touches him at both sides of the body with his two fingers, except for Jesus, Son of Mary, whom Satan tried to touch but failed, for he touched the placenta-cover instead."[94] In fact, this was Allah's response to the prayer of his grandmother, the wife of 'Imraan, when she said, **"…And I have named her Mary, and I seek refuge for her in You and [for] her descendants from Satan, the expelled [from the mercy of Allah]."**(Qur'an 3/36) [95]

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[93] *Zakaat* (literally, 'purification', as it serves to purify the heart of the person who pays it from selfishness and greed) is a fixed percentage of wealth on specified properties to be given to deserving poor and needy people.

[94] *Ibid.,* 3216.

[95] Textual evidence from the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's traditions honor Jesus and hold him in high esteem, stating that he was protected from the Devil, as opposed to the Biblical claim in Luke 4/1-13 and Matthew 4/1-11 that he was tempted by the Devil. In fact, there is a clear inconsistency between the two sources: did the devil test him and tempt him "on a pinnacle of the temple" and then on "an exceedingly high mountain", as in Matthew 4/5-8, or "a high mountain" first and then "on a pinnacle of the temple", as in Luke 4/5-9?

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The Qur'an teaches that Jesus was as pure in heart as was Muhammad, and that they were both righteous and honorable, for they were both messengers whom Allah Almighty sent with the truth. Muslims even consider not invoking Allah's peace and blessings upon Jesus once his name is mentioned a sign of disrespect to this noble prophet and messenger. Due to his high status is Islam, most Muslims are against anyone drawing his picture or playing his role in movies, for prophets in Islam are far greater than can be likened to or placed on an equal footing with anyone else. While Paul considers Jesus "… a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Hebrews 5/5) based on Psalms 110/1-4, this is not acceptable in Islam, for Jesus is definitely more exalted than a priest. In fact, he is one of the greatest of God's messengers and one of those amongst them who are of firm resolution, namely, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them all.

While Muslims reject the idea of deifying Christ just as they do regarding Muhammad himself, they refuse to derogate him or show disrespect to him in any way. Although the writers of the Gospels attribute to Jesus Christ great words and deeds which call to tolerance, love and goodness, they have, deplorably enough, also attributed to him words which show total disrespect to him, describing him as someone who does not practice what he preaches, God forbid! This saddens every Muslim and clearly testifies to the fact that false statements have been attributed to him. For example, the writers of the Gospels quote him as saying in Matthew 5/22, **"But I say to you, That whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:[96] and whoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council:[97] but whoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."** However, they falsely accuse him of doing things which contradict his statements. For instance, they claim that he said, **"And when He had looked around at them with anger…"**

[96] That is, he has to be killed.
[97] That is, he has to be killed.

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Mark 3/5**;** that he insulted scribes and Pharisees, saying **"You fools and blind…"** (Matthew 23/17), **"O generation of vipers"** (Matthew 3/7), and **"You serpents, you generation of vipers** (Matthew 23/33); and that he said about Herod, **"Go, and tell that fox."** (Luke 13/32)

They even claim that his insults were not confined to enemies but also included friends as well! Examples include Luke 3/7: **"Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers"**; Matthew12/34: **"O generation of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."** They also claim that he insulted Peter, **"Get you behind me, Satan: you are an offense unto me."** (Matthew 16/23); that he insulted two of his disciples, **"O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe"** (Luke 24/25); that he insulted a Pharisee invited him to eat with, saying to him and those with him, **"but your inward part is full of extortion and wickedness, you fools."** (Luke 11/39-40) Would someone who sincerely love Jesus Christ say to him, **"You insult us"** (Luke 11/45) when he reads in 1 Corinthians 6/10, **"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."**

Also when we read that Jesus Christ said, **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you,"** (Matthew 5/44), we find that the writers of the Gospels accuse him of failing to practice what he preached, as he called for killing his enemies! We read in Luke 19/27, **"But those my enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring here, and slay them before me."**

As for the call to show kindness to haters and pray for offenders, this turns, in practice, according to the writers of the Gospels, to abusing them and invoking curses upon them, as in (Matthew 23/14) **"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"**

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Also, when Jesus calls to showing kindness to the poor and taking good care of them, so much so that Matthew 19/21 quotes him as saying, **"If you will be perfect, go and sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."** John 12/5 accuses him of contradicting his statements: **"Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarius and given to the poor?"**

Also, when Jesus states, **"Honor your father and your mother"** (Luke 18/20), and **"You shall love your neighbor as yourself"** (Mark 12/31), we find that Luke 14/26 accuses Jesus contradicts himself: **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."** He also accuses him of preventing one of his disciples from burying his dead father when he asked him if he could do so: **"Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."** (Matthew 8/22) Even the well-known biblical text which calls to patience and forbearance, namely, **"but whosoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also"** (Matthew 5/39) has been contradicted by the writers of the Gospels! In John 18/22-23, for instance, we read, **"And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, 'Answer you the high priest so?' Jesus answered him, 'If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why strike me?'"**

Not only do they describe Jesus as being tyrannical and rough, as in Matthew 21/12, **"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves"**, they go as far as accusing him of saying horrible statements, such as **"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword"** (Matthew 10/34), and **"I am come to send fire on the earth; and would that it were already kindled?"** (Luke 12/49).

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They accuse him of killing children: **"And I will kill her children with death"** (revelation 2/23), and claim that he was hard-hearted, as he invoked a curse on a fig tree that had no fruits on it when he was rather hungry: **"And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on you again forever. And presently the fig tree withered away."** (Matthew 21/19) They also claim that he intentionally deceived other than his disciples by using parables so that they would not understand anything and thus not repent. In Mark 4/11-12, for instance, we read, **"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are outside, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them."**

They accuse him of being a racist, describing all nations, with the exception of Jews, as dogs and pigs and that he treated his mother and brothers with contempt, as in Matthew 15/22-26, Mark 7/27 and Matthew 7/6. They also accuse him of treating his mother and brothers with contempt, as in Mark 3/32-35, Matthew 12/47-50 and Luke 8/21. They also accuse Jesus of lying to his disciples, telling them that he was not going to the feast, but he did secretly, as in John 7/8. They also state in Luke 23/43 that he said to the man being crucified beside him, **"Verily I say unto you, Today shall you be with me in Paradise",** despite the fact that he said to Mary Magdalene, two days after the alleged crucifixion, **"Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father."**

The Christian doctrine erroneously claims that Christ descended into hell after his crucifixion and stayed three days there before his resurrection (1Peter 3/19; Acts 2/31; Ephesians 4/9) in imitation of what pagans say about Krishna, Adonis, Hermes and other 'pagan gods', when Paradise and Hell are two different places! Christian theologians insist that the Psalms text (22/6) that says, **"But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people"** is attributed to Christ, in line with Pauls' accusation of Christ that the latter had brought shame upon himself: **"Let us go forth therefore unto him outside the camp, bearing his reproach."** (Hebrews 13/13).

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They also show total disrespect to him, as in Luke 8/3-4, **"And certain women, who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, who ministered unto him of their substance."** Despite this, we read in Deuteronomy 23/18, **"You shall not bring the wages of a harlot, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD your God for any vow: for even both of these are an abomination unto the LORD your God."**

A book which offends Jesus Christ, one of God's great prophets and messengers, can never be trusted. In fact, such blatant abuse and disrespect[98] shown to Christ definitely causes those who truly love Jesus Christ to lose confidence in the Christian Holy Book, and prompts them to look for a better source which presents the great and noble teachings of Christ as they are and without distortion or inconsistencies. There is no other source that would provide such authentic information and which has been guarded against corruption except the one that was revealed to Prophet Muhammad who staunchly defended Jesus Christ.

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[98] In John 13/4-5, we read, **"He rose from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded."** A sensible reader may ask, "What is the relationship between stripping and washing feet?" Besides, is it not the right of sincere lovers of Christ to condemn what John said regarding him? For instance, in John 13/23-25, we read, **"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spoke. He then lying on Jesus' breast said unto him, Lord, who is it?"** A provocative text such as this would definitely be quoted by immoral people to justify their corrupt practices from which God Almighty has absolved Jesus Christ.

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Prophet Muhammad

Jesus told the Jews that after him no prophet would come from among them and that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to a nation more worthy of it. (Matthew 21/43) By this he meant Ishmael's descendants whom the Jews rejected.[99] As the Qur'an (61/6) states, **"And [mention] when Jesus, Son of Mary, said, 'O children of Israel, indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of the Torah and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad.' But when he came to them with clear proofs, they said, 'This is obvious magic.'"**

In the New Testament, Jesus prophesizes the coming of Muhammad in these words, **"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment… However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak of His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify me..."** (John 16/7-14) Since that time, who has glorified Jesus as much as Muhammad did?[100]

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[99]Despite the fact that the Jews rejected the descendants of Ishmael, the Arabs, and stubbornly refused to accept Muhammad as a prophet even though he perfectly fit the description of the prophesized prophet in their book, the Qur'an still does justice to them. It states in 2/47, for instance, that Allah preferred them above all other nation of their time. Many stories in the Qur'an speak of them and their prophets, particularly Prophet Moses, who is mentioned by name 136 times. Prophet Muhammad also encouraged Muslims to fast on the 10th of Muharram (the first month of the Islamic calendar) in gratitude to Allah for saving Moses and the Children of Israel from the army of Pharaoh by parting the Red Sea for them. Muslims also hold the prophets of the Children of Israel in high esteem, and so they name their children after them.

[100]Many people have gone to extremes regarding the person of Jesus Christ. Some reject him altogether and spare no effort to discredit him, some others deny his existence altogether considering him to be a fictional character, yet some others contradict his teachings which call to belief in one true God and go as far as attributing divine qualities to him and even worshipping him. Only Islam has the decisive say about him, defends him, confirms his prophethood and calls to the same message he brought, namely, to worship the One True God.

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Prophet Muhammad is mentioned several times in various places in the Old Testament despite the distortion and corruption it has undergone. For example, in Deuteronomy 18/18-19, we read, "**I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him."**

Makkah (Baca), where Prophet Muhammad received his divine revelations, is mentioned in Psalms 84/6, which says, **"As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a spring; the rain also covers it with pools."** The Qur'an (3/96) states, **"Indeed, the first House [of worship] established for mankind was that at Baca [i.e., Makkah], blessed, and a guidance for the worlds."** Prophet Abraham also mentioned the same place where he raised the foundations of the sacred House of God (the *Ka'bah*), indicating that it was a barren valley. As the Qur'an (14/37) states, **"Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House…"** Isaiah 21/13 also mentions revelation in Arabia.

The fact that Prophet Muhammad would be illiterate is also mentioned in Isaiah 29/12: **"And when they give the book to one who cannot read, saying, 'Read this,' he says, 'I cannot read.'"** (RSV) In *Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*, *hadeeth* no. 3, we read the following about the first revelation to Prophet Muhammad: He was in the cave when the truth descended upon him. The angel came to him and said, "Read." He said, "I cannot read." The Prophet, narrating the incident later, said, "So the angel held me so forcefully that I felt exhausted, then he let go of me and said, 'Read.' I said, 'I cannot read.' He held me again so forcefully that I felt exhausted, then he let go of me and said, 'Read.' I said, 'I cannot read.' He held me so forcefully for the third time, then he let go of me and said, **"'Read in the name of your Lord who created – created man from a clot [of blood]. Read and your Lord is the most Generous.'"** (Qur'an 96 /1-3) The Qur'an (7/157) also states: **"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel..."**

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The prophesy of Jesus and his predecessors was fulfilled in Arabia in the year 571 CE. The Comforter was born amongst the Children of Ishmael,[101] who were polytheists and idolaters. Muhammad stood out among his people due to the purity of his character, his love for truth, and his compassion for the poor and the weak. He came to be known as '*as-saadiq*' (the truthful) and '*al-ameen*' (the trustworthy) amongst his people. He was chosen by Almighty Allah at the age of forty to be His last messenger and prophet to all humankind. He preached the belief that Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the whole universe and all that it contains, is One and that He alone deserves to be worshipped.

God supported Prophet Muhammad with numerous miracles that were confirmed by eyewitnesses. These include the splitting of the moon (Qur'an 54/1) and the hurricane that God sent to counter a full-scale assault by the enemy on Madeenah. (Qur'an 33/9) Such miracles were mentioned in the Qur'an after their occurrence, and the unbelievers of the time, eager to find faults in the Qur'an, did not find any contradiction whatsoever between the Qur'an accounts and the actual events. While these miracles strengthened the believers' faith, it prompted many unbelievers to embrace Islam. Many other miracles were also mentioned in the *hadeeth,* such as the flowing of water from between the fingers of Prophet Muhammad, the increase in the amount of food during the digging of the trench around Madeenah, and the foretelling of some future events which Allah revealed to him. However, the Qur'an remains the greatest and eternal miracle of the Prophet, for it mentions numerous linguistic, scientific and legislative issues, among other matters that are of a miraculous nature.

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[101]In spite of the fact that Ishmael was the oldest son of Prophet Abraham as, is clear from Genesis 16/16, **"Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram,"** and Genesis 21/5, **"Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him,"** the Bible comes to contradict itself by claiming otherwise in Genesis 22/2, **"And He said, 'Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love.'"**

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Prophet Muhammad lived among his companions, his family and people. There was nothing about him that was unknown or kept secret. His life was like an open book before them, revealing everything about him, down to the minutest details. That was why those who believed in him sacrificed everything they had to support the truth he brought them when they were convinced of his prophethood. Meanwhile, all he had to give them was the true revelations he received from Allah Almighty. He called to fraternity which, in Islam, makes no distinction whatsoever between people as to race, color, language, wealth or sex. The Qur'an (49/13) confirms this fact, saying, **"O Mankind! We created you from a male and female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. The noblest among you in Allah´s sight is the most pious of You. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware."**

The Prophet emphasized that lineage has no value in the sight of God:[102] "Your Lord is One, and your father [Adam] is one. An Arab is not better than a non-Arab, nor is a non-Arab better than an Arab; similarly, a white person is not better than a black person, nor is a black person better than a white person – except through piety and righteousness." (*Ahmad*, 23105). This means that piety and righteousness are the criteria by which Allah judges people, regardless of color or race.

Slavery was widespread throughout the world. In fact, it was sanctioned by manmade religions of the time and by the Bible itself, as in Genesis 9/25-27, Exodus 21/2-12 and Ephesians 6/5. However, when God sent Muhammad as a messenger, he considered freeing slaves one of the greatest righteous deeds that bring one closer to God as well as one of the greatest means of making amends for sins. As the Qur'an **(90/11-13)** states, **"But he has not braved the steep ascent. What will convey to you what the steep ascent is?? It is freeing a slave."**

[102]Abu Lahab, an uncle of Muhammad, rejected God's message and spared no effort to fight Islam and Muslims. As a result, the Qur'an condemned him, and so his relationship to the Prophet did not avail him in the least.

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Allah Almighty sent Prophet Muhammad as **"a mercy to the worlds."** (Qur'an 21/107) Prophet Muhammad said, **"Those who are merciful will be shown mercy by the Most Merciful. Be merciful those on earth, and the One above the heavens have mercy upon you." (*At-Tirmidhee*, 1928)** He also said, **"Allah Almighty will not show mercy to the person who does not show mercy to other people." (*Muslim*, 5983)** In fact, he was the epitome of mercy. As the Qur'an **(3/159)** states, **"It is by Allah's grace that you were gentle with them; for if you had been harsh and hard-hearted, they would surely have deserted you; so bear with them, pray for forgiveness for them and take counsel with them in the conduct of affairs..."** Once a Bedouin entered the mosque and began to urinate. The Companions of Allah's Messenger urged him to stop, but the Prophet said, 'Don't interrupt him; leave him alone.' After the Bedouin finished urinating, the Prophet said to him, 'These mosques are not meant for urine and filth, but only for the remembrance of Allah, prayer and the recitation of the Qur'an.' The Prophet then gave orders to one of the people who brought a bucket of water and poured it over the urine. (*Muslim*, 611).

He pardoned a Bedouin who treated him harshly even though he was the head of state. Anas ibn Malik narrated, "I was once walking with Allah's Messenger, and he was wearing a thick robe made in Najran which had rough edges. A Bedouin caught up with him and strongly pulled him by his robe. I could see the side of the Prophet's neck with a clear mark made by the edge of his robe as a result of the Bedouin's harsh pull. He then said to him, 'Muhammad! Give an order for me to be given something of the money Allah has given you.' The Prophet turned to him, smiled and gave instructions for a payment to be made to him." (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 3080)

He also forgave Haatib who had committed high treason by writing a letter informing the enemy, the Quraysh, of the Prophet's plan. Haatib handed the letter to a woman and paid her some money in return for giving the letter to the Quraysh leaders. Allah informed the Prophet of his plan and so he commissioned two men to go ahead, catch up with the woman and seize the letter. The Prophet not only pardoned Haatib but also praised him for his support for Islam. (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 3080)

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He was a gentle teacher and pleasant to those who made mistakes in performing acts of worship. Mu'aawiyah ibn Al-Hakam narrated, "While I was praying with the Messenger of Allah, a man sneezed and I said, '*Yarhamuk-Allaah* (May Allah have mercy on you).' The people glared at me and I said, 'May my mother be bereft of me, why are you looking at me?' The people struck their hands against their thighs, and when I saw that they were telling me to be quiet, I fell silent. When the Messenger of Allah concluded the prayer he called me. May my father and mother be ransomed for him, for he neither hit me, nor rebuked me, nor reviled me. I have never seen a teacher better than him, before or after. He said, 'This prayer of ours is not meant for ordinary human speech; rather, it is glorification and exaltation of Allah and the recitation of the Qur'an.'" (*Muslim*, 1151)

He showed mercy even to his enemies and grieved a great deal for their refusal to accept the truth. As the Qur'an (18/6) says, **"Perhaps you may destroy yourself with grief if they do not believe in this message."** and (35/8), **"…Do not destroy yourself with grief for them…"** He even forgave those who intentionally attempted to kill him and do him harm to him even though he could have inflicted a severe punishment on them had he wanted to. It happened once that Ghawrath ibn Al-Haarith attempted to assassinate him in his sleep; however, when the Prophet woke up and got the better of him he simply forgave him and let him go even after he introduced him to Islam and he refused to accept it. (*Ahmad*, 14635) When 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy, the chief of hypocrites in Madeenah, who had long hurt the Prophet, died, the Prophet wanted to ask for forgiveness for him more than seventy times and even prayed for him until Allah revealed a verse (9/84) which mildly reproached him for doing so.

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Muhammad's enemies went as far as subjecting him and members of his clan and supporters to an economic and social boycott, and they remained in this state of near starvation and severe deprivation for two or three years until they became feeble and overstrained. When the Prophet became more powerful following his migration to Madeenah, his Companions apprehended Thumaamah ibn Uthaal, a chieftain of the Banu Haneefah who was among the most powerful Arab rulers before the advent of Islam. Thumaamah, was on his way to Madeenah bent on killing the Prophet. The Prophet's kindness to him convinced him and his fellow prisoners to embrace Islam, and, to return the favor, Thumaamah set out to punish the Quraysh by imposing an economic boycott on them even if that meant this would affect his highly profitable business relationship with the Quraysh. He ordered his people to withhold supplies from the Quraysh and vowed that he would not lift it until the Prophet gave permission to do so. The boycott gradually began to have effect, raising prices and causing many to go hungry. The pleaded with Muhammad to instruct Thumaamah to lift the boycott. Despite the great harm the Quraysh had inflicted on Muhammad and his followers for so many years, and despite the fact that this was an opportunity for him to avenge himself on them and force them to embrace Islam, he chose to forgive them and ordered that the boycott be lifted.[103]

Also, when he victoriously returned to Makkah, his hometown from which the Makkan pagans had unjustly expelled him and his followers, the pagans were sure that he would exact his vengeance on them. None of that happened. He stood at the door of the Ka'bah and said to them, "How do you think I should act toward you?" "With kindness, gracious and mercy, brother," they replied. "Be it so, declared the Prophet. "I say to you as Prophet Joseph said to his brothers, **'There is no blame on you today; may Allah forgive you, for He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.'"** (Qur'an 12/92) Then he said to them, "Go, for you are free." (*As-Sunan Al-Kubraa*, 18648)

[103] Ibn Hishaam, *Biography of the Messenger of God,* p. 57.

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Abu Sufyaan, a notable Quraysh leader and an avowed enemy of the Prophet who left no stone unturned to fight against Islam and the Muslims. However, when the Prophet victoriously entered Makkah after a long absence, he did not avenge himself on him. After the latter willingly embraced Islam, the Prophet granted him some special privilege to retain his prestige among his people. He said, "Whoever enters Abu Sufyaan's house will be safe, whoever enters his own house and shuts the door will be safe, and whoever enters the sacred area around the Ka'bah will be safe." (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 4577)

He also pardoned 'Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl, one of the prominent Quraysh leaders who had shown a great deal of hostility to him, and even granted him security. When 'Ikrimah approached Makkah, the Prophet said to his Companions, "Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl will come to you a believer and an immigrant, so do not curse his father. Cursing the dead hurts the living and does not reach the dead." (*Al-Muwatta'*, 601) The Prophet welcomed him warmly. (*Al-Haakim*, vol. 3, p. 269)

The Prophet also granted amnesty to 'Umayr ibn Wahb who had attempted to murder him with the support of Safwaan ibn Umayyah after the Prophet informed him of the murder plot they had hatched.[104] He even pardoned Safwaan ibn Umayyah

[104] Safwaan, a Qurash notable, was extremely depressed by the fact that his father and his brother were both killed at Badr, the first major battle between the Muslims and the Quraysh pagans. Before the Prophet's emigration to Madeenah, Umayr ibn Wabh used to cause the Prophet and his followers a great deal of harm. Although he escaped death and captivity at Badr, his son Wahb was taken prisoner. Safwaan and Umayr sat next to the Ka'bah and the topic of discussion was, inevitably, the Battle of Badr when Umayr said, "Had it not been for the fact that I am encumbered by debt which I cannot pay off and that my children are so young that, if something should happen to me, they would suffer much hardship, I would have gone to Madeenah pretending to pay my son's ransom whom they hold as a prisoner, and I will make sure to kill Muhammad." Safwaan realized that a great opportunity was opening up for him. He said to Umayr, "Do not worry about your debt; I will pay it all. Be reassured about your children; I will look after them for you. They will not be in need of anything I can provide." Umayr was serious in his intention and did not make the proposition to hold back from implementing it. He promised his friend that he would depart as soon as possible and he made Safwaan promise he would not say a word about their agreement to anyone. Secrecy was extremely important for the success of their venture. Umayr ordered that his sword be sharpened for him and poisoned. He then

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himself. (*Al-Muwatta'*, 1132) and gave him a large gift of 300 camels in three successive instalments (*Muslim*, 5975) even when he was still a non-Muslim. Seeing how generous the Prophet was despite the ascetic life he led, Safwaan cheerfully embraced Islam and said, "Kings do not make such gifts willingly. No one can give so generously except a prophet. I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah, and that you are Allah's Messenger." (*Kanz Al-'Ummaal*, 30170)

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set off secretly, not telling anyone of his purpose. In Madeenah, Umar ibn Al-Khattaab was sitting with a group of Muslims, talking about their victory at Badr. Suddenly Umayr appeared. Umar was the first one to notice him as he dismounted at the doorstep of the Prophet's mosque. He immediately noticed that Umayr had his sword with him. Seeing that, 'Umar told his fellow Muslims that Umayr could only have come for an evil purpose as he was the one to stir up trouble and to guess the Muslims' number to their enemies on Badr day. 'Umar then went to the Prophet and informed him of Umayr's arrival. The Prophet asked Umar to let Umayr in. Umar went to him and took the belt on which he hung his sword, put it round his neck and let him through. When the Prophet saw 'Umar pulling Umayr with the belt of his sword around his neck, he told him to release Umayr and told Umayr to come nearer. To break the tension, Umayr greeted everybody with the greeting used by the pagans: "Happy be your morning." "God has blessed us with a greeting better than yours, Umayr. That is the greeting of peace, the greeting of the people in heaven," the Prophet replied. Umayr replied, "By God, Muhammad, I have heard that only very recently." The Prophet then asked him about the reason for his journey to Madeenah. Umayr used his pretext and said: "I have come for the prisoner you are holding. I would like to request you to be kind to him." The Prophet then asked him why he was carrying his sword on him. Umayr replied, "Confound these swords! They are indeed useless." The Prophet repeated his question about the purpose of his journey and emphasized that he wanted to know the truth. Umayr again said that he simply came for his prisoner and there was nothing more to his being in Madeenah at that moment. "There is indeed," the Prophet said, "a different purpose. You sat with Safwaan ibn Umayyah at Al-Hijr and spoke about the losses of Quraysh at Badr, then you said to him, 'Had it not been for my debts and my children, I would have gone to kill Muhammad.' Safwaan then said he would pay your debts and look after your children in return for your killing me. But God will see to it that your purpose is foiled." Astonished, Umayr said, "I declare that you are the Messenger of God. We used to say that you were lying when you spoke to us about faith and about the revelations you received. Now this is something that nobody witnessed except Safwaan and myself. By God, I know that no one could have told you about it except Him. Praise be to Him that He has guided me to accept Islam and has shown me the right path. I declare that there is no deity but God and that you are His Messenger." The Prophet turned to his companions and said, "Educate your brother in his faith, teach him the Qur'an, and release his prisoner for him." (*Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabeer*, 118)

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Not only did he grant amnesty to Suhayl ibn ‘Amr, one of his avowed enemies who had used his poetic skill to defame him in pubic and lampoon him, but he also asked his companions to be kind to him and not hurt his feelings in any way. He said to them, “Let whoever meets Suhayl ibn ‘Amr not glare at him. Let Suhayl go out freely.” (Ibn ‘Abd Al-Barr, *Al-Istee’aab*, vol. 3, p. 57) He further said, “By Allah, he is a wise, noble man — the like of whom cannot ignore Islam.” (*Usd Al-Ghaabah*, vol. 2, p. 346) He also granted amnesty to Fudhaalah ibn ‘Umayr, one of the chieftains of Quraysh who attempted to assassinate him while the Prophet was circumambulating the Ka’bah in Makkah. (Ibn Katheer, *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah*, 4/342)

Among those to whom he also granted amnesty was Hind, daughter of Utbah and wife of Abu Sufyaan, the noted Quraysh leader, even though she mutilated some of the Prophet’s dead companions in the aftermath of the Battle of Uhud and was one of those who had long incited the pagans to fight the Prophet and his companions. (At-Tabaree, *History of Nations and Kings*, vol. 2, p. 70) He also granted pardon to a number of others including Zaynab, daughter of Al-Haarith, the Jewish woman who tried to kill him by giving him a lamb she had already poisoned (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 3198); the Jews of Banu Al-Mustaliq tribe who had allied with the tribes who attacked Madeenah; the Jews of Khaybar whose lives he spared despite the fact that they strived hard to destroy Islam and the Muslims (Ibn Katheer, *The Prophet’s Biography*, vol. 3, p. 376); those who were made to fight against him in the Battle of Badr against their will; the thirty men who attacked him and his men while the terms of Hudaybiyah truce were being committed to writing and the Hawaazin captives who were in their thousands. (Ibn Hishaam, (*Biography of the Messenger of God,* vol. 1, p. 628 and vol. 5, p. 162)

These and many other examples of the clemency the Prophet showed toward those who showed hostility to him prove beyond any shadow of doubt that he was indeed sent as a mercy to all mankind, for he never avenged himself but chose to forgive and forget, in response to Allah’s statement, **“…those who restrain their rage, pardon other people; and Allah loves the doers of good.”** (3/134) and **“Good deeds and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with good, and he who is your enemy will become your dearest friend. But no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint, and no one is granted it save those who are truly fortunate.”** (41/34-35)

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He once said to Uqbah ibn 'Aamir, "Shall I inform you about the best of all manners in this world and in the hereafter? To maintain a good relationship with those who sever ties with you, to give to those who deprive you, and to forgive those who wrong you." (*Al-Haakim*, 4161) He also said, "…Allah only increases a person in worth for forgiving others, and no person is humble but that Allah raises his status." (*Ahmad*, 7185)

When he was asked to pray to Allah to inflict punishment on his enemies who pelted him with stones until he fell on his side, causing a gash in his face, wounding his lower lip and breaking one of his incisors so much so that blood was streaming down his face, he simply prayed, "O Lord, forgive my people, for they do not know." (*Ibn Hibbaan*, 949) He never showed anger over any personal matters. He would show it only for the sake of Allah. He once said, "A strong man is not one who is good at wrestling, but one who controls himself in a fit of rage." (*Muslim*, 6595). He was an exemplary model of humility. Once a man came to him trembling with fear thinking he was about to meet a great king. The Prophet met him with all humility and said to him, "Calm down, I am not a king. I am the son of a woman who used to eat cured meat in Makkah." (*Ibn Maajah*, 3391)

He once said, "Whoever has an ant's weight of arrogance in his heart will not enter Paradise." (*Muslim*, 225)

Once a solar eclipse coincided with the death of his son, Ibraaheem, and people began to say that this phenomenon was only due to his death. However, he summoned them and proclaimed, "The sun and the moon are two of Allah's signs. They do not eclipse for the death or birth of anyone." (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 1044) In another tradition, he instructed his followers, "Do not praise me excessively as the Son of Mary was praised by the Christians. I am only a slave of Allah. So call me the slave of Allah and His messenger." (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 3372) Once one of his companions said to him, "You are our master and have more power and favor over all of us." The Prophet, not approving such a remark said, "Only Allah is the Master! I am no one's master. Do not let the Devil deceive you. I do not want you to raise me to a status higher than where Allah has placed me. I am only Allah's servant and His messenger." (*Ahmad*, 12295).

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The Islamic law (*Sharee'ah*) with which Allah sent him considers caring for the weak, the poor, the indigent and the orphans an integral part of Islam. As the Qur'an (107/1-3) says, **"Have you seen him who denies the Day of Judgment? That is the one who harshly repulses the orphan and does not encourage the feeding of the poor."** Neglecting the needy may also lead one to the Hellfire. The Qur'an (69/33-34) states, **"Indeed, he used not to believe in Allah, the Most Great, nor did he encourage the feeding of the poor."**

Islam condemns all forms of injustice, aggression and terror. The Qur'an (2/190) says, **"And do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like aggressors."** In 5/32, we also read, **"Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land, it is as if he had killed all mankind. And whoever saves one, it is as if he had saved all mankind."** Such is the brutality of murder in Islam. Muslims are even encouraged to show kindness to animals and are forbidden to harm them in any way. Prophet Muhammad said, "A woman entered Hellfire because of a cat which she had tied, neither giving it food nor setting it free to eat from the vermin of the earth." (*Muslim*, 5804) On another occasion, he mentioned that a prostitute had given water to a dog that was about to die of thirst, and so forgave her sins because of this good act. (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 2392) He was asked, "Messenger of God, are we rewarded for showing kindness toward animals?" He said, "There is a reward for kindness shown to every living being." (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 2323)

The message Prophet Muhammad brought promotes tolerance and respect for the rights of others including non-Muslims. He said, "Whoever does injustice to someone having a covenant of protection (i.e., a non-Muslim), diminishes his right, burdens him with more than he can bear, or takes from him something against his will, I will be his opponent on the Day of Judgment." (*Abu Daawood*, 3054). Islam also commands its adherents to give back their trusts to their rightful owners and to shun all acts of treachery. Prophet Muhammad said, "Give back what you have been entrusted with to whoever entrusted you with it, and do not betray one who has betrayed you." (*At-Tirmidhee*, 1261).

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It strongly disapproves of selfishness and calls its followers to love for others what they love for themselves. The Prophet said, “None of you becomes a true believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 13).

Good morals and respect for women are also part of the Islamic message. The Prophet said, “The believer with the most complete faith is the one who has the best moral behavior. And the best among the believers are those who are best in treating their women.” (*Ahmad*, 7374) Another *hadeeth* states, “A man came to the Prophet and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, to whom should I show kindness most?’ The Prophet said, ‘Your mother.’ The man asked, ‘Who is next?’ The Prophet replied, ‘Your mother.’ The man asked again, ‘Who is next?’ The Prophet again replied, ‘Your mother.’ When the man asked for the fourth time, the Prophet replied, ‘Your father.’” (*Muslim*, 6452)

Islam teaches that the reward for serving and looking after one’s mother is Paradise. The Prophet instructed a man who consulted him about going for *jihad* while he had a mother to take care of by saying, “Stay with her because Paradise is under her feet.” (*An-Nasaa’ee*, 3106).

The Prophet said, “Whoever has a daughter born to him and he does not bury her alive, humiliate her or favor his sons over her, Allah will admit him into Paradise because of her.” (*Ahmad*, 1966) He also said, “Whoever has two daughters or two sisters to whom he is kind as long as they are with him, he and I will be in Paradise [as close to each other] as these,” and he raised his forefinger and middle finger by way of illustration. (Ibn Abu Shaybah, *Al-Musannaf*, 21179) It is clear, therefore, that kindness to women is one of the righteous deeds that are bound to take one to Paradise.

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Prophet Muhammad came with a law which requires men, be they fathers, sons, brothers or even rulers, to look after women, maintain them, meet their legitimate needs, and allow them to enjoy their rights, which Islam has granted them, such as the right to inheritance and to a dowry, and the right to choose whomever they wish to marry and to remarry after divorce.[105] Allah says in the Qur'an (2/228), **"And due to the wives is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable."**

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[105]In Leviticus 15/19-30, we read, **"If a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; also everything that she sits on shall be unclean. Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And whoever touches anything that she sat on shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. If anything is on her bed or on anything on which she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening. And if any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean. If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her customary impurity, or if it runs beyond her usual time of impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her customary impurity. She shall be unclean. Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. Whoever touches those things shall be unclean, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. But if she be cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then the priest shall offer the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for her before the Lord for the discharge of her uncleanness."** Here, the Bible not only considers women remain unclean for half of their lives as well as a source of impurity, it also treats them as offenders who have committed a crime that requires atonement as though it were their choice to do so! The Bible also depicts women in a most humiliating way.In 1 Timothy 5/10, for instance, it is considered one of "the good works" for widows to wash saints' feet. They are also wicked (Zechariah 5/8) and should be forced to marry their husbands' brothers after their death (Deuteronomy 25/5). They are ineligible for inheritance in the presence of male relatives (Deuteronomy 21/15-17 and Numbers 27/1-11), and a man has the right to sell his daughter as a slave (Exodus 21/7). Furthermore, a female divorcee is prohibited from remarrying (Matthew 5/32).

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The religion with which he was sent calls to showing kindness to parents even if they fight against Islam: **"We have enjoined on man to show kindness to his parents; his mother bears him in hardship upon hardship, and his weaning takes two years: Give thanks to Me and to your parents; to Me is the ultimate return. But if they press you to associate something with Me about which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. Yet be kind to them in this world..."** (Qur'an 31/14-15)

It also calls to showing kindness to others. The Prophet said, "Hellfire is forbidden to touch anyone who is approachable, easy-going, soft-spoken and gentle." (*Ahmad*, 3937) It also warns against harshness. The prophet once asked his companions, "Shall I not inform you of the dwellers of Hellfire?" "Yes," they said. He then said, "Every harsh, haughty and arrogant person." (*Muslim*, 7136)

Islam honors and respects human rights, and the implementation of its laws is bound to guarantee peace and harmony between people. The Prophet said, "The real bankrupt from my nation is one who comes on the Day of Judgment with prayers, fasting and charity yet he also brings with him [heinous deeds], as he has insulted, abused, stolen from, killed or beaten others. So his good deeds will be credited to those whom he had wronged. If his good deeds fall short of settling the account, their bad deeds will be added to his, and he will be thrown into the Fire." (*Muslim*, 6531) Islam also commands justice and kindness even with the enemy. Allah says, **"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah."** (Qur'an 5/8)

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In a nutshell, it is a comprehensive religion and way of life that caters to the needs of the mind, the body and the soul, and it is suitable for all times and places. It enjoins all good and forbids all evil deeds.[106]

Before his prophetic mission, Prophet Muhammad was married to Khadeejah, a wealthy and noble lady from Makkah, for whom he had worked as a merchant. When he publicly proclaimed the new faith, his people offered him leadership, wealth and all types of worldly attractions so that he would abandon his call to Islam. However, he declined all this and instead chose to sacrifice everything in an attempt to spread God's message to mankind. Later on, after Allah granted him power and authority following the spread of Islam, he still led a very simple, ascetic life even though he could have lived like a king had he wanted to. He slept on a rough mat and lived in a mud house. He and his family would even go to bed hungry for several successive nights because there was nothing for them to eat for dinner, and most of the bread they contented themselves with was made from barley. (*At-Tirmidhee*, 2400)

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[106]Signs of prophethood of Muhammad include, among many other things, the fact that he was an illiterate man who lived in an environment that lacked education. In spite of this, he brought forth a comprehensive law that addresses every aspect of human life at all times in the areas of belief, acts of worship, dealings and morals. He introduced unprecedented and unrivaled laws, such as laws relating to marriage, divorce, pregnancy, parenting, alimony, inheritance, rights of children, relatives and neighbors, criminal punishment, the necessity of preserving human rights and the ultimate benefits which people must enjoy in order to lead an honorable life (religion, life, the mind, progeny and property). These also include laws governing politics, economics, social life, and the etiquette of eating, drinking, getting dressed, traveling, sleeping, waking up, yawning, sneezing, seeking permission, visiting the sick, and observing personal hygiene. Prophet Muhammad also demonstrated utter seriousness in acting on the teachings to which he called. Had his aim been to realize a personal gain or glory or to have a huge following, what would have been the personal benefit behind, for instance, performing prayer five times a day, performing ablution, taking a ritual bath after sexual intercourse, and observing fast for a whole month once a year from dawn to sunset, especially in the Arabian Desert, which is known for its dry and hot climate, let alone refraining from activities that are widely experienced as giving pleasure, such as drinking, adultery, usury and gambling? It is stated in Deuteronomy 18/20 and Jeremiah 14/15 that God condemns to death whoever falsely claims prophethood just as he condemned Hananiah to death in less than a year (Jeremiah 28/15-17). As for Prophet Muhammad's mission, it lasted for 23 years, and today Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. This clearly testifies to the fact that Muhammad is a true prophet of God.

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He even passed away when his shield was still pawned to a Jewish man in exchange for barley to make bread for his family.

He dedicated all of his life and efforts to ensure that people do only that for which they were created in the first place, namely, to believe in Allah as the only true God and to worship Him alone. As the Qur'an (51/56) states, **"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me."** In fact, this was the only way to save them from misery and to lead them to true happiness in this life and in the hereafter.

Prophet Muhammad, the last of All God's prophets and messengers, died in the year 632 CE, leaving with us the Qur'an, God's final message, and his teachings to guide all of humanity until the Day of Resurrection. In his book *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History,* American writer Michael Hart, states that Muhammad, who topped the list, "was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels." This unique combination entitled him to be classed as the greatest, most influential character in the world. In his book *The Life of Muhammad*, William Muir, the notable Scottish historian, praises the clarity of the words of Prophet Muhammad and the ease of his religion, stating that he accomplished wonderful deeds and that there was no other man in history who succeeded in wakening souls and reviving good morals and virtue in such a short time as he did.

Renowned historian and playwright George Bernard Shaw, in his book, *The Genuine Islam,* vol. 1, no. 8, 1936, states, "The world was in desperate need of a man who had Muhammad's intellect, as he was the prophet who always placed his faith in a place of respect and honor." He adds, "Islam was the religion most able to accommodate all civilizations at all times and that it would claim more ground in Europe in spite of the fact that the clergy of medieval times painted a dark picture of Muhammad and considered him an enemy to Christianity." Shaw further states, "I have studied him – the wonderful man – and in my opinion, far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Savior of Humanity." He continues, "I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness…"

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Alphonse de Lamartine, the famous French poet, says, "Never has a man set for himself, voluntarily or involuntarily, a more sublime aim, since this aim was superhuman: to subvert superstitions which had been interposed between man and his Creator … Never has a man accomplished in such a short time such a huge and lasting revolution in the world…If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astonishing results rare the three criteria of a human genius, who would dare compare any great man in history with Mohammad? ...He moved souls. On the basis of a book, every letter which has become law, he created spiritual nationality which blend together peoples of every tongue and race. …his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire… As regards all the standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask: 'Is there any man greater than he?'"[107]

As Dr. Vaglieri states in *Apologia dell' Islamismo* (*An Interpretation of Islam*), "Muhammad, as a preacher of the religion of God, was gentle and merciful even toward his personal enemies. In him were blended justice and mercy, two of the noblest qualities which a human mind can conceive. It is not difficult to support this with many examples that are to be found in his biographies."[108]

Dr. Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, a renowned orientalist, said, "I cannot conclude this address better than by expressing a hope that the day will come when Christians will honor Christ more by also honoring Muhammad. There is a common ground between Islam and Christianity, and he is a better Christian who reveres the truths enunciated by the Prophet Muhammad."[109]

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[107] Alphonse de Lamartine, *Histoire de la Turquie*, (1854), vol. 2, pp. 276-277.
[108] *Apologia dell' Islamismo*, Rome, A. F. Formiggini, Rome, Italy, 1925, translated from Italian into English as *An Interpretation of Islam* by Dr. Aldo Caselli, Haverford College, Pennsylvania, second edition, 1958, p. 28.
[109] *The Islamic Review,* May 1961, pp. 6-10.

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Doctrines of Christianity and Islam

Many denominations of Christianity believe in the following five doctrines: **(1)** the Trinity, **(2)** the divinity of Jesus, **(3)** the divine sonship of Jesus, **(4)** Original sin, and (5) the atonement.

Islam professes the oneness of Allah, which means that Allah is the only God who deserves to be worshipped and whose help is sought. Indeed, this is a fundamental principle in Islam, as opposed to the triune God of many Christian denominations. Islam sees the deification of Jesus as a reversion to paganism.[110] The Qur'an teaches that Jesus was not God incarnate but rather a prophet and a messenger who, like all other God's prophets, called to the worship of God alone. Islam also rejects the so-called divine sonship of Jesus and does not accept the doctrine of original sin, the vicarious sacrifice and the atonement.

The fundamental doctrines of faith in Islam are six: **(1)** belief in the oneness of God, **(2)** belief in the angels, **(3)** belief in the revealed scriptures, **(4)** Belief in the messengers of God, **(5)** belief in the Day of Resurrection, and **(6)** belief in God's decree (*al-qadar*), both the good and bad aspects of it**.**

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[110]As Will and Ariel state in their book, *The Story of Civilization*, vol. 11, p. 276, "Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it." This applies to the Christianity of Paul and not the true and pure religion of Jesus Christ who called for the worship of God alone.

The Trinity

This doctrine, adhered to by many Christians throughout the world, refers to the existence of three divine, distinct and separate persons in God: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. It is astonishing, however, that Jesus himself never mentioned the Trinity. He said absolutely nothing about three divine persons in a trinity. As a matter of fact, the word "person" itself is not to be found anywhere in the Bible. The concept that Jesus had about Allah was in no way different from the concept that all the previous prophets had it about Him. All of them preached the oneness of God, but never the Trinity.[111]

Jesus affirmed the tradition that had been revealed to the prophets who came before him. **"Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, 'Which is the first commandment of all?' Jesus answered him, 'The first of all the commandments is: Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment."** (Mark 12/28-30).

Other evidence in the Bible shows that Jesus believed in only one God, not in three divine persons in one, as in the following saying, **"You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve."** (Matthew 4/10)

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[111]According to Isaiah 44/24, **"I am the Lord, who makes all things."** We also read in Isaiah 45/5, **"I am the Lord, and there is no other, there is no God besides Me."** In Isaiah 45/18, we also find, **"For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is no other."** 1 Timothy 6/16 also states that God is One **"Who alone has immortality."** Isaiah 46/9 confirms, **"For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me."** The Qur'an (39/62) states, **"Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian and Disposer of all affairs."** It further states in 6/102, **"That is Allah, your Lord! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things, so worship Him; and He is the Disposer of all affairs."** We also read in 25/58, **"And trust in Him who lives and dies not."** The Qur'an also states in 42/11, **"There is nothing like to Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing."** It is only reasonable, therefore, that He who is as such should be worshipped alone.

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The doctrine of the Trinity was incorporated into the teachings of Jesus more than three hundred years after Jesus' departure. The four Canonized Gospels do not contain any reference to the Trinity. Neither Jesus nor his disciples taught this doctrine. Likewise, none of the earlier great scholars or the followers of Jesus preached it. This doctrine was established by the Nicean Council[112] after great controversies and conflict. The Council adopted the view of the minority rather than the majority who believed in monotheism.[113]

However, when considered rationally, the concept of the Trinity is unsustainable. It means to believe in three divine persons who are either finite or infinite. If we consider them infinite, then there are three different infinities, three different omnipotent beings, and consequently three different Gods. However, if we consider them finite, then neither the Father, nor the Son, nor the Holy Ghost can be God. Indeed the concept of the Trinity came into being as a result of falsely ascribing divinity to two "creatures", namely, Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Gabriel). Owing to the irrationality of the doctrine of the Trinity, the conventional response of the Church clerics is that it is a mystery beyond human comprehension and that it does not have to be understood; it suffices to just accept it as a matter of faith.

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[112]The Ecumenical Councils gave themselves rights above their authority. In the First Council, Jesus was deified; in the Second, the Holy Ghost was also deified. In the Third Council the same was done regarding Mary, and in the Twelfth Council the Church was granted the right to forgive sins. In the Twentieth, the Pope was made infallible.

[113] *Encyclopedia Americana* states that monotheism began as a theological movement at a very early stage in history and that it preceded the belief in the Trinity by tens of years. It further states that Christianity was a product of Judaism, which was very strict as far as monotheism was concerned. The belief in the Trinity was only admitted in the fourth century CE and did not accurately reflect the original Christian belief in the true nature of God; rather, the Trinity was a deviation from that original belief.(c.f., vol. 27, p. 294) *The New Catholic Encyclopedia New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, Vol. XIV, p.299, states, "The formulation 'one God in three Persons was not solidly established [by a council]...prior to the end of the 4th century. Among the Apostolic Fathers, there had been nothing even remotely approaching such a mentality or perspective."

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Islam preaches a plain and simple belief in the oneness of God, affirming the uniqueness of Allah and stating that He has no partners. He is self-sufficient, all creation depends on Him while depends on no one. He neither begets, nor was He begotten; He has neither a wife nor a son; no one is comparable to Him, and He has no partners whatsoever. Jesus preached the oneness of God, as is plainly shown in this dialogue quoted from the Bible: **"I speak what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have seen from your father." They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man**[114] **who has told you the truth which I heard from God."** (John 8/38-40)

We also read, **"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do."** (John 17/3-4)

The Qur'an stresses the oneness of God in chapter 112, **"Say, 'He is Allah, [who is] One; Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable to Him.'"** It also states in 4/171, **"People of the Book! Do not go to excess in your religion. Say nothing but the truth about Allah. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of Allah and His Word, which He cast into Mary, and a Spirit from Him. So have faith in Allah and His**

[114]Jesus confirms his human status, while God said of Himself, **"For I am God, and not man"** (Hosea 11/9). **"God is not a man… nor a son of man"** (Numbers 23/19). **"My spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh"** (Genesis 6/3 *The New KJV*). **"My spirit shall not abide in mortals forever, for they are flesh"** (Genesis 6/3 *KJV*).

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Messengers. Do not say, ´Three.´ It is better that you stop. Allah is only One God. He is too Glorious to have a son! Everything in the heavens and in the earth belongs to Him. Allah suffices as a Guardian." It further states in 5/73-74, **"They surely disbelieve who say, 'Allah is the third of three,' when there is no god except one God. If they do not desist from so saying, a painful punishment will fall on those of them who disbelieve. Will they not then turn to Allah and seek His forgiveness? For Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."**

The only text in the entire Bible that "supports" the doctrine of the Trinity is in the first Epistle of John, chapter 5, verse 7: **"For there are three who bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one."** Strangely enough, this text was removed from the *New Revised Standard Version* (RSV) of the Bible and others,[115] after Christian scholars discovered that it was one of the interpolations inserted in a number of editions, including the *King James Version* (KJV).



[115]For example, *The Bible in Basic English, The Darby Translation, Weymouth's New Testament, Holy Bible: Easy-to-Read Version, Contemporary English Version, The American Standard Version, God's Word Translation, The New Living Translation, The New American Standard Bible, The Revised Standard Version, World English Bible, International Standard Version,* and *Hebrew Names Version of World English Bible.*

The Divinity of Jesus

Christians believe that Jesus is an eternal God, the second person of the divine Trinity who, more than two thousand years ago, chose to take on a human body and was born of the Virgin Mary. As recorded in the Gospels, this doctrine, like the one previously discussed, contradicts the words attributed to Jesus. In fact, that Jesus never claimed divinity; instead he affirmed the divinity of God alone, saying to those around him, **"Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God."** (Mark 10/18) Thus, if Jesus Christ refused to be called "good", would he have accepted to be called "God"?

Speaking of God, Jesus said, **"My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God."** (John 20/17) He made it very clear that he could not do anything without the will of God who had sent him: **"I can of Myself do nothing.**[116] **As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."** (John 5/30)He states that the words he speaks are not his but were revealed to him by God, **"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak."** (John 12/49)

Also in John 7/17-18, Jesus states, **"If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him."**

Jesus also states that God is greater than him. According to John 14/28, **"I am going to the Father, for My Father is greater than I."** Jesus did things only for the good pleasure of God who sent him, **"'And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.' As He spoke these words, many believed in Him."** (John 8/29-30) According to Luke 4/43, Jesus came to preach the Kingdom of God, **"But He said to them, 'I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.'"**

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[116]This is exactly what Jesus said of himself, whereas he said about God, **"For with God all things are possible"** (Mark 10/27).

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In addition, Jesus states that entering the kingdom of heaven is dependent upon doing the will of God: **"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father which in heaven."**[117] (Matthew 7/21) Again he says, **"For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."**[118] (Mark 3/35)

According to Mark 13/32, Jesus is also reported to have denied having knowledge of the final hour of this world, saying, **"But of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."**

In Luke 13/33-34, Jesus refers to himself as a prophet, **"Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!"**

These and many other statements of Jesus, as reported in the Bible, demonstrate that he, in relation to God, was no more than a human being. He was not the Creator but a creation, just like Adam. He prayed to God (Mark 1/35, Mark 14/35 and Luke 5/16), which clearly indicates that he was a prophet and not God, for God does not pray to anyone**.** Jesus used to praise God, as is clear from Matthew 11/25, **"At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth.'"**

Thus, the doctrine of Christ's divinity is not supported by the words of Jesus as written in the Gospels. Like the doctrine of Trinity, the doctrine of the incarnation was developed after Jesus' departure. It was incorporated into Christianity from paganism.

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[117]The word '*Rabbi,*' translated as 'Lord' actually means 'master' (*KJV*) or 'teacher' (*The New KJV*). John 1/38 says, **"Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, 'What do you seek?' They said to Him, '*Rabbi*' (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), 'where are You staying?'"**

[118]In Matthew 12/50 we read, **"For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."** Matthew here changes the word 'God' to 'my Father' for theological purposes. As Kisman rightly said, "Both Luke and Matthew deliberately changed Mark's text a hundred times for theological purposes."

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In the mythology of religions that preceded Christianity, it can be seen how some heroes were considered to be gods. Most of what was said about Krishna by the Hindus, Buddha by the Buddhists, Mithra by the Persians, Osiris by the Ancient Egyptians, Bacchus by the Greeks, Baal by the Babylonians, and Adonis by the Syrians was, surprisingly, said of Jesus by the Christians. Islam, on the other hand, has freed its followers from such superstitions by rejecting the doctrine of the incarnation and of God's embodiment in or union with any of His creatures.

Islam emphatically states that neither Jesus nor any other human being could be God. Islam also rejects the notion that God may be incarnated or could unite with any of His creation. As the Qur'an (5/75) says, **"Christ, the son of Mary, was no more than a messenger; many were the messengers that passed away before him. His mother was a woman of truth. They had both to eat their [daily] food. See how Allah makes His signs clear to them; yet see in what ways they are deluded away from the truth!"** The idea is that anyone who eats cannot be God, be it Jesus, Muhammad or any other prophet or messenger, for that matter.[119]

In fact, many nations rejected the prophets God sent to them because they thought that it would not befit a messenger sent from God to be a human being who "eats food" just like them. The Qur'an (23/33) relates that the people of Noah said about him, **"This is not but a man like yourselves. He eats of that from which you eat and drinks of what you drink."** The Qur'an (25/7) also says about the Arabs in whose midst Prophet Muhammad appeared, **"And they say, 'What is this messenger that eats food and walks in the markets?'"** As for those who ascribe divinity to Prophet Jesus, we find that they took divergence to a whole new level by degrading God Almighty and considering Him a human who eats food!!

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[119] In fact, eating represents need and dependence on external elements, and the True God is neither in need nor dependent on anything. Besides, eating entails processing of the food in the body and then the need to defecate. Such acts do not befit the majesty of God.

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The Qur'an (5/72) strongly rejects the doctrine of Christ's divinity **"They are unbelievers who say, 'Allah is the Messiah, Son of Mary,' while the Messiah said, 'O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' Indeed, he who associates others with Allah – Allah has forbidden him Paradise, and his refuge shall be the Fire; and the wrongdoers shall have no helpers."**

Allah refutes the claim of those who use the miraculous birth of Jesus without a father to ascribe divine attributes to him. As the Qur'an (3/59) states, **"Indeed, the example of Jesus in the sight of Allah is like that of Adam. He created Him from dust; then He said to him, 'Be,' and he was."**[120]

The Bible even says about the priest Melchizedek that he is **"without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life."** (Hebrews7/3) Did anyone then deify him besides God? Moreover, If God is able to create people from stones just as Christ said, **"and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones"** (Matthew3/9), He is all the more able to bring into being a man from a woman without any intercourse whatsoever.

Christ is definitely only a prophet and messenger sent by God to invite the children of Israel to worship Him alone and thus he is by no means equal God. When Christ describes himself as lacking ability, **"I can of Myself do nothing"** (John 5/30), he says about God, **"for with God all things are possible."** (Mark10/27)

Similarly, when Christ **"was in all points tempted as we are"** (Hebrews 4/15), God **"cannot be tempted by evil."** (James 1/13)

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[120]The Bible says of Melchisedec, **"…without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life…"** (Hebrews7/3). However, no one ever claimed his divinity.

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Also, if the Gospels claim that Christ was tried before Herod, Pilate and the priests, God cannot be tried: **"For who is like Me? Who will arraign Me? And who is that shepherd Who will withstand Me?"** (Jeremiah 49/19). If Christ sleeps, as in Matthew 8/24, Luke 8/23 and Mark 4/38, God does not sleep, as in Psalm 121/4. If Christ becomes tired, as in John 4/6, God does not experience fatigue at all: **"Neither faints nor is weary."** (Isaiah 40/28)

If it is claimed **"that Christ died"** (1 Corinthians 15/3, John 19/33, Romans 5/6, 14/9), **"yielded up His spirit"** (Matthew 27/50), and was allegedly killed, **"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered"** (Acts 5/30), God never dies: **"And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man."** (Romans 1/23); **"Are You not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die."** (Habakkuk 1/12); **"who alone has immortality"** (1 Timothy 6/16); **"For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed." (**Daniel 6/26); **"He is the living God and the everlasting King."** (Jeremiah 10/10); **"Now see that I, even I, am He, And there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive;… And say, 'As I live forever.'"** (Deuteronomy 32/39-40); **"'As I live,' says the Lord God."** (Ezekiel 18/3); and **"But You are the same, and Your years will not fail."** (Hebrews 1/12).

If people saw Christ and heard his voice, **"No one has seen God at any time."** (John 1/18); **"whom no man has seen or can see."** (1 Timothy 6/16); and **"You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form."** (John 5/37) This clearly proves beyond any doubt that Christ was not God.

Furthermore, if Christ **"was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He opened not His mouth"** (Acts 8/32), **"a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth"** (Revelation 5/6, 17/14), despite the fact that he said, **"Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep?"** (Matthew 12/12), he is then in no way like God: **"There is no one like the God of Jeshurun"** (Deuteronomy 33/26); **"O Lord, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You."** (Chronicles 17/20).

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If Matthew 17/2 claims that Christ **"was transfigured"** in front of his disciples, God **"with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (James 1/17); "For I am the Lord, I do not change."** (Malachi 3/6).

If Christ is described as being poor, as we read in Matthew 8/20, **"And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head," the kingdom "is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship; all those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him."** (Psalm 22/28-29)

If Christ does not know the unseen world, such as the time of the Day of Judgment (Mark 13/32), when the season for figs is (Mark 11/13), who touched his clothes (Mark 5/30), since when a child who was possessed by a spirit that had robbed him of speech (Mark 9/21), and where Lazarus was buried (John 11/34), **"the Lord is the God of knowledge"** (1 Samuel 2/3), He **"is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets"** (Daniel 2/47), and that He is knows everything. (2 Kings 19/27)

If Mark 14/36 and John 7/2 state that Christ was afraid of his enemies and feared to face them, **"the Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, and the nations will not be able to endure His indignation."** (Jeremiah 10/10); **"Men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel."** (Daniel 6/26); **"The earth shook; the heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God."** (Psalm 68/8); **"Our God, The great, the mighty, and awesome God"** (Nehemiah 9/32); **"For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome."** (Deuteronomy 10/17)

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If Christ was born in a manger and **"he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth"** (Matthew 2/23), God is **"in the highest"** (Luke 2/14), is **"high above all nations, His glory above the heavens. Who is like the Lord our God, Who dwells on high"** (Psalm 113/4-5); is **"in heaven"** (Ecclesiastes 5/2), **"has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all"** (Psalm 103/19); **"His throne is in heaven"** (Psalm 11/4); He **"does whatever He pleases"** (Psalm 115/3); He **"looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men"** (Psalm 33/13); **"O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?"** (2 Chronicles 20/6). The heavens do not encompass God: **"But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!"** (2 Chronicles 6/18); **"And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven and he said, 'LORD God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keep covenant and mercy with your servants that walk before you with all their heart: Who have kept with your servant David my father that you promised him: you spoke also with your mouth, and have fulfilled it with your hand, as it is this day. Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with your servant David my father that you promised him, saying, There shall not fail you a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that your children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as you have walked before me. And now, O God of Israel, let your word, I pray you, be verified, which you spoke to your servant David my father. But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built?"** (1 Kings 8/22-27).

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All this prove that God is above the heavens and not on the earth. If God cannot possibly be contained by the heavens, how can He be contained by the womb of a woman, a manger or a tomb cut in the rock?

If the writers of the Gospels claim that Christ's enemies insulted him, stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, platted a crown of thorns and put it on his head and placed a reed in his right hand, bowed the knee before him, mocked him, spat on him, took the reed, struck him on the head, took the robe off from him, put his own garments on him, and led him away to crucify him (Matthew 27/27-31), God has **"honor and everlasting power"** (1 Timothy 6/16), is **"holy"** (Leviticus 11/44), **"power belongs to God"** (Psalm 62/11), **"for strong is the Lord God who judges her"** (Revelation 18/8), **"By the greatness of His might And the strength of His power; Not one is missing"** (Isaiah 40/26), **"Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?"** (1 Samuel 6/20), **"For the Lord Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth"** (Psalm 47/2), and **"Who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting."** (1Timothy 6/16)

Allah also describes Jesus as a pure and pious prophet, like any other prophet, and stresses that he is no more than a human being. Jesus said, **"Indeed, I am the servant of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and made me a prophet."** (Qur'an 19/30)

According to Acts 3/13, **"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus."**

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God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, alone deserves to be worshipped: **"And swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer."** (Revelation 10/6). We also read in Revelation 1/6, **"And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father."**

Faith must be founded upon evidence; otherwise, it is blind faith and does not count: **"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."** (Romans 10/17) However, when the high priest asked Jesus Christ about his teachings, he replied, **"I spoke openly to the world (i.e., the Jews)... and in secret I have said nothing."** (John 18/20)

Throughout his life, Christ never said he was God Himself, the Son of God or God incarnate. He never said that he had two distinct natures, divine and human, and two wills, or one nature and one will; nor did he ever say that he was the incarnate word of God. Besides, the writers of the Gospels never attributed to him such statements. In fact, Christ repeatedly acknowledged through his words and actions that he was a mere prophet sent by God and that God alone is his God and the God of all mankind who alone deserves to be worshipped. According to John 17/3, Christ addressed God thus: **"... You, the only true God..." Upon his ascension to heaven, he said, "My God and your God."** (John 20/17) He also repeatedly said, **"He that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."** (Revelation 3/12)

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In the hereafter, he will declare himself free from the divine attributes people have attributed to him and from those who have taken him a god or worshipped him besides God: **"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"** (Matthew 7/22-23)

As the Qur'an (5/116-119) states, **"And when Allah says, "Isa son of Maryam! Did you say to people, "Take me and my mother as gods besides Allah?"' He will say, 'Glory be to You! It is not for me to say what I have no right to say! If I had said it, then You would have known it. You know what is in myself but I do not know what is in Your Self. You are the Knower of all unseen things. I said to them nothing but what You ordered me to say: Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. I was a witness against them as long as I remained among them, but when You took me back to You, You were the One watching over them. You are Witness of all things. If You punish them, they are Your slaves. If you forgive them, You are the Almighty, the All-Wise.' Allah will say, 'This is the Day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness. They shall forever dwell in Gardens through which rivers flow. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him: that is the supreme triumph.'"**

These facts make it abundantly clear that Islam is not the only religion that refutes Jesus' divinity; indeed, Biblical texts do just the same. A poll carried out by London Weekend Television's weekly religion show, Credo, 19 out of 31 bishops of the Anglican Church stated that Christians are not obligated to believe that Jesus Christ was God.[121]

[121] *Daily News,* 25 June, 1984.

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The Divine Sonship

This doctrine, like those previously discussed, is not in conformity with the teachings and sayings of Jesus. In the Bible the expression "son of God" has been used to refer to Adam (Luke 3/38) and many of the earlier prophets who preceded Jesus. Israel, for example, is called the "son of God" in one of the five books of Moses, **"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, "Israel is My *son*, even My firstborn."'"** (Exodus 4/22)

In the Psalms, the same title is given to David, **"I will declare the decree: The Lord had said to Me, 'You are My *Son*, today I have begotten You.'"** (Psalms 2/7) In I Chronicles, 22/10, Solomon is also called the son of God, **"He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My *son*, and I will be his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever."**

From the above statements and from many others in the Bible, it has been established that the word "son" actually means nearness to God in love. Jesus himself said this in the following verses: **"Love your enemies… that you may be *sons* of your Father in heaven."** (Matthew 5/44-45) **"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."** (Matthew 5/9) An analysis of all of the previous statements leaves no doubt as to the meaning Jesus assigned to the word "son".

Therefore, in view of this, there can be no justification for considering Jesus the son of God in an exclusive and unique sense as most Christians do today. When Jesus used the phrase "son of God", it meant exactly the same as it meant when it was used for Adam, Israel, David and Solomon. Jesus is referred to as the 'son of God' 13 times in the Bible, whereas he is referred to as the "son of man" 83 times.

The Qur'an (2/116) emphatically and categorically rejects the dogma of "sonship": "They say, 'Allah has taken a son.' Exalted is He! Rather, to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are devoutly obedient to Him." Furthermore, attributing a son to God would implicitly deny and negate the perfection of God and imply His need of another being besides Himself.

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The Original Sin

According to the explanation of this dogma, Adam sinned when he disobeyed God by eating from the forbidden tree (the tree of the knowledge of good from evil, as in Genesis 2/17).[122] As a result, and according to Christian theology, all descendants of Adam inherit the sin of Adam, which means that all human beings are born with this original sin. And according to Christianity, for God's justice to be satisfied, a price must be paid for every sin that has been committed.

In other words, God will not let any sin go unrequited and cannot even forgive a simple sin! Accordingly, the only thing that can wipe out sins is the shedding of blood. According to Paul, **"And without shedding of blood there is no remission."**[123] (Hebrews 9/22) This blood, however, must be perfect, sinless and incorruptible. Therefore, Jesus, alleged to be the son of God, shed his sinless blood, suffered indescribable agony, and died to pay the penalty for the sins of men. Because he was the infinite God, he alone could pay the infinite price of sin. Therefore, no one can be saved unless he accepts Jesus as his personal savior![124] Moreover, everyone is condemned to suffer eternal torment in Hellfire because of his or her inherent sinful nature unless he or she accepts atonement for his or her sins made by Jesus with his blood!

This dogma can be divided into three distinct parts: (1) the original sin, (2) the belief that God's justice requires that the penalty for sin must be paid for by blood, and (3) the belief that Jesus has paid the price for the sins of men by his death on the cross and that salvation will only be granted to those who believe in his vicarious sacrifice.[125]

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[122]A question arises here: How could Adam possibly be punished for his deed if he did not know right from wrong?

[123]This very text is in contradiction with other Biblical texts which state that atonement could be made through the offering of flour (as in Leviticus 5/11), money (as in Exodus 30/15) or **"of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces,"** as in Numbers 31/50.

[124]Isaiah 43/11 reads, **"I, even I, am the Lord, and besides Me there is no savior."** This verse clearly states that God is the only savior.

[125]If belief in the crucifixion of Jesus were the only way to salvation for those living in his time and those who believe in him afterward, what would be the case of the sinners who died before Jesus and never had the chance to know him or believe in the crucifixion?

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Regarding the first part, Reverend J. F. de Groot writes, "Scripture teaches us that Adam's sin passed unto all men (our Blessed lady exempted). For in the words of St. Paul: **'Therefore, as by the offence of one [Adam] all men were taken to condemnation; so also by the Justice of one [Christ] many shall be made just.'"**[126] These words make it plain that all people inherited Adam's sin. Like many other Christian beliefs, the doctrine of "inherited sin" finds no support in the words of Jesus or of the prophets who came before him, who all taught that every man is accountable for his own actions and that children will not be punished for the sin of their parents.

No human being is born sinful, and Jesus himself regarded children as innocent and pure and that they were not born sinners. As he said, **"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."** (Mark 10/14-15)

Rationally considered, it would be the height of injustice to condemn the entire human race for the sin committed thousands of years ago by our first parents. Sin is a willful transgression of the law of God or the law of right and wrong; hence, the responsibility or blame for it must lie only on the person committing it and not on his children. It is a grave injustice to consider a person sinful at birth. How unreasonable and hardhearted a person can become by believing in the dogma of the inherited sin as shown by the theological dictum of Saint Augustine that all unbaptized infants are doomed to burn Hellfire for all eternity?! Until recently, unbaptized infants were not buried in consecrated grounds in Christendom because they were believed to have died in "original sin".

Islam vehemently condemns the dogma of original Sin and regards children as pure and sinless at birth. Sin, it states, is not inherited but is something that is committed only by doing what one should not do and by not doing what one should do.

The second part of the Christian doctrine of atonement is

[126] *Catholic Teaching,* p. 140. The Biblical reference is Romans 5/18-19.

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that God's justice requires that a price be paid for the original and all other sins of man. If God were to pardon a sinner without punishment, it would be a denial of His justice. Reverend W. Goldsack (1871–1957), an Australian Baptist Missionary Society missionary, writes in this connection, "It should be as clear as daylight to anyone that God cannot break His own law: He cannot forgive a sinner without first giving him an appropriate punishment. For if He did so, who would call Him 'Just' and Equitable?"[127]

This view shows complete ignorance of God's justice. God is not a mere judge or king. He is, as the Qur'an (1/3-4) describes Him, **"The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Master of the Day of Recompense."** He is not only Just but also Most Merciful and Forgiving, **"Allah will forgive you; and He is the Most Merciful of the merciful."** (Qur'an 12/92) Indeed, if a person is sincerely repentant, having a real urge to conquer the evil within himself, Almighty God will certainly forgive his failings and sins altogether.

After all, the only proper motive for punishment is to check evil and reform the offender. To punish a person for his past sins, even after he has repented and reformed himself, is a sign of vengeance, not justice. By the same token, forgiving a person after punishing him or her, or after inflicting punishment on someone else instead, cannot be considered forgiveness by any stretch of the imagination.

Allah, the Creator, is All-Merciful. If He prescribes a law and demands obedience, this will not be for His own benefit but rather for the benefit of humankind. Besides, if He punishes a person for his sins, He does not do so for His own satisfaction or compensation, as the Christian dogma proclaims, but for curbing evil and purifying the sinner. God forgives the faults and sins of those who turn away from their sins and reform themselves. He does not punish them or inflict punishment on others on their behalf, and this does not go against God's justice. As the Qur'an (6/54), states, **"Your Lord has decreed upon Himself mercy: that any of you who does wrong out of ignorance and then repents after that and corrects himself—indeed, He is Forgiving, Most Merciful."**

The third part of the Christian doctrine of atonement is that

[127] *The Atonement*, p. 5.

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Jesus paid the penalty for the original and other sins of people by his death on the cross at Calvary and that salvation cannot be obtained without belief in the saving power of his blood. As J. F. de Groot states, "Since Christ, God Incarnate, has taken upon Himself our sins in order to atone for them by giving satisfaction to God's demand for justice, He is the mediator between God and man."[128] This dogma denes not only God's mercy but also His justice.[129]

To demand the price of blood in order to forgive people's sins demonstrates complete lack of mercy, and to punish a guiltless person is undoubtedly the height of injustice.

A number of refutations have been put forward to confirm the falsity of the belief in atonement and crucifixion. The following are only a few:

First: The dogma of crucifixion of Jesus Christ to atone for the original sin is based on a flawed foundation, and anything built on flawed foundation is itself flawed. The idea that Adam's sin was passed on to his offspring contradicts the verses in the Torah which, according to the New Testament, Jesus came not to destroy but to fulfill. In Deuteronomy 24/16, we also read, **"The fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin."** In Ezekiel 18/20 we also find, **"The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son."** According to Matthew 16/27, Jesus himself said, **"Then He will reward each according to his works."** This is in agreement with the Qur'an (53/38-40) which states, **"...That no soul shall bear the burden of another, and that man shall have nothing but what he strives for, and that [the fruit of] his striving shall soon be seen."**

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[128] *Catholic Teaching,* p. 162.

[129] An interesting question arises here: Was Adam's remorse and repentance, his expulsion from Paradise, the Great Flood and the numerous sacrifices made to God not a price enough for salvation? What about the sins that are far more horrendous than Adam's eating of the tree? And how could this mystery of salvation have remained unknown to all the prophets only to be later discovered by the Church?

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Second: According to Genesis 5/5, **"All the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died."** This proves the falsehood of Genesis 2/17, which states, **"For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die,"** because this did not occur. This also indicates that Adam repented of his sin and sought forgiveness, undertook his religious duties, and God pardoned him. Ezekiel 18/21-22 states, **"But if a wicked man**[130] **turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live."**

Therefore, because Adam and his wife "lived", they must have "turned from all the sins they had committed." This means that the original sin was not inherited, and thus there was no reason for Jesus to die for the sins of anyone. This fact is in total agreement with the Qur'an, which states: **"And Adam disobeyed his Lord and erred. Then his Lord chose him and turned to him in forgiveness and guided [him]."** (20/121-122)

Third: According to the Bible itself, it is not correct to say that Jesus had come to die willingly and deliberately for the sins of humankind. We read in the Bible that he did not wish to die on the cross, and that when he learnt that his enemies were plotting against his life, he declared, **"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death."** (Mark 14/34) After that he prayed to God, saying, **"Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."** (Mark 14/36) He also asked his disciples to buy swords (Luke 22/36) and keep watch over him at night to protect him from his enemies.

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[130] If this is the case of a "wicked" person, what would be the case of a righteous person who commits a sin, like Adam? Would it not be the case that he is more entitled to have his sin forgiven once he seeks repentance?

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Fourth: The Bible tells us in Mark 15/34 that the person crucified **"cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' which is translated, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'"** Such desperate cries – if we accept for the sake of argument that they did occur – prove that the person crucified was not willing to die on the cross. More importantly, the passage contains clear evidence that the person crucified could not possibly have been Jesus Christ, as such desperate cries and panic do not befit a prophet of God, let alone one who is claimed to be God.

Fifth: According to Mark 14/50, the crucifixion was not witnessed by anyone of the disciples of Jesus as **"they all forsook Him and fled."**[131] Also, none of the Gospel and Epistle writers witnessed the crucifixion; in other words, there were no credible eyewitnesses. Thus, the sources of the story are doubtful, especially considering that the Canonical Gospels themselves differ as to the exact details of the crucifixion from beginning to end.

Sixth: The idea that shedding of blood is necessary to appease the wrath of God came into Christianity from the primitive image of God as an all-powerful demon. There is no logical connection between sin and blood. What wipes away sins is not blood but remorse, sincere repentance, persistent resistance to evil inclinations, and constant struggle to carry out the will of God as revealed to us by the prophets. Furthermore, when Jesus was asked about the way to eternal life, his reply was not belief in him as the savior through the shedding of his blood. Instead, it was: **"But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."** (Matthew 19/17) This means, obey God's law.

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[131]The fact that we ought to think well of the disciples of Jesus leaves us with two conclusions: either this text is another interpolation and was not part of the original text, or (if it was correct) the disciples run away when they realized that the person to be crucified was not Jesus himself but rather the person made to look like him.

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The Christian scheme of salvation not only is morally and rationally unsound but also contradicts the words of Jesus, who came to rescue men from sin by his teachings and the example of his godly life rather than by deliberately dying on the cross for them and offering his blood for their sins. His mission was also to call sinners to repent, as was the case with all prophets throughout the ages. He never said that he came to take the punishment for humanity's sins (the so-called penal substitution). This is emphasized in Matthew 4/17, as we are told about Jesus: **"From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"** Deplorably enough, the present-day Bible goes as far as abusing Jesus by describing him as becoming a curse. Paul says, **"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.')"** (Galatians 3/13)

Similarly, the doctrine of atonement originated from ancient pagan religions. According to Arthur Findlay in *Rock of Truth,* 16 names of 'pagan saviors' were believed by their peoples to have come for their salvation. These include Osiris in Egypt (1700 BC), Baal in Babylon (1200 BC), Krishna in India (1000 BC), Andhra in Tibet (725 BC), Buddha in China (560 BC), Prometheus in Greece (547 BC), and the Persian Mithra (400 BC).

The doctrine of atonement and crucifixion not only contradicts rational thinking but also encourages people to abandon good deeds and commit evil acts, such as murder, theft, rape and adultery. Paul underestimates the importance of the commandments preached by Jesus. As he states, **"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law."** (Romans 3/28) He even mentions that Abraham's deeds were of no benefit to him. As he states, "For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. (Romans 4/2) Paul's statements make salvation attainable only through by belief in Christ's crucifixion. What would then be the state of mankind if people were to believe in this concept?

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The answer to Paul's claim was made by Jesus himself: **"Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5/19)**

Islam rejects the doctrine of atonement. It declares that the forgiveness of sins cannot be obtained by the suffering and sacrifice of any other person but only by the grace of God and one's own sincere repentance, giving up sins immediately, feeling remorse for committing them, resolving not to commit them again, and trying one's best to do good deeds. Furthermore, if the sins are committed against others, by taking their rights or saying unkind words about them in their absence for instance, another condition must be met, in addition to those mentioned above, namely, to give the rights back to their rightful owners and to ask those against whom one has sinned for forgiveness as far as possible.

The Qur'an (2/112) promises salvation to all those who believe in the oneness of God and do good deeds, **"Indeed, those who submit themselves to Allah and act righteously shall be rewarded by their Lord: they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve."** The Qur'an (18/110) also says, **"Say [O Muhammad], 'I am only a human being like yourselves. It is revealed to me that your God is One God; so let him who hopes to meet his Lord do good deeds and let him associate no one else in the worship due to his Lord.'"**

James's Epistle (2/14) is in total agreement with both Islam and the commandments: **"What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not works? Can faith save him?"** We also read in James 2/17, **"So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."**

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Islam: The Monotheistic Religion of All the Prophets

An objective analysis of the aforementioned Christian doctrines would certainly lead to only one conclusion: they are both irrational and contradict the teachings of Jesus. It is sufficient to know that during the years immediately following Jesus' ascension to Heaven, none of his followers considered him other than a prophet of God. The doctrines previously mentioned were conceived many years later, which is a clear indication that the foundation of the Christian Church was based on a considerable deviation from the original message of Jesus and all the other prophets before him.

Believing in the oneness of God and worshipping none besides Him is the rule, and associating others in worship with God was an exception to the rule and only came at a later stage in the history of humankind. People worshipped God (Allah) alone for ten centuries after Adam, and it was only prior to the era of Prophet Noah that idol worship began to be practiced. This was the result of people's excessive love and veneration of some righteous individuals among them who had passed away. They ascribed divine attributes to them, believing that they would bring them closer to God and intercede for them before Him. It was for this reason that God sent Noah to guide his people back to the right path and to call them worship none but Allah. After that He sent one prophet after another to various nations to preach the same message: to declare that God is One who alone is worthy of worship.



The primary mission of the prophets was not only to call people to believe in God as the Supreme Being and accept Him as the Creator, Provider and Sustainer and Disposer of all affairs, for even the polytheists innately knew that God existed and never doubted this fact.[132] Only a few of them pretended to deny God's existence. Some people sought closeness to God through good deeds and prayers in difficult times. However, during times of ease, they would seek God's assistance and support through mediators and intercessors; and so the prophets called them to pray to God alone without seeking the aid of mediators or intercessors. Because monotheism is the foremost and most important obligation as well as the criterion by which deeds may be considered valid and acceptable, we find that all the prophets began calling their peoples by preaching it first: **"Worship Allah; you have no other god but Him."** (Qur'an 7/65); **"We sent a messenger among every people [saying], 'Worship Allah and avoid false deities.'"** (Qur'an 16/36); **"We sent no messenger before you without revealing to him: There is no god but Me, so worship Me."** (Qur'an 21/25)

[132]Atheism started to spread in Christian societies only during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Reasons for this include the injustices committed by the Church and its enslavement, humiliation and exploitation of people "in the name of God". This was also due to the corruption of Christianity and the conflict between the Christian faith and reason. The introduction of modern science into these societies as well as the spread of industrialization created a rift between people and Christianity which opposed scientific advancement and even persecuted scientists. Add to this man's natural tendency to indulge in material pursuits and desires, his distaste for restrictions and regulations that control his whims and desires, and the weakness or non-existence of the good example that shows the value and importance of religion as well as its wonderful teachings which covers all aspects of life.

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It is clear, therefore, that Islam, which means total submission to the will of God, was the same religion preached by all God's prophets and messengers of God, from Adam to Muhammad, including Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, among many others. Islam teaches that a Muslim must believe in all God's prophets and messengers and must not make any distinction whatsoever between them. According to Islam, those people who followed the guidance of the prophet of their time and worshipped God alone without associating any false deities besides Him are all considered Muslims and they will be admitted into Paradise in the hereafter.

Islam restored the message of monotheism God revealed to His prophets to its original status. In fact, Islam is a continuation of this eternal message, which is, in essence, one. Allah sent His messengers to convey this message to their people. With the passage of time, however, it was mixed with superstitions, false beliefs, pagan rituals and wrong practices. Islam, as revealed to Prophet Muhammad, is a revival of monotheism taught by Jesus and all of the prophets who came before him. It is a universal message that is addressed to all humanity until the end of time and is not specific to a particular people, as was the case with the previous divine messages.

When Islam came, it condemned all erroneous beliefs and restored the true concept of God to its pure status. It clearly states that God (Allah) alone is the Creator, the Provider and the Disposer of everything in the universe. It teaches that God's attributes are perfect in every respect and that He is free of any imperfection.[133] This necessitates that He alone deserves to be worshipped and that no one should be worshipped besides Him. This also requires that He should be worshipped in accordance with His law, not in accordance with the dictates of newly invented matters in religion that are in opposition to the Qur'an and the Prophet's teachings, and that all acts of worships should be directed to Him alone.

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[133] Allah has the most beautiful names and the loftiest, perfect attributes which must be affirmed for Him in a manner that befits His majesty, without distorting their obvious meanings, thinking that they mean something other than what has been reported in the Qur'an or Prophet Muhammad's sayings, without denying their meanings, either completely or by way of interpretation, without qualifying them and without likening them to any of those of His creatures.

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Just as confirming the oneness of God (monotheism) is the greatest and most important duty in Islam, associating others with God is the gravest sin, which God never forgets unless one sincerely repents of it. As the Qur'an (4/48) states, **"Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgives anything else, to whom He pleases."** Indeed, this is the sin which will deprive those who commit it from being admitted into Paradise and will cause them to dwell in Hellfire for all eternity. This is exactly what Jesus himself said, as the Qur'an (5/72) states, **"Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. If anyone associates anything with Allah, Allah will forbid him the Garden and his refuge will be the Fire. The wrongdoers will have no helpers."** It is also the sin that renders all good deeds null and void. As the Qur'an (6/88) states, **"But if they join others with Him, vain assuredly shall be all their works."**

Therefore, God alone should be worshipped under all circumstances, and people should approach Him and seek His help and support directly without any intermediaries; for He is the True Lord upon whom all creatures depend, the Sustainer of all the worlds, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

These aspects of monotheism are also found in the bible. In 1Corinthians 8/4-6, for instance, we read, **"Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him."**

We also read in Acts 14/13-18, **"Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes. But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out and saying, 'Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them."**

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As Italian orientalist Dr. Laura Veccia Vaglieri states, "Thanks to Islam, paganism in its various forms was defeated. The concept of the universe, the practices of religion and social customs were each liberated from all the monstrosities which had degraded them, and human minds were made free of prejudices. Mankind finally realized its dignity and humbled itself before the Creator, the Lord and Master of all mankind…The spirit was liberated from prejudice, man's will was set free from the ties which had kept him bound to other men or other so-called hidden powers. Priests, false guardians of mysteries, brokers of salvation, and all those who pretended to be mediators between God and man and consequently believed that they had authority over the will of other people fell from their pedestals. Man became the servant of God alone, and toward other men he had only the obligations of one free man toward another free man. While previously men had suffered from the injustice of social differences, Islam proclaimed equality among human beings. Each Muslim was distinguished from other Muslims not by reason of birth or any other factor not connected with his personality, but by his greater fear of God, his good deeds, his morals and intellectual qualities."[134]

She further states, "It was not the use of force nor the efforts of insistent missionaries that caused the great and rapid spread of Islam. Rather, it was the fact that the Book which was presented by the Muslims to the conquered people, with freedom to accept it or reject it, was the Book of God, the Word of Truth, the greatest miracle that Muhammad could have presented to the faltering ones on earth…While all other religions prescribe for their followers a heavy load of doctrines which are hard both to carry and to understand, Islam is a religion of marvelous easiness and of crystal-clear simplicity."[135]

British historian Arnold J. Toynbee also says, "Indeed, I invite the world to adopt the Islamic principle of brotherhood and equality. The doctrine of God's oneness brought by Islam is of the most wonderful examples of how to unify the world. The continuation of Islam gives hope to the whole world."[136]

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[134] *Ibid*., pp. 33-34.
[135] *Ibid*., pp. 42-43.
[136] *Civilization on Trial,* Oxford University Press, New York, 1948.

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My Final Step toward Islam: The Influence of Jesus on My Conversion

Even a portion of the information contained in the previous chapters is sufficient for a seeker of truth to perceive the authenticity of Islam and the extent to which Christianity has deviated from and contradicted the real teachings of Prophet Jesus. Nevertheless, I still did not take any decisive step to distance myself from the path that the Church had outlined for me. My 'talisman' was always with me wherever I went. Inside the small case I always carried were seven small silver crosses, a supposed image of Jesus and a statue of him. I felt that if I ever put it aside, something bad would happen to me. For this reason, I never misplaced it, and I always made sure it was in my pocket.

One day when I was reviewing the literature that had been given to me in the mosque, I read two statements that filled my heart with great joy and happiness. Tears started to flow from my eyes and I said, "My God, this is the truth; this is the answer that I could never find!"

I must admit that up to that time I had never touched or read the Qur'an. I had not seen or touched a copy of it in any language, and the name Qur'an was not part of my vocabulary. In a categorical, emphatic, clear and precise manner, I read in the study guide I had received in the mosque: **"They said [in boast], 'We killed Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah.' But they killed him not, nor did they crucify him."** (Qur'an 4/157)

Here, I paused in the reading. I repeated several times, **"They killed him not, nor did they crucify him."** At the precise moment I was reading those statements, I felt that God was answering the question that previously made me have doubts about His power due to my inability to find a logical and convincing answer to it.

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It was not easy to find this answer. I had to compete with many other students to earn a scholarship. I had to travel thousands of miles to the state of Washington in the westernmost part of the USA. I had to learn to speak and read English, and being from Latin America, I had to have a character that was acceptable to the rest of the Muslims in Seattle in order to find these two statements. That this information would reach a Venezuelan in 1978 was a remote possibility. However, this was decreed by Allah and it came to pass. In those moments while I was still rejoicing over this great news, I prayed to God and asked Him for forgiveness. Elated with joy, I really wanted to fly back home to Venezuela to announce the good news to my family and to the rest of the world.

This was happening just like in the movies. My great hero, the good guy in the movie, my beloved prophet, Jesus of Nazareth, to whom I used to pray twice a day in a small altar in my house, had not been crucified after all!

To me it seemed as though the weight of the cross that Jesus allegedly carried to Mount Calvary vanished and disintegrated in the same manner that great buildings and firm mountains crumble when demolished by dynamite.

What followed this discovery was no less significant. I reasoned, “If this is the truth, then this religion is the right one.” For twenty years, I had been told that Jesus had been killed. I had been taken on a journey without any alternate routes. Now, another avenue had been opened with a more logical answer, and now things were getting clearer as the final piece of the “puzzle” was eventually found. This was the last in a sequence of miracles that Jesus had performed by Allah’s leave. A man who, by the permission of God, restored sight to the blind, walked on the water, cleansed the lepers, made the lame walk again, multiplied bread and fish to feed thousands of people, exorcised demons, and brought the dead back to life could not have been crucified! Once again I reasoned and resolved that I wanted to belong to this religion. I wanted to be a Muslim!

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In the same manner that the weight of the cross disintegrated, the resurrection of Jesus on Sunday, the Holy Week (the week immediately before Easter), Good Friday, the visit to the Seven Churches (Stations of the Cross), the fasting on Fridays, the eating of fish instead of meat on those alleged "Holy Days" also disintegrated all at once, and I realized that they were all lies. The power of the talisman vanished. The logical mind of a young man studying to be an engineer was now free to reject all these baseless traditions built upon the irrational concept of God becoming a man and dying for the sins of men. As a young man who had been a professional fireman saving lives and property and who had not acquired the vices of smoking and drinking even though these were among the norms of society, I could no longer accept these lies and deception.

During the summer of 1979, I took an optional course at Oklahoma State University that further illuminated the new path I had already followed. The course was called "Islamic Teachings". At the end of the summer of 1979, I went back to Seattle, where I officially embraced Islam by pronouncing the testimony of faith (the *shahaadah*), before the same *imam* who had given me the Islamic literature.

I can still remember the *imam* asking me, "Are you sure you want to embrace Islam?" "Yes," I replied. Then he insisted, "Even if this means it will be written in your passport that you are a Muslim?" I said, "Even so." Then he said, "If you are sure that is what you want, then repeat after me, "*I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.*" I made the testimony in English and then in Arabic by repeating it after the *imam,* thereby taking the final step to Islam.

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How Islam Affected My Life

Any change undoubtedly requires certain adjustments, and my case was no exception. Once I had embraced Islam, I promised Allah that I would do whatever I possibly could to learn as much as possible about this religion. While I was still relatively young, having just completed my first year at Oklahoma State University, I married a young Muslim girl. In Stillwater, Oklahoma, the Islamic Center assigned me my first Islamic teacher, Brother Faiz from Palestine (may Allah bless him and reward him for what he taught me), who dedicated a substantial amount of time to teach me how to perform the daily prayer, the other pillars of Islam, the articles of faith, about life after death, the Day of Resurrection and many other topics. I can still remember the great impact the topic of life after death had on me. As a Christian, no one had ever taught me anything similar and in such great detail. Death was always a mystery to me.

I did not know what would happen to me after burial. In Islam, however, I found detailed answers. When a person dies, Islam teaches, he or she must be buried according to the instructions of Prophet Muhammad. The body of the deceased is washed completely and perfumed. Then it is wrapped in two pieces of white cloth and is buried in the ground without a coffin and facing the *qiblah*, which is the direction of the Ka'bah in Makkah, in modern-day Saudi Arabia. According to one saying of Prophet Muhammad, the dead person hears the footsteps of those who attend his or her funeral as they walk away from the grave and will be aware that he or she is being left alone. Shortly thereafter, two angels come into the grave and ask the deceased these questions: (1) Who is your Lord? (2)What is your religion? And (3) Who is your prophet?

According to another saying of Prophet Muhammad, the believer will have no difficulty at all answering these questions correctly, while the unbeliever will not be able to answer them. Furthermore, depending on the deeds the person has done in this life, he or she will feel either cool perfumed breezes from Paradise or scorching winds from Hellfire. The dead person will remain in this state until the Day of Resurrection.

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This information, which Brother Faiz had given me, dispelled some of my doubts about people who commit crimes and are not punished during their worldly lives. It made me aware of the reason why Allah gives people countless opportunities to repent and start a new chapter in their lives as well as God's utmost justice and mercy toward his creatures. I once thought I had deeply understood the concepts of temporary and eternal life. While in the Catholic Church, I was taught that Jesus had died to save us; in Islam I learned that every person is responsible for his own acts and will be rewarded or punished accordingly. This information sounded so logical that it reassured me and set my mind at rest.

This new knowledge was gradually transforming all my previous information as well as my sense of priorities. I began to devote more time to studying the new faith. When my early morning workout at the gym began to conflict with morning prayers, I delayed the training to give priority to my prayers.

For several years before embracing Islam, I was an aspiring musician who had participated in several music concerts, playing the guitar and singing my heart out. However, once I accepted Islam, I abandoned music and singing altogether and dedicated my time to learning how to recite the Qur'an in Arabic — the very language in which it was revealed. My responsibilities as a married man and my engineering studies at the age of 21 left me with no time for any other activities. Nonetheless, through Allah's guidance, my attachment to my new faith grew to such an extent that I wanted to start teaching what little I knew.

When I returned to Venezuela, my family did not know anything about Islam. They used to watch how I prayed without criticizing or condemning my actions. I had been abroad in the USA for more than four years, so the joy of a reunion with my parents, brothers and sisters prevailed, and they accepted me as I was.

At work back home in Venezuela, I asked permission from my supervisor to pray for five minutes in my office. I was practically the only Venezuelan Muslim in the oil industry in 1982. I prayed and asked Allah to help me persevere and be steadfast, since temptations appeared everywhere and more and more often. I managed, by the grace of Allah, to keep away from these temptations.

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Today, after more than thirty years since I embraced Islam, I feel increasingly happy that I resolved to become a Muslim, especially when I see many people around me embracing Islam every day. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all that exists, for that. I have also discovered that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. It has actually the greatest number of practicing followers[137] in spite of the modest means available to those inviting to it in comparison with other religions, especially Christianity. While Islam spreads with ease and by simple means, Christianity would have been no match for Islam had it not been for the enormous resources behind its missionary activities.

A cursory look at the difference between converts to Islam and converts to Christianity, the two major religions with followers all over the world (unlike other religions whose followers are mostly confined to specific nations), will reveal that Christianity attracts the poor and destitute who are generally drawn to the Church due to the tempting material comforts it offers them. Were this not the case, why then are churches and Christianity itself abandoned in their own wealthy home countries and huge attempts are made to export the Christian faith to poor countries? Is it not true then that "nothing will come of nothing"?

On the other hand, those who embrace Islam are from all backgrounds and from all walks of life. They include the poor, the rich, scientists, rabbis, monks and priests and celebrities, among many others. Even those who are bound to lose much in terms of material gain and comfort or be subjected to prosecution as soon as they convert have embraced Islam.

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[137]The number of practicing Muslims exceeds the total number of people practicing all other religions put together. According to *The Sunday Times*, "Attendance at Britain's mosques has outstripped the number of regular worshippers in the Church of England for the first time. Figures compiled from government and academic sources show that 930,000 Muslims attend a place of worship at least once a week, compared with 916,000 Anglicans." See "Muslims Outpace Anglicans in UK", Nicholas Hellen and Christopher Morgan, published on 25 January 2004; available at http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/article26788.ece. This is taking place in a Christian country where Muslims constitute a minority.

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My faith is getting stronger and stronger day in day out as I witness that the promise of Allah is being gradually fulfilled. As the Qur'an (61/8-9) states, **"They seek to extinguish the light of God with their mouths; but God will perfect His light, much as the unbelievers may dislike it. It is He who has sent his Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to exalt it over every other religion even though the idolaters may dislike it."**

Anyone who reads the Bible today will definitely notice that some of its teachings which are still intact and have not been corrupted or tampered with, are followed only by Muslims. According to the Bible, Christ and the prophets before him used to prostrate themselves in prayer before God: **"Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations."** (Genesis 17/3); **"When Abraham's servant heard their words, that he worshiped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth."** (Genesis 24/52); **"So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them."** (Numbers 20/6); "**And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 'Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.' And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will you be angry with all the congregation?'"** (Numbers 16/20-22); **"And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, 'What does my Lord say to His servant?' Then the Commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, 'Take your sandal off your foot, for the place** where **you stand is holy.' And Joshua did so."** (Joshua 5/14-15)

Jesus himself fell prostrate: **"He went a little farther and fell on His face."** (Matthew 26/39) In Revelation 7/11, we read, **"And fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God."** We also read in Nehemiah 8/6, **"And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. Then all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen!' while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground."**

What religion is there, other than Islam, whose followers raise their hands in prayer, bow and prostrate?

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Fasting is also mentioned in the Bible. We read in 2 Samuel 1/12, **"And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening."** According to Daniel 9/3, **"Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes."** In Joel 2/12, we find, **"Now, therefore," says the Lord, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."**

There are numerous other verses regarding this point including the following:**"…and fasted seven days."** (1 Samuel 31/13)

"David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground." (2 Samuel 12/16).

"As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away." (Acts 13/2-3)

"However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17/21)

Regarding optional fasts in which Muslims frequently engage, we find the verse, **"I fast twice a week."** (Luke 18/12).

Just as in Islam, fasting is originally meant to abstain from food and drink and other pleasures as an act of worship and a means to get closer to God. It is not a partial fast which involves giving up only certain types of foods, refraining from snacks between meals, or skipping one or two meals a day, as Christians do today: **"Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"** (Esther 4/16); **"Then they said to Him, 'Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?'"** (Luke 5/33)

Likewise, only Muslim women wear the head covering mentioned in the Bible, as in 1 Corinthians 11/5, 1 Timothy 2/9 and 1 Peter 3/3. In fact, all Christians admit that Mary used to wear a veil over her head, and Christian nuns still observe this practice today. It is amazing to note that the Bible mentions that the righteous women also cover their faces. In Genesis 24/65, *New Living Translation*, we read, **"'Who is that man walking through the fields to meet us?' she asked the servant. And he replied, 'It is my master.' So Rebekah covered her face with her veil."**

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There are other verses to this effect, such as Genesis 38/14, *Holman Christian Standard Bible*, **"So she took off her widow's clothes, veiled her face, covered herself, and sat at the entrance to Enaim..."**; Song of Solomon 4/1, **"You have dove's eyes behind your veil…"**; Song of Solomon 6/7, **"Like a piece of pomegranate Are your temples behind your veil?"**; and Daniel 13/32, **"But those wicked men commanded that her face should be uncovered."**

Even the greeting used by Jesus, "Peace be unto you", is used only by Muslims today. We read in Luke 24/36, **"Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, 'Peace to you.'"** We find the same thing in Matthew 28/9 and John 20/21. Christ even commanded his followers to say this, as in Luke 10/5, **"But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.'"** We find that the Qur'an (24/27) commands the faithful to do just the same thing: **"O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own until you have asked permission and greeted their inhabitants. That is better for you, so that you may pay heed."** Another verse reads, **"But when you enter houses, salute one another with a greeting of peace, a greeting from your Lord full of blessings and purity…"** (24/61)

There are many other religious practices observed today mainly by Muslims, such as *wudhu'* (ablution before prayer): **"So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations."**(Exodus 30/21, 40/31) Indeed, no one performs this long-standing religious obligation except the Muslims.

Circumcision is also a Christian practice. In Luke 2/21, we read that Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day. The Bible itself states that God commands it, as in Genesis 17/9-14.[138]

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[138] According to Genesis 17/9-14, **"And God said unto Abraham, 'You shall keep my covenant therefore, you, and your seed after you in their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your seed after you; every man child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in your house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.'"**

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Offering sacrifices to the Lord is also a religious practice, as in 1 Kings 8/63-66. We also find equal retaliation in punishment, which is practiced in Islam, among Biblical teachings. In Leviticus 24/17, for instance, we read, **"Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death."** Just like in Islam, equal retaliation is a punishment which relates to matters affecting life as well as matters short of life, as in Exodus 21/24-25: **"Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."**

There are also a number of prohibited acts mentioned in the Bible which Muslims, compared to other nations and religious groups, totally avoid. Just as the Qur'an forbids Muslims to engage in usurious transactions, the Bible does just the same thing. In Ezekiel 18/17, for instance, we read, **"That has withheld his hand from the poor, that has not received from money interest nor increase, has executed my judgments, has walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live."**[139]

The prohibition of alcohol consumption[140] and music[141] is also stressed in the Bible. In Isaiah 5/11-12, for example, we read, **"Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may follow intoxicating drink; who continue until night, till wine inflames them! The harp and the strings, the tambourine and flute, and wine are in their feasts; but they do not regard the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of His hands."**

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[139] We also read in Exodus 22/25, **"If you lend money to any of my people who is poor among you, you shall not be to him as a lender, neither shall you charge him interest."**

[140] There are numerous Biblical texts that categorically prohibit alcohol in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, as in Isaiah 5/22; Proverbs 20/1; Luke 1/15; 1 Corinthians 6/10; Galatians 5/21; 1 Corinthians 5/11; Ephesians 5/18; and 1 Peter 4/3 4, to mention but a few examples. However, because there are other Gospel writers with other inclinations and desires, including their desire to win those accustomed to drinking alcohol over or due to their own desire to drink it, we find other texts calling to drinking alcohol and even encourage becoming addicted to it. In this way, we find that these writers give precedence to their personal desires over the noble principles prophets called so that their people would achieve salvation!

[141] Prophet Muhammad said, "From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, wearing of silk for men, consuming alcoholic drinks and the use of musical instruments lawful." (*Al-Bukhaaree*, 5590). This prophecy has already been fulfilled, and now we find that some Muslims not only listen to music but also consider doing so lawful despite the fact that it is strictly forbidden.

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Regarding pork consumption, which is strictly prohibited in Islam, we find the same thing in the Bible. In Deuteronomy 14/8, for instance, we read, **"Also the swine is unclean for you, because it has cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud; you shall not eat their flesh or touch their dead carcasses."** Consumption of dead animals is also forbidden, as in Leviticus 17/15-16 and Deuteronomy 14/21., and so is blood consumption: **"Only you shall not eat the blood."** (Deuteronomy 12/16); **"Only be sure that you do not eat the blood...."** (Deuteronomy 12/23), and **"You shall not eat anything with the blood."** (Leviticus 19/26)

Shaving around the sides of the head on the sides of one's head, shaving the beard, tattooing, practising divination and soothsaying are among the many practices the Bible declares prohibited. In Leviticus 19/26-28, for instance, we read, **"...nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying. You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard. You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the Lord."**

It is crystal clear, therefore, that Muslims are the true followers of Jesus[142] and the prophets of God before him.

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[142] Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11/7, **"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God."** Therefore, if a man ought not to cover his head, why do so many members of the clergy wear a form of head covering? Why don't they follow the teachings of Paul to whom, as they claim, Christ revealed himself? Why do the Orthodox priests wear black head coverings despite the fact that their Holy Book says, **"Let your garments be always white..."**? Furthermore, is there a relationship between wearing a headgear and being equal to God? Is it, then, not true that an ordinary Muslim follows the teachings of the Qur'an more than members of the clergy follow the teachings of the Bible?

How My Conversion Affected Others' Lives

Having received this great divine gift, I felt a strong desire to convey this final message to those who had not heard about it. My efforts were not successful in the beginning. Some people took the whole matter as a joke, while others advised me to convey this message to the children since older people's beliefs were hardened and thus would by no means accept any change. For a long time my only support, besides Allah's assistance, was my wife, who shared my belief in Islam.

In 1990, I returned to the United States to do a master's degree in safety engineering at Texas A&M University (TAMU). And it was during this trip that I decided to increase my efforts to propagate Islam. I followed an Islamic training program which I created for myself from material available at the Bryan College Station Islamic Library. I used to write to my family in Venezuela about whatever Islamic topics I studied. By the grace of Allah, when I returned to Venezuela in 1992, after only a few brief discussions, my parents and my older brother embraced Islam. Soon afterward, two of my sisters, another brother, and a nephew followed suit.

The director of the largest mosque in Caracas approved my proposal for a Sunday program to invite non-Muslims to visit this mosque, which was the largest in Latin America. I volunteered to coordinate this program with the *imam* of the mosque and, praise be to Allah, our initial effort was a complete success. About 250 people attended what was the first public lecture I had ever given to Venezuelans about Islam. Perhaps for the first time in Venezuela, a mixture of Jews, Christians, atheists and others attended a lecture about Islam. The program was such a great success that, by the grace of Allah, many Venezuelans embraced Islam. The Sunday outreach program is still ongoing, and anyone interested in knowing about Islam can attend it.

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I have noticed that wherever I give my lectures, many people show interest in Islam. Countless people have embraced this religion; many others take whatever Islamic literature is available and go through it gradually, just as I did over thirty years ago. Still others are more resistant to Islam on the plea that they have too many vices that they cannot get rid of. It is worth mentioning here, however, that that when a person embraces Islam, this does not mean that their life will undergo a drastic change overnight. This may happen, of course, but it is not always the case. What generally happens is that change takes place gradually as one progressively learns about the new faith and its fundamental teachings and gets closer and closer to Allah and to one's brothers and sisters in faith. Many of those who attend my lectures ask these questions: (1) Do I have to speak Arabic in order to be a Muslim? (2) Is it necessary to be an Arab if I want to be a Muslim? And (3) Should I stop believing in Jesus and the Virgin Mary to be a Muslim?

The answer to all these questions is, of course, a definitive "no". Islam is a universal religion, its followers come from all over the world, and so language should not be a barrier at all. To be a Muslim, it is necessary to believe in Jesus as one of God's greatest prophets and in the Virgin Mary as Jesus' mother, whom Allah exalted above all the women of her time.

Many people hesitate take the final decision to embrace Islam, thinking that they may not fulfil certain requirements but not aware that that the first step to become a Muslim is very simple indeed and does not involve any complexities whatsoever. There are no special requirements one must meet in order to become a Muslim, nor are there are any special ceremonies, intermediaries or anything beyond one's capacity. All one needs to do is to

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believe sincerely that Allah is the only true God, who is the Creator, the Sustainer of the universe, and the Disposer of all affairs; that He alone is worthy of worship; that He has the most beautiful names and the most glorious attributes, that He has no partners whatsoever, that He neither begets, nor was He begotten; and that nothing is comparable to Him. One must also abandon all forms of paganism.

After the declaration of faith, testifying that no one is worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, everything else can be learned gradually with patience and dedication. If anyone dies in this state, he or she is considered a Muslim and will, by Allah's grace, be admitted into Paradise in the hereafter. By the way, when a person testifies that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, this does not mean that he is the only prophet of Allah. This simply means that he is the last prophet and messenger of Allah and the last in the line of prophets going back to Adam.

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When Religion Is Inculcated by Compulsion

Allah Almighty mentions in the Qur'an that no one can be forced to embrace Islam. This is a fundamental tenet of His teachings: **"There is no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from Error."** (Qur'an 2/256)

He also says, **"And say, 'The truth is from your Lord, so let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve.'"** (Qur'an 18/29) In fact, Islam calls for establishing dialogue with others and inviting them to Islam with wisdom and beautiful exhortation: **"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way."** (Qur'an 16/125)

The Catholic Church attained the position it has today as a result of the dreadful massacre of millions of innocent people. I was astonished when I learned that in the Netherlands alone, three million people were executed when they did not abide by and accept the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

John Lothrop Motley, speaking of papal persecution in the Netherlands, says, "Upon the 16th February, 1568, a sentence of the Holy Office condemned all the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death as heretics. From this universal doom only a few persons, especially named, were excepted. A proclamation of the King, dated ten days later, confirmed this decree of the Inquisition, and ordered it to be carried into instant execution, without regard to age, sex, or condition. This is probably the most concise death-warrant that was ever framed. Three millions of people, men, women, and children, were sentenced to the scaffold in: three lines… And under this new decree, the executions certainly did not slacken. Men in the highest and the humblest positions were daily and hourly dragged to the stake. Alva, in a single letter to Philip, coolly estimated the number of executions which were to take place immediately after the expiration of holy week, at eight hundred heads."[143]

[143]John Lothrop Motley, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, New York, 1950, Vol. I, p. 626.

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After the Nicean Council was held, it became a capital offense to possess an unauthorized Gospel. As a result, over a million Christians were killed in the years following the Council's decision. This was the methodology used by Athanasius to unify the Christians. It may seem to most of us that the perpetrators of these crimes against humanity were bloodthirsty individuals with no genuine motives, but I was shocked to find out that the call to perpetrate these horrendous crimes stems directly from the Bible. It may seem obvious to anyone who reads it that these individuals were implementing some of the Biblical texts which have been corrupted.

For instance, in Numbers 31/17-18, we read **"And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately. But keep alive for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man intimately.'"** The Lord said, **"Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women."** (Ezekiel 9/5-6)

Joshua said to the people of Israel, **"'Shout, for the Lord has given you the city [of the Canaanites]!… But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord…' And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword."**[144] (Joshua 6/16-21)

The Lord also allegedly said, **"Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey."** (1 Samuel 15/3) We also read in Hosea 13/16, **"Their children also will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be plundered and their wives ravished."** (Isaiah 13/16) **"Samaria will be held guilty, for she has rebelled against her God. They shall**

[144]Since some Christians attack Islam and accuse it of having been spread by the "sword", it is worth mentioning that the word "sword" is actually mentioned 406 times in the Bible while it is not mentioned even once in the Qur'an. Which of these two religions, then, was highly likely to have been spread by the sword?

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fall by the sword, their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child ripped open."[145]

It appears that the Bible is the only religious book in the world that sanctions the killing of children, the smashing of infants to death, and the ripping open of pregnant women's bellies. The presence of such verses in the Bible which are outrageously attributed to God is clearly testifies to its corruption.[146] Allah Almighty vehemently warns against telling lies in His name. As the Qur'an (2/79), states, **"Woe to those who write the scripture with their own hands, and then declare, 'This is from God,' that they may sell it for a paltry price. Woe to them because of what their own hands have written, and woe to them for what they have earned."**

Compulsion is incompatible with religion because religion depends upon faith, will and total satisfaction, and these will undoubtedly be meaningless if religion is imposed on people. Men and women must be given the opportunity to choose whatever religion to follow, but the alternatives must be

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[145]Islam instituted *jihad* as a means of protecting the weak, such as women and children, and not for killing people, as it is all too often erroneously understood. The Qur'an (4/75) states, **"And how should you not fight for the cause of God, and for the helpless old men, women, and children who say, Deliver us, Lord, from this city of wrongdoers, grant us a protector out of Your grace and grant us a supporter out of Your grace?"** *Jihad* was also instituted in self-defense, and not as an act of aggression: **"And fight for the religion of God against those who fight against you, but transgress not by attacking them first, for God loves not the transgressors."** (Qur'an 2/190). It was also instituted as a means of insuring the freedom of calling others to Islam and not forcing them to embrace it: **"There is no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from Error."** (Qur'an 2/256); **"And say, 'The truth is from your Lord, so let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve.'"** (Qur'an 18/29)

[146]Because the presence of these and many other texts is a cause of great embarrassment to the "editors" of the Bible, we find that they occasionally add or delete whatever texts suit them, which testifies to the corruption to which the Bible has been subjected. For example, 1 Samuel 6/19 reads, **"Then He struck the men of Beth Shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord. He struck fifty thousand and seventy men of the people."** In the English, French, German and Arabic translations, however, we find "seventy men" instead of "fifty thousand and seventy men", as it does not befit the Merciful Lord to kill such a huge number of people, hence the blatant deletion. Besides, it was decided, believing that merely "looking" into the ark of the Lord is not a crime that requires genocide. If they do not refrain from deleting or adding texts to the Bible today due to the spread of printing and the fact that the Bible is virtually accessible to almost everyone, one wonders what the situation was like in the ancient times when only priests had access to the Bible!

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presented to them without any bias whatsoever and without compulsion. Guillotines, saws, axes and fire should not have been the options[147] given to those who did not want to accept doctrines imposed upon them by the Catholic Church. As Allah states in His Last Message to humankind, **"There is no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from Error."** (Qur'an 2/256).

Today we are witnessing the horrendous consequences of compulsion in religion in different parts of the world. Drug addiction, murder, theft, prostitution, corruption, rape and homosexuality are some of the dreadful outcome of imposing religion on people who do not believe in it. Besides, the blind following of inherited traditions and erroneous beliefs are by no means bound to lead any nation to success. For this reason, I would like to offer at least one alternative that can save lives, rehabilitate alcoholics, and unite families and society.

The 2002 heartbreaking news of cases of child sex abuse committed by Catholic priests in the United States represents only the tip of the iceberg. Astonishingly, high-ranking officials in the Vatican did not respond to this scandal as though what happened was not an atrocious crime. All they did was offering payments to victims to remain silent. One report several years earlier stated that more than five percent of priests in the USA commit child sex abuse. Shockingly, this disturbing news took several years to grab the headlines on main TV stations worldwide.

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[147]The Bible attributes heinous acts of genocide to Prophet David, of which he is totally innocent. In 2 Samuel 12/29-31 we read, **"So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, fought against it, and took it. Then he took their king's crown from his head. Its weight was a talent of gold, with precious stones. And it was set on David's head. Also he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance. And he brought out the people who were in it, and put them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, and made them cross over to the brick works. So he did with all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem."** We also read in 1 Chronicles 20/3, **"And he brought out the people who were in it, and put them to work with saws, with iron picks, and with axes. So David did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem."** It makes one wonder how the world can ever live in peace when such inhumane acts of genocide are called upon in a so-called Holy Book and are ascribed to God and His prophets.

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According to a draft survey commissioned by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2004, children accused more than 4,000 priests of sexual abuse in the years between 1950 and 2002. The survey found that children made more than 11,000 allegations of sexual abuse by priests. The 4,450 accused priests are about 4 percent of the 110,000 priests who served during the 52 years covered by the study.

That is an astonishing statistic to say the least, but not at all surprising. The undoubted truth is that if there is any one factor to blame, without looking at the individual and collective mistakes, then it should be the present-day corrupted Bible itself. It is important to note here that even though the Bible, more often than not, calls to moral values, deplorably enough, it includes numerous texts which encourage immoral acts, including sexually explicit and indecent expressions, and encourage fornication and adultery,[148] rape,[149]

[148] Even though the story of the adulterous woman (John 8/3-11), which many priests are never weary of repeating, on the face of it calls to mercy it is, in fact, an invitation to encourage adultery. Not only is it fabricated, as it does not exist in the oldest manuscripts of the Bible, but it also represents a type of racial discrimination against women, for it mentions that it was only the adulterous woman who was tried and not the man with whom she was caught in the act. This is based on a strange assumption that victimizes women to the exclusion of men and rules that their hands should be cut off even if a woman comes to rescue her husband from his assailant by reaching out and seizing the assailant by his private parts, as in Deuteronomy 11/25. Despite all this, Islam is severely criticized for ruling that the thief's hand can only be cut off if a number of conditions are met.

[149] In Judges 21/20, for instance, we read, **"And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come you out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin."** We also read in Judges 19/25-29, **"But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to dawn, they let her go. Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her lord was, till it was light. And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold. And he said unto her, up, and let us be going. But there was no answer. Then the man took her up upon a donkey, and the man rose up, and got himself unto his place. And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, together with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the territory of Israel."** The Bible states that the punishment for raping a virgin girl who is not pledged to be married is as follows: **"If a man find a young woman**

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marital infidelity,[150] alcoholism,[151] prostitution, incest,

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that is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the young woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he has violated her, he may not put her away all his days." (Deuteronomy 22/28-29) In fact, this only serves to encourage rape, reward the offender and cause the victim to forfeit her right, and so anyone who wishes to force a woman to marry him only needs to rape her and give her father fifty shekels of silver!

[150] In Proverbs 7/16-19, for example, we read, **"I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with colored spreads, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us delight ourselves with love. For my husband is not at home…"** Hosea 3:1 also reads, **"Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her lover, and an adulteress...."**

[151] One the immoral acts of which the writers of the Gospels have accused Jesus Christ, peace be upon him, and which Muslims vehemently reject and would by no means tolerate, is that he was an alcoholic: **"The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'"** (Luke 7/34) In Matthew 11/19, we read, **"The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a drunkard…"** The irony is also apparent when one reads in Proverbs 23/29-30, **"Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has babbling? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine."** Other verses include: **"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflames them! And the harp, and the lyre, the timbrel, and flute, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands."** (Isaiah 5/11-12); **"Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mix strong drink."** (Isaiah 5/22); **"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."** (Proverbs 20/1); John the Baptist is praised in Luke 1/51 **"For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink."** Paul even said that those who drink alcohol will not inherit the kingdom of God: **"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."** In Galatians 5/21, **we read, "Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of which I tell you beforehand, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."** He even warns against associating with drunkards: **"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat."** (Corinthians 5/11). He also said, **"And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."** (Ephesians 5/18) We also read in 1 Peter 4/3-4, **"For the time past of our life will suffice us to have done the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in licentiousness, lusts, excess of wine, reveling, carousing, and abominable idolatries: In which they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of dissipation, speaking evil of you."** One can only imagine the state of humankind if it were to believe that one of the greatest prophets of God, like Jesus Christ, was an alcoholic. No book will combat alcoholism from which mankind suffers when it says, **"For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is fully mixed; and he pours out of the same…"** (Psalm 75/8) and even accuses God's noble prophets of being addicted to alcohol, as it has done regarding Noah (genesis 9/20-26), Lot (Genesis 19/30-38) Isaac (Genesis 27/37) and other prophets (Isaiah 28/7). The Bible also

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homosexuality,[152] among many other immoral acts,[153] even though the intensity and explicitness of sexual references in some of these texts are mitigated in some translations through the textual devices of euphemism and deletion. See, for instance, Ezekiel 16/7-23, Ezekiel 23/1-22;[154] 2 Samuel 13/1, about Amnon son of David falling in love with his sister Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David;[155] 2 Samuel 13/10-14,

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(Song of Solomon 5/1), **"I have come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." "Come you, they say, I will bring wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."** (Isaiah 56/12). In II Maccabees 15/39, we read, **"For as it is hurtful to drink wine or water alone; and as wine mingled with water is pleasant, and delights the taste."** It even considers his turning water into wine a miracle (John 2/3-10) and calls to spending wealth for the sake of alcohol, as in Deuteronomy 14/26, **"And you shall bestow that money for whatsoever your soul desires, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever your soul desires: and you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you, and your household."**

[152] 2 Samuel 1/26, for instance, reads, **"I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant have you been unto me: your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."**

[153] With this and other evil acts, the writers of the Gospels who have interpolated fabricated texts about Christ and other prophets of God, provide ready excuses for addicts, adulterers, homosexuals, rapists and murderers: Do you really want us to be better than the prophets of God who commit such sins?

[154] Because these Biblical texts are considerably indecent, only some of the names of books and the numbers of chapters have been mentioned out of respect to readers.

[155] It is really strange that the Bible describes Jonadab, who encouraged his cousin Amnon, son of a prophet of God—Prophet David, peace be upon him!—and even made a wicked plan for him to rape his own sister, as being subtle and shrewd rather than being a mischievous villain! In 2 Samuel 13/1-14, we read, **"And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. And Amnon was so distressed, that he became sick over his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it improper for him to do anything to her. But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very shrewd man. And he said unto him, Why are you, being the king's son, so haggard from day to day? Will you not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister. And Jonadab said unto him, Lay you down on your bed, and pretend to be sick: and when your father comes to see you, say unto him, I pray you, let my sister Tamar come, and give me food, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it from her hand. So Amnon lay down, and pretended to be sick: and when the king had come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray you, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand. Then David sent home to**

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Amnon raping his own sister Tamar; 2 Samuel 16/21-22, Absalom asking Ahithophel for advice, and the latter advised him to sleep with his father's concubines whom he left to take care of the palace and so a tent was pitched for Absalom on the roof, and he slept with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel; and Song of Solomon 1/1-3 about passionate kissing and about love that is more delightful than wine. See also Deuteronomy 22/28; Judges 19/25; Judges 21/21; Genesis 19/30-36; Genesis 35/21-22; 2 Samuel 1/26; 1 Samuel 16/12; Matthew 5/27-28; Romans 1/24-27; Ezekiel 23/19). These are but very few examples. It is worth mentioning here that adultery in general and incest in particular are just two of the evil acts which the Bible falsely states that some of God's prophets committed. Of course, as Muslims, we wholly reject the idea that any of God's prophets had ever been involved in such despicable acts. Such texts—as a result of human interpolations—have corrupted many of those who have read them despite the fact that there are other Biblical texts which prohibit and strictly warn against homosexuality, adultery and immoral acts in general.[156]

I have asked some Christians in countries or communities where the Bible is generally accepted as the Word of God the following question, "Why are the rates of murder, rape, theft,

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Tamar, saying, Go now to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare him food. So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was lying down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. And she took a pan, and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Send out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the food into the chamber that I may eat of your hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister. And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not you this folly. And I, where shall I cause my shame to go? And as for you, you shall be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray you, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from you. However he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her." A book contains such explicit references can by no means reduce the moral decay of any society.

[156] See, for instance, Romans, 1/24-27. The Bible not only prohibits fornication but also warns against associating with fornicators, as in 1 Corinthians 5/9, **"I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators."**

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alcoholism, prostitution, homosexuality, incest and all forms of corruption in general extremely high compared to countries where the Qur'an is considered the Holy Book?" Many of them have been shocked by this question since they have never thought about making such comparisons.

For example, in a dialogue that I had with a US citizen, I cited a case where the death penalty was imposed in Saudi Arabia on seven criminals who, while under the influence of alcohol, raped a woman. I told him that as a consequence of the application of the full weight of the law, hundreds of thousands of other women had been saved from other potential criminals. He disagreed and felt that the law was too severe and that it could not be implemented in his country. Based on official statistics, I told him that in his country in the last eight months more than half a million women were raped; an average of two thousand women raped every day! He was shocked and admitted to the effectiveness of the application of the Islamic Law. If I could talk to him again, I would tell him that in Islam, even if an *imam* were to rape a child, as the priests have done in the church, he would be executed without delay, in order to save the rest of the children. How happy I am to have embraced Islam, and I am proud to be a Muslim.

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An Open Invitation to the Pope and Other World Leaders

I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. May Allah bless all those who follow the correct path.

I hereby extend this invitation to the Pope and all the leaders of the world, especially those who govern and rule over millions of people of other religions, sects and ideologies; I invite all of you to embrace Islam. Come to Islam and you will be saved from the punishment of Allah and earn His reward in Paradise. If you are a Jew or a Christian, Allah will give you a double reward if you embrace Islam,[157] as Prophet Muhammad states in one of his traditions. (*Muslim*, 342). However, if you reject this invitation, you will be held accountable for all those under your influence and all those who follow you.

Like all my Muslim brothers and sisters the world over, Allah has charged me with the responsibility of conveying this message to all humanity to the best of my ability. He says, **"Say, O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you – that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah. But if they turn away, then say, 'Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Him].'"** (Qur'an 3/64)

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[157]The People of the Book (the Jews and the Christians) occupy a special position in Islam, and the Qur'an encourages its adherents to establish dialogue with them and argue with them in the best manner possible. As the Qur'an (29/46) states, **"And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best."** The Qur'an (5/82) also states that the Christians are nearest in love and affection to the Muslims: **"…the nearest in affection to them are those who say, 'We are Christians.' That is because there are priests and monks among them, and because they are free from pride."**

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Having presented the previous proofs in this book so that whoever has eyes can see them and whoever has intellect can understand them, a junction has been reached where Allah, the Exalted, calls on all people to embrace the truth. Once again I affirm that it is my duty and responsibility as a human being, one who submitted by free will to the law and commands of Allah, the one and only God, the Beneficent, the Merciful, to invite all mankind to give up the worship of false deities, whether animate and inanimate objects or any other thing created by Allah or fashioned by man. After repenting, they must submit themselves completely to the will of Allah, the only true God, the Creator of the universe.

It is noteworthy that as much money, prestige, position, and power that a non-Muslim might have in this life, he or she will never have enough to buy his or her entrance to the gardens of Paradise in the next world.[158] The poorest inhabitant of the earth who has testified that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger (the testimony of faith) will be happier and more dignified in the next world than the richest person who did not accept the last message sent by Allah to guide humankind.

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[158]Only those who fulfills his main purpose in life, i.e., the worship of Allah alone, may be able to achieve true happiness and inner peace. As the Qur'an (16/97) says, **"Whoever works righteousness, whether he be male or female, and is a true believer, We will surely make him live a happy life; and We will give them their reward, according to the utmost merit of their actions."** The Qur'an (13/28) also says, **"Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah; surely in the remembrance of Allah hearts can find comfort."** We also read in 20/123-124, **"…whoever follows My guidance will not lose his way, nor will he come to grief; but whoever turns away from My reminder, his truly shall be a life of misery…"** The latter verse explains the reason behind the numerous psychological illnesses prevalent today and the attempt of some of the world's wealthiest and most recognized celebrities to commit suicide.

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Allah says in the Qur'an (3/85), **"Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he will be among the losers."** He also says in 5/36-37, **"As for those who reject faith, if they had everything on earth, and twice as much again and offered it to ransom themselves from the torment of the Day of Resurrection, it will not be accepted from them and they will have a painful punishment. They will want to get out of the Fire but they will not be able to, and they will have an everlasting punishment."**.

So while one's soul is still within his body and he can still breathe, speak and is conscious of his actions, he can always repent to Allah, the Exalted. If repentance is sincere and one testifies that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, while avoiding all forms of paganism, Allah will forgive him, even if he should be but a minute's distance away from the Hellfire. Allah will then change the person's bad deeds into good deeds and allow him or her entrance into Paradise eternally. Allah says, **"…Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful."** (25/70)

He also says, **"But the ones who believe and do righteous deeds – We will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. [It is] the promise of Allah, [which is] truth, and who is more truthful than Allah in statement?"** (4/122) It is the promise of Allah for anyone who wants to repent sincerely and start a new life. I close this invitation, citing the following verses from the Qur'an, where Allah, the Almighty, gives the opportunity to all human beings to repent sincerely. He invites sinners to repent, regardless of the magnitude of their sins, and He will forgive them.

The Qur'an (39/53-54) says**, "Say, 'O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And return [in repentance] to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you; then you will not be helped.'"**

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Here also, Allah informs us that time for repentance is of limited duration and that when death arrives it is no longer possible to obtain forgiveness.

Finally, Allah extends His promise of forgiveness and mercy to the believer who is steadfast in faith and does good deeds, saying, **"But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance."** (20/82).

I supplicate to Allah, the Creator of all that exists, the true Guide, to guide to the right path all those seekers of truth whose minds are open to objective analysis. I ask Allah to guide all those who make sincere self-assessments and to improve their conditions according to what is pleasing to Him.



"And to you [Muhammad] have We revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and determining what is true therein..." (Qur'an 5/48)
The Qur'an, which is the last of all divinely revealed books, is the criterion by which the contents of all other sacred books may be judged. It confirms what is valid in them and corrects what is not.

The Bible	The Qur'an
Concerning God	
"For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed." (Exodus 31/17)	**"We created the heavens and the earth and everything between them in six days, and We were not affected by fatigue." (Qur'an 50/38)**
"Then the Lord awoke as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man who shouts because of wine." (Psalms 78/65)	**"God, there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep." (Qur'an 2/255)**
Jacob wrestles with God and defeats Him, as in **Genesis 32/28**. See also **Judges 1/19**: **"So the Lord was with Judah. And they drove out the inhabitants of the mountains, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the lowland, because they had chariots of iron."**	**"No just estimate have they made of God. Surely, God is Powerful and Exalted in Might." (Qur'an 22/74) "There is nothing in the heavens or the earth that can frustrate Him. Surely He is All-knowing, All-powerful." (Qur'an 35/44)**
The lord shows no mercy and does not forgive: **"My eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity" (Ezekiel 9/10).**	**"Surely God is Forgiving and Merciful." (Qur'an 2/173)** In fact, all chapters of the Qur'an, with the exception of Chapter 9, begin with the statement **"In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful"**, which clearly shows the importance of mercy and compassion in Islam. Besides, God's attribute of 'mercy' and its derivatives far exceed the number of His other attributes in that it is mentioned 315 times!

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God oppresses and wrongs people: **"I will speak in the bitterness of my soul....Show me why You contend with me. Does it seem good to You that You should oppress." (Job10/1-3)**	God neither wrongs, nor oppresses anyone: **"God does not wrong people in any way; rather it is people who wrong themselves." (Qur'an 10/44)**
"How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?"(Psalms 13/1)	**"My Lord neither errs nor forgets." (Qur'an 20/52)**
"O Lord, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear?" (Habakkuk 1/2)	**"Indeed, my Lord is the Hearer of supplication." (Qur'an 14/39)**
"Open Your eyes, O Lord, and see." (2 Kings 19/16)	**"God sees what you do." (Qur'an 49/18)**
The Lord is alleged to have said, **"...And break My covenant with them." (Leviticus 26/44)**	**"That is God's promise. God will never break His promise, but most of the people do not know." (Qur'an 30/6)**
According to **Genesis 3/9**, God was ignorant of Adam's whereabouts and of his eating from the tree: **"Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?'"**	God is all-Knowing; therefore, when Adam and his wife ate from the tree, He addressed them in a way that clearly indicated His knowledge of what they had done: **"Their Lord called out to them, 'Did I not forbid you this tree and say to you that Satan is your open enemy'?"(Qur'an 7/22)**
The Lord needs a mark to distinguish the houses of the Israelites from the houses of the Egyptians. **(Exodus 12/13)** Nor does He know what happens on the earth unless He descends to find out: **"And the Lord said, 'Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know.'" (Genesis 18/20-21)** In **1 Corinthians 1/25**, Paul says, **"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."**	**"[He is the Knower of the Unseen, Whom not even the weight of the smallest particle eludes, either in the heavens or in the earth; nor is there anything smaller or larger than that which is not in a Clear Book."(Qur'an 34/3) "He is the knower of the unseen and the visible, the Great, the Most-Exalted. It makes no difference whether you keep secret what you say or voice it out loud, whether you hide in the night or go out in the day"(Qur'an 13/9-10) "The keys of the Unseen are in His possession.No one knows them but Him. He knows everything in the land and sea. No leaf falls without His knowing it. There is no seed in the darkness of the earth, and nothing moist or dry which is not in a Clear Book." (Qur'an 6/59) "God has knowledge of all things." (Qur'an 5/97)**

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In **Isaiah 7/20** the Bible blatantly depicts God as being so poor that He has to hire a razor: **"In the same day shall the Lord will shave with a hired razor, with those from beyond the River, with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the legs, and will also remove the beard."**	**"Mankind! You are the poor in need of God whereas God is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy." (Qur'an 35/15) "God has heard the words of those who say, 'God is poor and we are rich.' We will write down what they said and their killing of the Prophets without any right to do so...'" (Qur'an 3/181)**
God is fed and eats His fill: **"Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Command the children of Israel, and say to them, "My offering, My food for My offerings made by fire as a sweet aroma to Me, you shall be careful to offer to Me at their appointed time." And you shall say to them, "This *is* the offering made by fire which you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs in their first year without blemish, day by day, as a regular burnt offering. The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil. *It is* a regular burnt offering which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD. And its drink offering *shall be* one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; in a holy *place* you shall pour out the drink to the LORD as an offering. The other lamb you shall offer in the evening; as the morning grain offering and its drink offering, you shall offer *it* as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour as a grain offering,**	God provides food to His creation, but He does not need to be fed. **"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me. I do not want from them any provision, nor do I want them to feed Me. Indeed, it is God who is the [continual] Provider, the firm possessor of strength" (Qur'an 51/56-58).** **"Say, 'Is it other than God I should take as a protector, Creator of the heavens and the earth, while it is He who feeds and is not fed?' Say, [O Muhammad], 'Indeed, I have been commanded to be the first [among you] who submit [to God] and [was commanded], 'Do not ever be of the polytheists.'" (Qur'an 6/14).** **"And it is He who feeds me and gives me drink" (Qur'an 26/79).** **"And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for**

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mixed with oil, with its drink offering - *this is* the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering'" (Numbers 28/1-10). **11 "To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle" (Isaiah 1/11).**	**provision; We provide for you, and the [best] outcome is for [those of] righteousness" (Qur'an 20/132).**
He commands insulting others: **"So let him curse, because the Lord has said to him, 'Curse David … and let him curse; for so the Lord has ordered him" (2 Samuel 16/10-11).**	God forbids insulting even the idols which the idolaters worship besides Him:"Do not insult the gods of those they call besides Allah, lest they, out of spite, insult Allah in their ignorance."(6/108) He also commands speaking kindly to all people, Muslims and non-Muslims;**"..and speak kindly to people" (Qur'an 2/83).**
In **Psalms 18/8**, God is described with a nose and a mouth from which smoke comes out: **"Smoke went up from His nostrils, and devouring fire from His mouth."** According to **Jeremiah 13/17**, the Lord cries and sheds tears: **"My soul will weep, … my eyes will weep bitterly and run down with tears."** In **Micah 1/8** God wails, howls and walks naked: **"Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked; I will make a wailing like the jackals and a mourning like the ostriches."** And He whistles (i.e., hisses) for the fly and bee: **"The Lord will whistle for the fly… and for the bee." (Isaiah 7/18)** And He claps with his hands: **"I also will beat My fists together." (Ezekiel 21/17)**	**"Glory be to thy Lord, the Lord of Glory, above that they describe!" (Qur'an 37/180) "There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing." (Qur'an 42/11) "For God is the highest attribute. And He is Exalted in Might, the Wise." (Qur'an 16/60) "He is God, there is no deity save Him, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Source of Peace, the Granter of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Compeller, the Supremely Great, Glory be to God, who is far above what they associate with Him. He is God — the Creator, the Maker, the Giver of Form. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise." (Qur'an 59/23-24)**

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Concerning Jesus	
Jesus is accused of misbehavior towards his mother: **"Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?'" (John 2/4).** and of being tyrannical and cruel: **"Do not think that…I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword" (Matthew 10/34).**	The Qur'an defends Jesus against these false accusations, namely, that of being disobedient to his mother and that of being tyrannical and cruel. Jesus said: **"…And [made me] dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me a wretched tyrant"(Qur'an 19/32).**
Jesus is accused of choosing to anoint his feet with the expensive perfume rather than offering it in charity for the poor **(John12/3).**	Jesus is much concerned with *zakat* (the obligatory alms) and helping the poor throughout his life:**"And He has made me blessed wherever I am and has enjoined upon me prayer and *zakaat* as long as I remain alive" (Qur'an 19/31).**
Jesus is accused of having been tried and tricked by Satan **(Luke 4/2).**	Satan has no power whatsoever over Jesus and his mother as they were both protected by God in response to the supplication of his grandmother, the wife of 'Imran: **"And I have named her Mary, and I seek refuge for her in You and [for] her descendants from Satan, the expelled [from the mercy of God]" (Qur'an 3/36).**
The first miracle performed by Jesus in the Bible is his turning water to wine at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. **(John 2/7-11).**	The first miracle of Prophet Jesus was speaking immediately after his birth, defending his mother against the false accusations leveled at her by her people **(Qur'an 19/30-33).** In this wasy, she was spared the punishment of burning with fire mentioned in **Leviticus 21/9**.

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The Bible claims that Jesus brought discredit on his noble lineage, accusing all the four women mentioned in his lineage **(Matthew1/3-6)** of adultery, namely, Tamar, who is accused of incest with her father-in-law **(Genesis 38/13-19)**; Judas, the fourth son of Jacob; Rahab who is accused of adultery **(Joshua 2/1)**; Bathsheba who is equally accused of adultery **(2 Samuel 11/1-4)**; and Ruth, also accused of the same evil deed **(Ruth3/7)**, despite the words of **(Deuteronomy 23/2) "One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the Lord; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the Lord"** What makes Muslims all the more upset is that even Virgin Mary is falselyaccused of adultery, as in **John 8/41.**	Jesus, one of the greatest prophets in Islam, peace be upon them all, is of pure and honorable ancestry. He belongs to the family of 'Imran after whom a long chapter (*Surah*) in the Qur'an is named. Besides, it is a family whom God had chosen, among others, above all peoples of their time: **"God chose Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imran above all people of their times" (Qur'an 3/33).**
Concerning Mary	
Pure Virgin Mary is falsely accused of committing adultery: **"'You do the deeds of your father.' Then they said to Him, 'We were not born of fornication'" (John 8/41).** **The Christians' Bible remains silent on this matter and does not attempt to defend pure Virgin Mary against such a monstrous falsehood. In its official website** **(http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20050516_mary-grace-hope-christ_en.html)**	The Qur'an vehemently defends pure Virgin Mary, describing what was said about her as a monstrous falsehood: **"They denied the Truth and uttered a monstrous falsehood against Mary" (Qur'an 4/156).** **"And make mention of the woman who kept her chastity; We breathed into her of Our spirit, and made her and her son a sign to all mankind" (Qur'an 21/91).**

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the Vatican says "Moreover, the suggestion that it originated as an answer to the accusation of illegitimacy levelled at Jesus is unlikely, as that accusation could equally have arisen because it was known that there was something unusual about Jesus' birth (cf. Mark 6:3; John 8:41)." This means that the false accusation of Jesus Christ of being illegitimate (John 8/41) is probably due to the unusual manner of his own birth.

The Christians' Bible not only remains silent on the false claim that pure Virgin Mary committed adultery, as in John 8/41, nor does it remain silent on the false claim that Jesus Christ was the son Joseph the carpenter, as in John 6/42: "And they said, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?" . It more often than not states that he is the son of Joseph the carpenter, as in **(Matthew 1/1-16: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:…And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ."**; and in **Luke 3/23: "And Jesus… being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli."**

It further states that Joseph the carpenter was the father of Jesus Christ, peace be upon him, many times, as in Luke **2/48: "and His mother said to Him, 'Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.'"** This is despite **"And [the example of] Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity, so We blew into [her garment] through Our angel [i.e., Gabriel], and she believed in the words of her Lord and His scriptures and was of the devoutly obedient" (Qur'an 66/12).**

"She said, 'How shall I have a son when I have neither been touch by any man, nor ever been unchaste?'" (Qur'an 19/20).

The Qur'an also mentions her good upbringing: **"Right graciously did her Lord accept her : He made her grow in purity and beauty"(Qur'an 3/37).**

Interestingly, no single book of the Gospels bears the name of Virgin Mary, whereas Chapter 19 of the Qur'an is named after her. Nor is there any chapter in the Qur'an bearing the name of Prophet Muhammad's mother or any of his wives or daughters. It is also noteworthy that Mary is the only woman whose name is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an. While the Qur'an mentions her name34 times, the Christians' Gospel mentions it only 18 times. Besides, the third chapter of the Qur'an bears the name of her family. In fact, this chapter mentions that God had chosen her over all women of the world in her time. As **the Qur'an (3/42)** says, **"And remember the angels' words to Mary. They said, 'God has chosen**

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the fact that, according to the Christians' Bible, she was only betrothed to him upon her conception of Jesus, as in **Luke 1/27: "to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary"; and in Luke 2/4-5: "Joseph also went up from Galilee … to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife who was with child."**	**you. He has made you pure and exalted you above all women [of your time].'"** Muslims often name their daughters after her to show respect and love for her. Besides, Muslim women in general are the ones who really wear the hijab, which the pure Virgin Mary, peace be upon her, herself used to wear.
Concerning Jesus' Disciples	
Mark 14/50 says of Jesus' disciples, **"Then they all forsook Him and fled".** The Bible **(Matthew 8/26)** also claims that Jesus said to the disciples, **"Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?"** **"Then Jesus answered and said, 'O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me" (Matthew 17/17).** **"Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast it out?' So Jesus said to them, 'Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you'" (Matthew 17/19-20).** **"But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men'" (Matthew 16/23).**	The Qur'an defends the disciples of Jesus and declares them free from betrayal and weak faith: **"But when Jesus felt [persistence in] disbelief from them, he said, 'Who are my supporters for [the cause of] God?' The disciples said, 'We are supporters for God. We believe in God and we testify that we are Muslims [submitting to Him]. Our Lord, we have believed in what You revealed and we have followed the messenger [Jesus],so write us down among the witnesses'"(Qur'an 3/52-53).** **"O you who believe, be supporters of God, as when Jesus, the son of Mary, said to the disciples, 'Who are my supporters for God?' The disciples said, 'We are supporters of God'" (Qur'an 61/14).** **"And [remember] when I inspired to the disciples, 'Believe in Me and in My messenger Jesus.' They said, 'We have believed, so bear witness that indeed we are Muslims [in submission to God]'"(Qur'an 5/111).**

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Concerning the Prophets of God	
Noah is drunk and naked in his tent **(Genesis 9/21)**, and Abraham sacrifices his honor. **(Genesis 12/10-19; Genesis 20/2).**	**"Indeed, God has chosen Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imraan over the worlds" (Qur'an 3/33).**
Lot gets drunk and commits incest with his own two daughters, impregnating them **(Genesis19/30-36).**	**"And Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot – and all [of them] We preferred over the worlds" (Qur'an 6/86).**
Jacob lies to his father and steals the blessing and prophethood from his brother **(Genesis 27/35).**	**"And remember Our servants, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – those of strength and [religious] vision. Indeed, We chose them for an exclusive quality: remembrance of the home [of the Hereafter]. And indeed they are, to Us, among the chosen and outstanding" (Qur'an 38/45-47).**
Joseph, peace be upon him, commits the sin of practicing polytheism, by swearing by the life of Pharaoh: **"But Joseph said to them, 'It *is* as I spoke to you, saying, "You *are* spies!" In this *manner* you shall be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether *there is* any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you *are* spies!'" (Genesis 42/14-16)**	**The Qur'an defends Joseph, peace be upon him, and describes him as one of God's chosen servants: "Indeed, he was of Our chosen servants" (Qur'an 12/24). "And I have followed the religion of my fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It was not for us to associate anything with God. That is from the favor of God upon us and upon the people, but most of the people are not grateful" (Qur'an 12/38).**
Reuben, the prophet and oldest son of Jacob, commits adultery with his father's wife who is the mother of his two brothers. **(Genesis 35/22 and Genesis 49/3-4)** Judah, the fourth son of Jacob commits incest with his daughter-in-law and has Perez and Zerah from her. **(Genesis 38/15-18)**.	**"Those were the ones upon whom God bestowed favor from among the prophets of the descendants of Adam and of those We carried [in the Ark] with Noah, and of the descendants of Abraham and Israel, and of those whom We guided and chose. When the verses of the Most Merciful were recited to them, they fell in prostration and weeping." (Qur'an 19/58).**

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The Lord accuses **Moses** and Aaron of betrayal in the Old Testament: **"Because you trespassed against Me among the children of Israel" (Deuteronomy 32/51).**	The Holy Qur'an defends **Moses** and **Aaron**: **"Peace upon Moses and Aaron. Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good. Indeed, they were of Our believing servants" (Qur'an 37/120-122).** **"O you who believe! Be not like those who abused Moses; then God cleared him of what they said. And he, in the sight of God, was distinguished" (Qur'an 33/69).**
Moses' killing of the Egyptian was deliberate and premeditated **(Exodus 2/12).**	**Moses** did not kill the Egyptian deliberately. **(Qur'an 28/15)**
Moses put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, it was leprous: **"Furthermore the Lord said to him, "Now put your hand in your bosom." And he put his hand in his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, like snow" (Exodus 4/6)**	**Moses, peace be upon him, put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, it was pure white, without any sign of leprosy or any other disease whatsoever:** **"Insert your hand into the opening of your garment; it will come out white, without disease. And draw in your arm close to you [as prevention] from fear, for those are two proofs from your Lord to Pharaoh and his establishment. Indeed, they have been a people defiantly disobedient" (Qur'an 28/69).**
Aaron fashioned the golden calf and ordered the Israelites to worship it in the absence of Moses **(Exodus 32/1-6).**	The Qur'an defends **Aaron** against this false allegation, confirming that the one who introduced worship of the calf was as-Samiri and not Aaron. **(Qur'an 20/85-98)** The Qur'an defends Aaron against this false allegation, confirming that the one who introduced worship of the calf was as-Samiri and not Aaron **(Qur'an 20/85-98).**

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David betrays his neighbor and army chief, has sexual intercourse with his wife, and then sends him to be killed in war **(2 Samuel 11/4-15).**	**"And remember Our servant, David, the possessor of strength; indeed, he was one who repeatedly turned back [to God]" (Qur'an 38/17).**
Solomon has a thousand women who turn his heart away from God, and he builds temples for their gods (**1 Kings 11/1-9**).	**"We had given David and Solomon knowledge, and they said, 'Praise [is due] to God, who has favored us over many of His believing servants'"(Qur'an 27/15).** **" It was not Solomon who disbelieved"(Qur'an 2/102).**
David's son, Amnon, rapes his sister, Tamar **(2 Samuel 13/11-14). Absalom, the son of David**, commits open adultery with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel **(2 Samuel 16/21-22).**	**"They made for him what he willed of elevated chambers, statues, bowls like reservoirs, and stationary kettles.[We said],"Work, O family of David, in gratitude." And few of My servants are grateful." (Qur'an 34/13).**
Job is impatient and refuses to accept the will of God **(Job/10).**	The Qur'an dismisses the unjust description of Prophet Job and illustrates his character as follows: **"Indeed, We found him patient, an excellent servant. Indeed, he was one repeatedly turning back [to God]" (Qur'an 38/44)**
Zechariah did not believe God's miracle regarding the birth of John, so God punished him with dumbness for nine months: **"But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time" (Luke 1/20).**	The Qur'an defends Zachariah, stating that his silence for three days was a sign that the miracle would come true and that it was not a punishment: **"[Zechariah] said, 'My Lord, make for me a sign.' He said, 'Your sign is that you will not speak to the people for three nights, [being] sound'"(Qur'an 19/10).**

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Jesus allegedly describes all the prophets before him as thieves: **"All who *ever* came before Me[a] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them" (John 10/8)** In **Jeremiah 23/11-16**, God allegedly attributes wickedness and lies to His prophets: **"'For both prophet and priest are profane; yes, in My house I have found their wickedness,' says the Lord. 'Therefore their way shall be to them like slippery ways; in the darkness they shall be driven on and fall in them; for I will bring disaster on them, the year of their punishment,' says the Lord. 'And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied by Baal and caused My people Israel to err. Also I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem: they commit adultery and walk in lies; they also strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns back from his wickedness. All of them are like Sodom to Me, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah.' Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets, 'Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall; for from the prophets of Jerusalem profaneness has gone out into all the land.'" Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; they speak a vision of their own heart, from the mouth of the Lord.'"**

The Qur'an confers great respect on all prophets of God and does not ascribe any obscene acts or wrongdoing to them. In fact, believing in all the prophets as well as respecting them is a main requirement in Islam. **The Qur'an (2/136)** says, **"Say, [O believers], 'We have believed in God and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.'"** God praises His prophets: **"We have already sent Our messengers with clear proofs and sent down with them the Scripture and the balance that the people may maintain [their affairs] in justice" (Qur'an 57/25)**. He also says, **"And We made them leaders guiding by Our command. And We inspired to them the doing of good deeds, establishment of prayer, and giving of *zakaat*; and they were worshippers of Us"(Qur'an 21/73).**

God ordered Prophet Muhammad to take the prophets before him as examples: **"Those are the ones whom God has guided, so from their guidance take an example" (Qur'an 6/90).**

The Qur'an has thus saved humankind by clearing the names of God's prophets. One can only imagine the grim state of humanity if the false descriptions of prophets in the Bible were followed.

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Concerning Equality	
"For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel." (Jeremiah 16/9) **"Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." (2 Kings 5/15)**	**"[All] praise is [due] to God, Lord of the worlds." (Qur'an 1/2) "And there was no nation but that there had passed within it a warner." (Qur'an 35/24)** **"And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], 'Worship God and avoid false deities.'" (Qur'an16/36)** According to these verses, God sent prophets and messengers to all peoples and not only to the Israelites.
The Lord instructs nations to prostrate to the Jews and lick the dust of their feet: **"They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me." (Isaiah 49/23)** One third of the human race is condemned to curse and slavery when Canaan, son of Ham, was made a slave to Shem and Japheth. **(Genesis 9/18-27)** Paul said, **"Nevertheless what says the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." (Galatians 4/30-31)** Jesus is portrayed as a racist in his answer to the Canaanite woman who sought his help to cure her daughter who was **"severely demon-possessed."** He said to her, **"It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." (Matthew 15/22-26)**	**"Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in God's sight is the most pious of you. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Qur'an 49/13)** 
The Bible discriminates between men and women: **"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." (1Timothy2/14)** According to the Bible, the impurity resulting from the	According to the Qur'an, both Adam and his wife sinned, repented and shared responsibility for their actions: **"But Satan caused them to slip out of it and removed them from**

delivery of a female is twice that of the male. In **Leviticus 12/2-5**, we read, **"If a woman has conceived, and borne a man child, then she shall be unclean seven days... She shall then continue in the blood of her purification thirty-three days… But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity, and she shall continue in the blood of her purification sixty-six days."** The Bible also states that just as God is the head of Christ, the man is the head of the woman. She is not the glory of God like a man is, and she was created for man. **(1 Corinthians 11/3-9)**	**that [condition] in which they had been." (Qur'an 2/36)** **"They said, 'Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers.'" (Qur'an 7/23)** **"And Adam disobeyed his Lord and erred. Then his Lord chose him and turned to him in forgiveness and guided [him]." (Qur'an 20/121-122)** **"And due to the wives is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable."(Qur'an 2/228)** To learn more about the status of women in Islam, the reader may refer to Chapters 4 and 65 of the Qur'an.
Concerning Scientific Facts	
The Bible contradicts contemporary scientific facts as it claims that the world dates back to 3700 BC, i.e., that from the beginning of the creation until the 21st century, there is only 6000 years. It also states that there were only a few days between the creation of the earth and the creation of man. According to geology, however, the earth is about 4550 million years old, and there was a very long period of time between the creation of the earth and that of man. The Bible says that God created light, day and night **(Genesis1/3-5)** before the creation of the planets, the sun and the moon. **(Genesis 1/14-18)**	The Qur'an does not contradict or clash with modern science. In fact, it contains scientific facts that were only discovered in modern times and with the use of highly sophisticated equipment. See, for instance, the following: 2:74, 2:173, 2:222, 4:56, 6:99, 6:125, 10:92, 12:47, 13:41, 15:14-22, 16:66, 17:12, 21:30-32, 22:5, 23:12-14, 24:40, 24:43, 27:88, 30:1-4, 36:37-40, 39:5-6, 41:11, 51: 47, 52:6, 55:19-20, 55:37, 57:25, 78:6-7, 86:1-3 and 96:16. It is worth noting here that the Qur'an is, first and foremost a book of guidance, which serves to guide mankind to happiness in this life and eternal bliss in the hereafter.
In **Revelation 7/1**, we read, **"I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth,"** meaning that the earth is square, while **Matthew 4/8** indicates that the earth is	The Qur'an refers in very clear terms to the ball-shaped earth as manifested by the overlapping of the day and night: **"He wraps the night over the day and wraps the day over the night." (Qur'an 39/5)**

flat: **"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory."**	**"And after that He spread the earth." (Qur'an 79/30)**
Earth is fixed, and in is not moving: **"You who laid the foundations of the earth, So that it should not be moved forever." (Psalm 104/5)**	Earth is not fixed, but moving: **"And you see the mountains, thinking them rigid, while they will pass as the passing of clouds. [It is] the work of God, who perfected all things. Indeed, He is Acquainted with that which you do." (Qur'an 27/ 88)**
The Bible claims that the Israelites went to Egypt with Jacob and they were only 70 men and women. Yet when they left two generations later, the number of men alone was 603,550. **(Deuteronomy 10/22, Exodus 12/37 and Numbers 1/46)** Thus, if this was the number of men, considering the fact that Pharaoh used to kill the male children, it means that their total number, including women and children, was about 3 million. How could 70 people become 3 million within two generations? In 2 **Maccabees 15/39**, we read that drinking water alone is harmful: **"For as it is hurtful to drink wine or water alone…"** Another scientific anomaly is found in **Leviticus 11/6** to the effect that the hare is considered unclean: **"The hare, because it chews the cud…"**	God says, **"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth." (Qur'an41/53);"And those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, and it guides to the path of the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy." (Qur'an 34/6)** See also *The Bible, The Qur'an and Science* by Maurice Bucaille who said at the end of his book, "I could not find a single error in the Qur'an. I had to stop and ask myself: if a man was the author of the Quran, how he could have written facts in the Seventh century CE that today are shown to be in keeping with modern scientific knowledge?" Many other contemporary scholars, such as Dr. Keith Moore, Dr. G.C. Goeringer, Dr. Marshall Johnson, Dr. Tagatat Tejasen, Dr. Alfred Kroner, Dr. William W. Hay, Dr. Yoshihide Kozai and Dr. Joe Leigh Simpson, have also addressed the issue of the scientific facts in the Qur'an.

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Concerning the Preservation of the Holy Scriptures	
It is shrouded in uncertainty and reveals shortcomings: **"Which if I have done well, and as it becomes the history, it is what I desired: but if not so perfectly, it must be pardoned me" (2 Maccabees 15/39).**	The Qur'an firmly confirms its certainty : **"This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of God" (Qur'an 2/2).**
Humans have been instructed to safeguard it, but they haven't: **"Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?"(Romans 3/2-3).**	God has taken it upon Himself to guard it and protect it against corruption: **"It is We who have sent down the Reminder (i.e., the Qur'an) and We will, most surely, safeguard it"(Qur'an 15/9).**
Explicit Corruption: **"How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us?' Look, the false pen of the scribe certainly works falsehood" (Jeremiah 8/8).** **"And the oracle of the Lord you shall mention no more. For every man's word shall be his oracle, for you have perverted the words of the living God, the Lord of hosts, our God" (Jeremiah 23/36).** **"And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men"(Matthew 15/9).**	**Explicit Preservation:** **"… Truly, it is a mighty Book. Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it; [it is] a revelation from a [Lord who is] Wise and Praiseworthy" (Qur'an 41/41-42).** **"And it was not [possible] for this Qur'an to be produced by other than God, but [it is] a confirmation of what was before it and a detailed explanation of the [former] Scripture, about which there is no doubt, from the Lord of the worlds" (Qur'an 10/37).** **"Will they not ponder on the Qur'an? If it had not come from God, they would have surely found in it many contradictions" (Qur'an 4/82).**

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Concerning Forgiveness and Intercession	
Humans can forgive sins: **"And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'" (John 20/22-23).**	God alone can forgive sins: **"And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember God and seek forgiveness for their sins – and who can forgive sins except God? – and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know." (Qur'an 3/135)** Supplications are raised to Him directly without any mediators or intercessors whatsoever: **"And when My servants ask you [O Muhammad] concerning Me – indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me." (Qur'an 2/186)**
Concerning Wealth	
The rich will not enter the kingdom of God: **"And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19/24).**	**"Seek the abode of the hereafter with what God has given you, without forgetting your portion of this world. And do good as God has been good to you …" (Qur'an 28/77).**

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Concerning Terrorism	
"Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey." (1 Samuel 15/3)	**".. whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land, it is as if he had killed all mankind. And whoever saves one, it is as if he had saved all mankind." (Qur'an 5/32)**
"Their children also will be dashed to pieces before their eyes." (Isaiah 13/16) **"They shall fall by the sword, their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child ripped open." (Hosea 13/16)**	The Qur'an considers the act of burying female infants alive, as was prevalent before the advent of Islam, so monstrous that it mentions it alongside the horrifying events that will take place on the Day of Resurrection. **(Qur'an 81/1-9)**
Concerning Wisdom and Knowledge	
"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2/17) **"For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow." (Ecclesiastes 1/18)** **"As it happens to the fool, it also happens to me, and why was I then more wise?" (Ecclesiastes 2/15)**	**"And say, 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge.'" (Qur'an 20/114)** **"God will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees." (Qur'an 58/11)** **"He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none will remember except those of understanding." (Qur'an 2/269)**
Concerning the Perfect Religion	
"For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away." (1Corinthians13/9-10)	**"This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion." (Qur'an 5/3)**

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جميع الحقوق محفوظة لمؤسسة رسالة الرحمة

Risaalat Ar-Rahmah (Message of Mercy)

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"I learned to love Jesus more than my own parents."

"That is Jesus, the son of Mary, the word of truth about which they dispute." (Qur'an 19/34)

"And We made the son of Maryam and his mother a Sign…" (23/50)

Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) was born in peace, will come back in peace, will die in peace and will be raised to life in peace. As the Qur'an (19/33) says about him, "Peace be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die and the day I am raised up again alive."

Jesus is mentioned 25 times in the Qur'an, while Prophet Muhammad is mentioned only 5 times. An entire chapter of the Qur'an is named after one of the miracles performed by Jesus, namely Al-Maa'idah (5/114). This miracle is not mentioned in any of the four Gospels, nor is that of his speaking to people while he was still in the cradle, nor that of making a figure out of clay, breathing into it and it became a bird by Allah's leave, which is far greater than that of resurrecting the dead, among other miracles.

Muslims do not accept that Christ's name be mentioned without invoking God's peace upon him, for failure to do so shows total disrespect to this noble prophet; neither do they accept that he be depicted in a movie or serial because he is, just like any other prophet of God, far greater and more revered to have his role as a prophet be played by anyone. In fact, Muslims are the ones who use the same greeting Christ used, as in Matthew 28/9.

It is interesting to note that no single book of the Gospels bears the name Mary, peace be upon her, whereas Chapter 19 of the Qur'an is named after her, and there is no chapter in the Qur'an bearing the name of Prophet Muhammad's mother or any of his wives or daughters. It is also noteworthy that Mary is the only woman who is mentioned by name in the Qur'an, and the third chapter bears the name of her family. In fact, this chapter mentions that God had chosen her over all women of the world. As the Qur'an (3/42) states, "And when the angels said, 'O Mary, Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the world.'" (3/42)

Many Muslims also name their daughters after her to show respect and love for her, and Muslim women in general are the ones who wear the head covering which Mary, peace be upon her, herself wore. The Qur'an mentions that, of all people in the world, fair-minded Christians are the closest in affection to the Muslims:"You will find the nearest in affection of them to the believers those who say,'We are Christians.' That is because among them are priests and monks and because they are not arrogant."(Qur'an 5/82)