

Christendom Must Revert to Pure Monotheism before it is Too Late

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Introduction

It is a great waste when the Christian scholars judge the Koran - the literal word of Allah and the one unified Book throughout the ages according to their several altered and inconsistent bibles. Simple scientific approach compels healthy minds to use the one unified and unchangeable Book, the Koran, as a reference and not the opposite. Relying on the Koran to reform, amend and correct Christianity in no way means rejection of the Bible, on the contrary, the Koran clears the name of Jesus from false teachings attributed to him against his will by later Christians.

The Koran confirms the scriptures that came before it and safeguards the Torah of Moses and the Bible of Jesus for it has preserved within it the authentic teachings of the former Books. It watches over these Books in the sense that it will not let the true teachings of the Torah and the Gospel to be lost. It stands as a witness because it bears testimony to the Word of Allah contained in these Books, and helps to sort it out from the interpretations and commentaries of the people which were mixed with it: what is confirmed by the Koran is the Word of Allah and what is against it is that of the people. The Koran testifies the truth that is in the former Books and falsifies the falsehood that was added to these Books.

Muhammad came to the Jews and Christians to make clear to them the facts they concealed in their scriptures, and to help them abandon imagination which is always at war with reason so that they cannot later on claim innocence and say: "No one came to us in the capacity of spectacle and a warning."

The religion of all true and sincere men of faith should be one, and that is the ideal of Islam.

The Jews violated the laws of the Torah to serve their worldly interests. A sect of the Jews called Ozair (Ezra) who allegedly dictated from memory the whole Jewish law which was lost during captivity, a son of Allah. They considered him as fully worthy to have been the law giver if Moses did not precede him. Christianity has digressed from the concept of the Oneness of Allah into a vague and mysterious doctrine that was formulated during the fourth century. The Christians invented the concept of trinity, thus associating with Allah other partners. In this they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. The Christians further considered Jesus as their lord, yet they were commanded to worship but Allah alone. The Jews and the Christians also took their rabbis and their monks as their lords in derogation of Allah.

The false claim that Allah has begotten a son is considered in Islam as an unforgivable sin. The Koran teaches that never shall Allah forgive setting up partners in worship with Him but less than that He forgives to whomsoever He will. In this regard, Muslim's refutation of Christian teachings is not based on personal whim or malice. Muslims are simply stating Allah's judgment on the matter - whoever ascribes partners to Allah has rejected faith.

Believing in the Oneness of Allah and worshipping Him alone without associating with Him any partners is the core and essence of sound belief. Muhammad came the Jews and the Christians to explain to them most of the matters in which they differ. He came to warn against the breaching of the Covenant of the Jews and the Christians with Allah, and to re-establish the Oneness of Allah on earth.

Allah is One, and His Message cannot come at one place or at one time to contradict His Message in another place or at another time in spirit.

The author wonders: is the present Bible beyond reproach? Does a Christian become a heretic if he raises the banner of Christian reformation? Is there a true man in Christendom who would take the initiative to purify Christianity from trinitarianism, thus taking it back to Allah's Unity instead of one in three or three in one?

The author strongly calls on Christendom to use its logic, reasoning and intellect. The author invites the Christians to reconsider the Doctrine of Trinity, and to employ the faculty of reason in forming conclusions and adducing facts in a logical, peaceable, and gracious manner. They must admit that God is One and to Him we all bow to the ground in surrender and adoration.

The Christians must take courage and start reforming their religion by freeing it from trinitarianism by taking it back to pure monotheism before it is too late.

Christians must struggle to reach a well defined goal: "Allah is only One and none is worthy of being worshipped but Him alone." They must gather not to produce other mysterious doctrines, but rather to put the true words of Jesus into effect:

"The first of all commandments is: hear, o Israel, the lord, our god, the lord is one." (Mark 12: 29).

"There is one God" (Romans 3: 30a).

"God is one" (Galatians 3: 20b).

"Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only." (Mathew 4:10).

If the people of the Book read the Torah and the Bible with careful scrutiny in search of the truth shall recognize what really proceeded from Allah and what has been adulterated by base admixture of false glosses. Such-like persons shall comprehend the truth and accordingly honor the Koran. Those who refuse to acknowledge the truth, the loss is their own.

It is quite likely that Christians, when they find out that there is a universal religion in the world that teaches people to worship and love Allah, while also practicing pure monotheism, would at least feel that they should re-examine the basis for their own beliefs and doctrines.

How much wiser would it be if Christians humble themselves and sought the light of Allah. It is a chance given them; will they exercise their free will and take it! The truth has been brought plainly before them; will they resist it and go after false gods, the creation of their own fancy?

The solution for the dilemma of the Jews and the Christians lies in the Koran for guidance. The Koran came to amend and reform. The Koran revelation has, step by step, confirmed the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus. It is a guide from Allah and appeals to reason and understanding. Allah's truth is continuous, and His Prophets from Adam, through Noah and Abraham, down to the last of the prophets, Muhammad form one brotherhood.

The Christian leaders must seek integrity, insight, foresight and courage in pursuing truth in the realm of their religion. They must rethink all of the images of Christianity and try to reach the final truth, which is: Allah is one; there is no other deity to be worshipped but Him alone and Jesus is His servant and Prophet. This must be complemented by believing in the Koran as the last divine revelation to mankind, and in Muhammad – peace be upon him - as the seal of the prophets.

Chapter 1

Christianity Must Revert to Pure Monotheism before it is too late

The attack on Islam comes from many directions, but behind each element of attack, lies in most cases a well prepared agenda designed to convince people that the real problem with Islam is that it is too traditional and its reformation relies on adopting the progressive ways of the West.

Islam has been accused by backwardness because Muslim countries are underdeveloped compared with the West. If Muslim countries are comparatively under developed, it is because of political reasons and absolutely not due to Islam as a religion. It is no secret that the main factor for such underdevelopment is the West occupation of Muslim countries since the crusade and until the occupation of Iraq in the third millennium. It must be remembered that the Islamic Empire since the Prophet of Islam and until the Middle Age flourished religiously, culturally and scientifically, and Islam as a religion was its way of life. It should also be remembered that without the science of Muslims the Age of the Renaissance wouldn't have been born. Civilization comes and goes and has nothing to do with religion. Pagan Greek, pagan Egypt and pagan Rome were strong and outstanding civilizations, but devoid of religion.

The Christians claim that they are more civilized and rational than Muslims are because they look critically at their scriptures while Muslims avoid such practice. They proclaim that Islam is a backward religion, and it needs reformation, the same way they did in their religion. They call for changing the statutes of the Koran in order to keep with the needs of modern life, thus forgetting the fact that the literate words of Allah are unchangeable and it is compulsive for the believers to follow them without any deviation in order to reach the gates of heaven.

Changing the verses of the Koran or altering them in any way in order to match the norm or model of modern life as some Christians claim, is unlawful and totally forbidden in Islam. The literal words of Allah are not to be changed, but only to adhere to and to be blindly obeyed. The Koran teaches that those who change the words of Allah by twisting the words of the sacred Scriptures to alter the meaning of Allah's words, for them there is a disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter await them a great torment.

The teachings of Islam do not need to be updated or watered down in order to appeal to non-Muslims living in today's troubled world. Because the teachings of Islam are applicable to all times and places, they can be easily lived and implemented in the daily life of people to make their lives more fulfilling. Unique among world religions, Islam has not had to sacrifice its integrity to be both applicable to modern life and to have enough spiritual impact to change people's lives.

Since the Holy Koran is divine revelation, it cannot and will never be changed. Because it is perfect it cannot be improved, revised or reformed. Since the Prophet of Islam is the final Prophet, his guidance can never be superseded by any other. The Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet are in fact addressed to all peoples, in every

country of the West as well as the East. Since the Koran and the Sunna are relevant for all times, in all places, they can never become out-of-date or obsolete.

It is a great waste when the Christian scholars judge the Koran - the literal word of Allah and the one unified Book throughout the ages - according to their several altered and inconsistent bibles. Simple scientific approach compels healthy minds to use the one unified and unchangeable Book, the Koran, as a reference and not the opposite. Relying on the Koran to reform, amend and correct Christianity in no way means rejection of the Bible, on the contrary, this necessary reformation is precisely to clear the name of Jesus from false teachings attributed to him against his will by later Christians.

It should be realized that Allah conveyed to all His servants through Muhammad, not only a supreme law but also a permanent scheme of values. That, which is good, according to the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet is good for all times, and that, which is evil, shall remain evil forever. That which is enjoined as duty, in the Koran and the Sunna, shall always be a duty. What is declared permissible is permissible forever, and what is prohibited is prohibited for all times. In this law and set of values, no amendment, deletion, addition, or abrogation, is possible unless some persons or community decides to denounce Islam. So long as Muslims remain Muslims, it is impossible in their social and legal system that something which was evil yesterday, turns into good today, and reverts to evil tomorrow.

Allah warned those who reproduce the Torah and word it differently with their own hands tossing phrases about till they bear other meanings and relate it to Allah to exchange the truth for the vanity of the fleeting life; that He will chastise them for what their hands have written and for that they earn thereby.

So woe to those who write the Book with their hands, then say, 'this is from Allah,' that they may sell it for a little price; so woe to them for what their hands have written, and woe to them for their earnings (Al-Baqarahh, 79).

The Koran teaches that the ancient Jews, who concealed Allah's revelations, sent down in the Torah, and exchanged the truth for the worthless vanity of the fleeting life, simply consumed nothing but fire in their bellies; Allah shall ignore them on the Day of Judgment, He shall not absolve them from guilt and they shall be put to the torment. They are the ones who have been steered by false beliefs and exchanged the guidance to the path of rectitude for the perplexed path in the maze of error, and forgiveness and mercy for torment and torture; how persistent they are in their struggle to cast themselves head-long to Hell!

Such destiny that they have incurred is also the consequence of their negative response to the Koran when it came to them, a Book Allah has revealed in truth and sincerity, and those who dispute its precepts have set themselves at variance and are far away in opposition.

Those who keep from the knowledge of others the clear and plain revelations which Allah presented to the people in His sacred Books have earned the curse of Allah and of those (the angels and the pious) whose curses take effect against whom it is uttered.

Those who conceal the clear signs and the guidance that We have sent down after We have shown them clearly in the Book – they shall be cursed by Allah and the cursers (Al-Baqarahh, 159).

The Koran teaches that those who keep from the knowledge of others the clear and plain revelations which Allah has revealed in the Torah, and exchange the truth for a small gain of worldly things, simply consume nothing but fire in their bellies. Allah shall ignore them on the Day of Judgment, He shall not absolve them from guilt and they shall be put to the torment. These are they who have been steered by false beliefs and exchanged forgiveness and mercy for torment and torture.

Those who conceal what of the Book (Torah) Allah has sent down on them, and sell it for a little price – they shall eat naught but the Fire in their bellies; Allah shall not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection neither purify them; there awaits them a painful chastisement. Those are they that have bought error at the price of guidance, and chastisement at the price of pardon; how patiently they shall endure the Fire!

That, because Allah has sent down the Book (Koran) with the truth; and those that are at variance regarding the Book (the Koran) are in wide schism (Al-Baqarahh 174-176).

The Koran also teaches that those who sell the faith they owe to Allah for a miserable price, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter nor will Allah speak to them or look at them on the Day of judgment, nor will He purifies them of sin – they shall have a grievous penalty.

Those that sell Allah's covenant, and their oaths, for a little price, there shall be no share for them in the world to come; Allah shall not speak to them, neither look at them on the Resurrection Day, neither will He purify them and for them awaits a painful chastisement.

And there is a sect of them (people of earlier Scripture) twist their tongues with the Book, that you may suppose it part of the Book, yet it is not part of the Book; and they say, 'It is from Allah,' yet it is not from Allah, and they are inventing lies and attributing them to Allah knowingly (Al-Imran 77, 78).

The Christians criticism of their scriptures is due to the fact that their books have been distorted and changed. They have been added to and removed from. As a result some of these teachings clearly contradict reason, the facts and the common sense.

Due to such distortion in the Christian Scriptures, protestant reformation began with Martin Luther in 1517. The reformation began as an attempt to reform the Catholic Church and led to the fracturing of Christendom. Many western Christians were troubled by what they saw as false doctrines and malpractices within the Church, particularly involving the sale of indulgences. Another major contention was the practice of buying and selling church positions and the tremendous corruption found at the time within the church's hierarchy. This corruption was systematic at the time, even reaching the position of the Pope (1).

The protestant reformation led to women's emancipation, political liberty, scientific breakthroughs, the wealth and opportunity created by the industrial revolution, and permission to think freely regarding God.

It should be well understood that the reformation undertaken in Christianity during the Middle Age was the product of the Koran statutes spread by the Arabs to Europe as well as their scientific achievements in Spain, thus breaking the taboo of the Christian Church it imposed on science and development.

But are these privileges brought forth by Christian reformation, can be considered as true reformation? These privileges in fact express nothing but the success of separation from church and racing towards collecting worldly gains resulting from scientific breakthroughs and industrial revolution. These materialistic gains, however, which the West admires and is proud of, are not considered in the balance of deeds in the Day of Judgment unless man believes in the Oneness of Allah and worship Him alone. Believing in the Oneness of Allah is a pre-requisite for Allah to accept the deeds of His servants. Even those remarkable men who changed the face of the earth, and whom people eternalize by symbolic statutes and print their names on streets, buildings and airports, their works will not be considered by Allah on the Day of Judgment if they die as sinners and do not believe in His Oneness. Allah will not shower them with His mercy at the Day of Judgment and will not look at their deeds whether good or bad and their abode will be Hell-Fire without accountability. As taught by Islam and all other former religions, the purpose of life and the wisdom of creation is not by hoarding silver and gold and rising in positions and ranks, but worshipping sincerely the one God, Allah, the Lord of creation. If this condition is fulfilled, the deeds of Allah's servants will be considered and looked at, and Allah will shower them with His Mercy and Forgiveness.

Believing in the Oneness of Allah and worshipping Him alone without associating with Him any partners is the core and essence of sound belief. Everything around us pointing to unity of purpose and design indicates the unity of Allah and His August Presence. Yet among people are those who equal with Allah deities. They foolishly think that something else is equal to Allah. Perhaps they even do lip service to Allah, but their hearts are in their fetish – unlike the hearts of the righteous, which are wholly devoted and absorbed in the love of Allah. If only the unrighteous could see the consequences, they would see the terrible penalty, and that all power is in Allah's hands, not in that of any one else.

Of mankind are some who take for worship others besides Allah as rivals. On the Day of Resurrection those who were followed will declare their innocence from those who followed them and took them as a model, and as they both perceive with their own eyes the penalty being imposed, those who followed as adherent disciples shall say, 'If only we could have the chance to go back to life below, we would renounce them as they have renounced us Hereafter. Thus Allah does show them that their evil deeds in worldly life, now represents nothing but regrets. Nor will there be a way for them out of the Fire.

Yet there be men who take to themselves compeers apart from Allah, loving them as Allah is loved; but those that believe love Allah more ardently. O if the evildoers might see when they see the chastisement that the power altogether belongs to Allah and that Allah is terrible in chastisement. When those that were followed disown their followers; and they see the chastisement, and their cords are cut asunder. And those that followed say, 'O if only we might return again and disown them, as they have disowned us!'

Even so Allah shall show them their deeds as regrets for them. Never shall they issue from the Fire (Al-Baqarahh 165-167).

On the Day of Judgment the worshippers of false gods will try to shift the responsibility from their own shoulders to that of the false gods. They will claim that they were misled by the false gods.

And when the idolaters behold their associates, they shall say, 'Our Lord, these are our associates on whom we called apart from Thee. They will fling back at them the saying, 'Surely, you are truly liars.' (Al-Nahl, 86).

There and then shall the infidels resign themselves to the will of Allah and be forsaken and renounced by those whom they presumed to share with Allah His divine nature. Their invented false deities, e.g. idols, saints, priests, monks, angels, Jinn, Gabriel, Messengers etc. will vanish from them.

And they will offer their full submission to Allah on that Day, and there shall go astray from them that they were forging (Al-Nahl, 87).

The Oneness of Allah is the core of Islam and all other religions before it. The Christian reformation made therefore is useless and of no avail because it hasn't touched the concept of Trinity, which is the main conflict between Christians regarding the nature of Allah. Polytheism is still there threatening the belief of any devout Christian searching for the truth.

One may ask: 'is the West today strong because it has undergone reformation in Christianity? Is there any real Christianity in the West now? Are the true teachings of Jesus now prevailing in the West?'

Unfortunately, Christianity in the West by the statements of eminent Christian scholars is dying!

Sincere efforts must therefore be directed to reform Christianity. It will be an amazing achievement for Christendom to undergo such reformation in the third millennium.

After the corruption of the older revelations, the Koran comes with a twofold purpose: 1) to confirm the true and original Message and 2) to guard it, or act as a check to its interpretation. The Koran safeguards the Torah of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus, for it has preserved within it the teachings of all former Books. It watches over these Books in the sense that it will not let their true teachings to be lost. It supports and upholds these Books in the sense that it corroborates the Word of Allah which has remained intact in them. It stands as a witness because it bears testimony to the Word of Allah contained in these books and helps to sort it out from the interpretations and commentaries of the people which were mixed with it: what is confirmed by the Koran is the Word of Allah and what is against it is that of the people (2).

And We have sent down to thee the Book with the truth, and trustworthy in highness and a witness over it (old Scriptures). So judge between them according to what Allah has sent down, and follow not their caprices to forsake the truth that has come to thee. To every one of you We have appointed a right way and an open road (Al-Maidah, 48).

Allah wished that the people of the Book would have believed in Muhammad and the Message of Islam and ward off evil (sin, ascribing partners to Allah) and had become pious in order to expiate them from their sins and admit them to Gardens of Pleasure in Paradise.

But had the people of the Book believed (in the Koran) and been god-fearing, We would have acquitted them of their evil deeds, and admitted them to Gardens of Bliss (Al-Maidah, 65).

The Koran teaches that if only the People of the Book had acted sincerely according to their Torah, the Gospel, and then according to what has been sent down from their Lord (the Koran), they would have enjoyed happiness from all side.

Had they performed the Torah and the Gospel, and what was sent down to them from their Lord, they would have eaten both what was above them, and what was beneath their feet. Some of them are a just nation; but many of them – evil are the things they do (Al-Maidah, 66).

The Koran does explain to the Children of Israel most of the matters in which they differed. The Jews had numerous sects; some were altogether out of the pale. The Samaritans, who had a separate Torah of their own, hated the other Jews and were hated by them too, but even in the orthodox body, there were several sects: the Pharisees, who were liberalists, formalists, and fatalists, and had a large body of traditional literature, with which they overlaid the Law of Moses; the Sadducees, who were rationalists, and seemed to have doubted the doctrine of Resurrection or of a Hereafter; the Essenes, who practiced a sort of communism and Asceticism and prohibited marriage. About many of their doctrines they had bitter disputes, which were settled by the Koran, which supplemented and perfected the Law of Moses. The Koran also explained clearly the attributes of Allah and the nature of revelation, and the doctrine of the Hereafter. The disputes between rival sects can only be settled by the Decree of Allah in the form of a Revelation as was done by the Koran (2).

Surely this Koran relates to the Children of Israel most of that in which they differ.

It is guidance and a mercy unto the believers (An-Naml 76, 77).

Surely the Lord will decide between them (various sects) by His Judgment; He is the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.

So put thy trust in Allah; thou art upon the manifest truth (An-Naml 78, 79).

Christianity has digressed from the concept of the Oneness of Allah into a vague and mysterious doctrine that was formulated during the fourth century. It was only after the conversion of the pagan emperor Constantine that he was the one to call and introduce the doctrine of Trinity. He a convert of Christianity who knew nothing of this religion introduced a paganistic concept that goes back to Babylonian times. This doctrine of Trinity continues to be the source of controversy both within and outside the Christian religion. It is said that Athanasius, the bishop who formulated this doctrine, confessed that the more he wrote on the matter, the less capable he was of clearly expressing his thoughts regarding it.

As it seems, the creeds of Nicea and Constantinople are not the final word on the nature of the Godhead. The development of the Trinity was in steps. Some of the ideas that were purported by earlier theologians were later condemned as heresy, even though they were the basis for later developments which were accepted as orthodoxy.

Frank Staag spoke of the deficiencies in the development of the Trinitarian doctrine when he said: " But what began as insistence upon tri-unity eventually became an emphasis upon the threeness and increasing jeopardy to the belief in Oneness... To the term Trinity were soon added the terms 'persons,' 'three persons,' 'three persons of the Godhead,' and even the ranking of the persons as first, second, and third. Thus trinitarianism was fast on the way to tritheism, a de facto belief in three distinct gods... This, the New Testament never anticipated and does not support."

Jason Dulle indicated that since the development of the trinity was in stages, and those who advanced the doctrine had deficiencies in their theology, he must believe that even the councils and their definitive creeds did not bring an end to the pursuit of understanding God, or an end to theological deficiencies. He believes that it is the duty of the modern believer to re-examine his beliefs about God to be sure they are Biblically based. There is no creed or tradition as important as truth, and no truth as important as God. The modern church must seek to perfect its understanding of God. This may indeed necessitate the re-examining of the doctrine of the trinity as it has developed over the centuries (3).

Jason Dule emphasizes that as did the early church, the modern church must continue to seek out a manner in which to understand and explain the Biblical teaching of monotheism, the Biblical language that puts distinctions between the Father, Son, and Spirit, and the Biblical teaching of the divinity of the Father, Son and Spirit.

Among the several duties of Muhammad – peace be upon him – is to warn the Christians against the wrath of Allah if they don't abide by the absolute truth (Allah is only One, He is to be worshipped alone without associating with Him any partners) that was given to all prophets starting from Adam until Jesus, then passed to Muhammad, the seal of the prophets The Koran as a unified Book throughout the ages could perfectly serve as a reference for the reformation of the Christian faith. All the principles needed for such reformation already exist within the pages of the Koran. The Koran contains the literal words of Allah addressed to His seal of the Prophets. Divine words well guarded by the Creator until the Day of Resurrection so all people on the Day of Judgment will not have any excuse to say, 'O Lord, we know nothing about this, no Warner has come to us, we were descendants of our fathers and we followed their tradition, do you chastise us for what our fathers did?'

The Prophet's responsibility was to preach and show the way. Men and women of good will had faith and accepted the Message. But the Prophet was not responsible for obstinacy and perversity of men who turned away from Allah's Signs and rejected the Truth.

Thou shalt not make the dead to hear, neither shalt thou make the deaf to hear the call when they turn about, retreating.

Thou shall not guide the blind out of their error, neither shalt thou make any to hear, save such as believe in Our signs, and so surrender (An-Naml 80, 81).

Allah sent Prophet Jesus to the Children of Israel with the Gospel which teaches the worship of the One God, Allah. However, some three hundred years after his death, the religious leaders instituted a new doctrine not taught by him that he was the son of God. Before Jesus Allah sent Moses with the Torah to the Children of Israel, but a few centuries after his death, their religious leaders set up another book, the Talmud, which they followed while ignoring the Torah. Allah then sent the last of the Prophets, Muhammad to all mankind and not just the Arabs with His final Scripture, the Koran, to correct once and for all the deviations that had been made by the Jews and the Christians.

Now the Warner came and preached and gone. He left amongst all people the Koran well guarded by Allah so they can always have a reference Book through which they ponder and contemplate. The Koran is not only complete, perfect and detailed, but also protected against human corruption. The aim of the Koran is to finally free mankind from all kinds of burdens, shackles and wrong teachings.

Muhammad demands no wage for the Koran or for imparting Allah's revelations. His only reward is to see people take a path to Allah. The Koran is but a reminder to all beings.

Looked upon as a mystery, the doctrine of the Trinity is known as such within the realms of the Christianity for various reasons. Foremost, it is unscriptured, undocumented within the Bible, only conferred to through references in few biblical verses. Mentioned in creeds, it is a difficult concept for many to grasp, as is the principal of God.

The Vatican Council has explained the meaning of Trinity to be attributed to the term mystery in theology. It lies down that a mystery is a truth which we are not merely incapable of discovering apart from divine revelation, but which, even when revealed, remains "hidden by the veil of faith and enveloped, so to speak, by a kind of darkness." (4).

Belief in the Trinity was a historical development, not a "given" from the early years of the faith. This doctrine does not appear to be a doctrine pronounced by Jesus or any other Christian writers during the first hundred years or so of Christianity. It cannot be found explicitly stated in the earliest Christian writings. The only passage of the New Testament that declares the doctrine (1 John 5:7 -8) was not originally part of the text but was added by doctrinally astute scribes at a later date. The doctrine of Trinity is not found in any Greek manuscripts until the 11th century (5). Designed in the second century, the doctrine received final approval in the fourth century. The first time in which it was denoted to be used in Christian writing, was around 180 A.D. by Theophilus of Antioch who referred to "God, His Word, and His Wisdom." Tertullian regarded it as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in approximately 200 A.D. (6).

The early church believed in the One God. In fact, the Church taught that God is one since early Christianity. It was not until after the death of the original apostles, and false apostles (revelation 2:2) entered the church that the Godhead became an issue. These false apostles began to bring heresy into the church, attempting to organize the Christian faith and exercise control over the laity. In revelation 2:6 Jesus identified this in the first Church Age (Ephesus) as "the deeds of the Nicolaitanes". By the third Church Age (Pergamos) these deeds had become a doctrine, called the doctrine of the

Nicolaitanes (revelation2:15). Now, most of the Christian movement had become organized under the control of man. Those opposing the teachings of this Nicolaitane (conquer the laity) form of Christianity were put to death.

The Nicolaitane influence continued to grow in the church, causing more and more controversy and division. Peter's prophecy had come to pass. In 2nd Peter 2:1 he warned the Saints saying, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as their shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." One of those damnable heresies was the teaching of the trinity – three person concept of the Godhead (7).

Monotheism was the message of all prophets. Abraham, Moses and Jesus were all monotheists. Deviation from the pure doctrines of Jesus and all prophets before him started with Paul, who never met Jesus. Paul was the first to claim the Godhead and divine son ship of Jesus, as well as his resurrection. Yet, the disciples and the early Christian generations were Unitarians. They resisted the efforts of Paul and his followers to change both the faith and Law of Moses and Jesus, and later, many of them were tortured for holding to their faith.

Trinity was imposed for the first time as an official creed of the Roman Empire, by Emperor Theodosius in the year 381 AC. The motive was mainly political, to save the Roman Empire by putting an end to the split between the Unitarian Christians and the Trinitarians, a split that persisted even after the council of Nicea in 325 AC which adopted the Pauline doctrines deifying Jesus as the son of God.

Trinity, subsequently endorsed by the Council of Constantinople in 381 AC, attracted those who found in it a compromise between their original pagan beliefs and Christianity. Trinity was an invention of Athanasius of Alexandria in the fourth century after Jesus departure.

Trinity in fact is a coinage of the Pauline doctrine with pagan beliefs of the ancient world. For example, in Egypt: Horus, Isis and Osiris; in India: Brahma, Siva and Visnu, as well as the Greek myths of people who are sons of the Holy Ghost Apollo.

Other influences of the pagan beliefs was the change of the Sabbath holiday to the Roman Sun-day, and to change Christmas to 25th December, the birthday of the Roman Sun-god, Mithra. So the concepts of Trinity and the Holy Ghost or Spirit were, in fact, a pagan invention that neither Jesus nor the early Christians ever accepted or advocated.

If the People of the Book had true faith, the Koran as the last divine revelation, would have removed their doubts about the nature of Allah and His Prophet Jesus. They should have found in the Koran a Guide and a substitute for the Mosaic Law, and for the Christian Gospel, which had both been corrupted.

The religion of all true and sincere men of faith should be one, and that is the ideal of Islam. Instead of bringing the wrath of Allah upon themselves by attacking Islam, slandering the seal of the prophets and belying the Koran - the literal words of Allah - the Christians have another major task to undertake. They should strive to find a unified ground of belief and reconsider the Doctrine of Trinity. They must employ the

faculty of reason in forming conclusions and adducing facts in a logical, peaceable, and gracious manner. They must declare their thoughts in words, and acknowledge what has been revealed to Muslims and to them. They must admit that our God and their God is One and to Him we all bow to the ground in surrender (Islam) and adoration.

The Korans says:

Dispute not with the People of the Book save in the fairer manner, except for those of them that do wrong; and say, 'We believe in what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down to you; our God and your God is One, and to Him we have surrendered (Al-ankabut, 46).

Christians have to learn to accept things that are from outside their fold and cooperate with the followers of other religions. There is no need at all to feel intimidated or over-awed. The Christians must take courage and start reforming their religion by taking it back from trinitarianism to monotheism before it is too late.

Allah is One, and His Message cannot come at one place or at one time to contradict His Message in another place or at another time in spirit, though there may be local variations according to the needs or understanding of men at any given time or place.

Christians are not to gather and convene in order to produce other mysterious doctrines, but rather struggle to reach a well defined goal: "Allah is only One and none is worthy of being worshipped but Him alone." In order to do that, they must evaluate critically everything that has been inherited from their Christian tradition in strict accordance with the bidding of the last unchangeable divine revelation to mankind, the Koran.

Is there among the Christians a brave man that would put the true words of Jesus into effect: "**Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.**" (Mathew 4:10).

Mere disputations are futile. There is no much time for arguments, debates or rejections. The Day of doom is near, the angel of death is hovering over our heads, and death will come no matter what. All people will be accountable to Allah, and the Christians will be asked about the innovation they invented in their religion – the doctrine of Trinity - an innovation that is considered in the sight of Allah as the most heinous crime.

Is the present Bible beyond reproach? Does a Christian become a heretic if he raises the banner of Christian reformation? Is there a true man in Christendom who would take the initiative to purify Christianity from trinitarianism, and tritheism, thus taking it back to Allah's Unity and Oneness instead of one in three or three in one?

The solution for the dilemma of the Jews and the Christians lies in the Koran for guidance. In the Koran Allah has completed all the principles and rules governing life, then the Sunna of the Prophet came to explain further the instructions of Allah. Allah has therefore drawn the marks we have to follow, and determined the limits we shouldn't cross. Yes, the Koran came to amend and reform.

Why the Jews and the Christians would rely on the Koran as a reference Book for the reformation of their religion? The answer is simple:

a- Islam as a complete, perfect and well preserved religion came originally to purify Judaism and Christianity from the falsehood that was added to them. The Prophet of Islam was sent with the Koran to bring about unity among the jarring sects (Jews and Christians) by explaining to them the points of dispute.

O People of the Book! There has come to you Our Messenger, revealing to you much in the Book that you used to hide, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary). There has come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book (Al-Maidah, 16).

And We have not sent down upon thee the Book except that you may explain clearly unto them the things in which they differ, and as a guidance and as a mercy to a people who believe (An-Nahl, 64).

b- The Koran comes directly from Allah, and is not a second-hand exposition on other men's authority. It is superseding previous revelations and whoever turns away from it shall suffer the heavy burden of sins he carries on the Day of Judgment.

...And We have given thee a remembrance (the Koran) from Us. Whosoever turns away from it, he shall bear a heavy burden (of sins) on the Day of Resurrection, therein abiding forever (in the Fire of Hell); how evil upon the Day of Resurrection that burden for them! (Taha 99-101).

c- The Koran confirms the Torah and the Gospel and serves as a Book of reference which does answer any query on matters disputed among the Jews and the Christians, for it is the umpire of all preceding Scriptures, and the decision that is based on its percepts shall have to be accepted as final.

And We have sent down to thee the Book with the truth, confirming the Book that was before it, and a witness over it... (Al-Maidah, 48).

d- The Koran is a complete Book.

...We have neglected nothing in the book, then unto their Lord they shall be gathered (Al-An'am, 38).

And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can change His Words. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-knower (Al-An'am, 115).

e- The Koran is perfect; it has no mistakes, no falsehood, and no nonsense.

Falsehood comes not to it from before it nor from behind it; a sending down from One All-Wise, All Laudable (Fussilat, 42).

f- The Koran is detailed.

And We have brought them a Book that We have well distinguished, resting on knowledge, guidance and a mercy unto a people that believe (Al-A'raf, 52).

g- Allah calls the Koran, the best discourse. He called on His true believers to accept no other discourses as a source of religion.

Or they have not considered the dominion of the heaven and of the earth, and what things Allah has created, and that it may be their term is already nigh? In what manner of discourse will they after this believe? (Al-A'raf, 185).

h- The unity of the Koran is admittedly greater than that of any other sacred Books. If it were revealed from a source other than Allah, people would surely have found in it many a contradiction.

What, do they not ponder the Koran? If it had been from other than Allah, surely they would have found in it much inconsistency (Al-Nisa, 82).

i- The Koran awakens those who are asleep, gives a severe jolt to the heedless persons and stirs the sense of the civilized nations to reconsider the nature of Allah. Should they turn a deaf ear, the Prophet's duty is only to preach the clear Message.

So, if they turn their backs, thine it is only to deliver the manifest Message (Al-Nahl, 82).

The reformation suggested could be based on certain basic principles strongly emphasized in the Koran. In the following I will emphasize these principles, and because there is no compulsion in religion, I will leave brave and intelligent Christians and Jews to think for themselves, and make their choice.

1- The Present versions of the Old Testament and the New Testaments are the work of Jewish and Christian priests, and they are not therefore authentic.

Allah says about this in the Koran:

Are they then unaware that Allah knowest that which they keep hidden and that which they proclaim?

Among them are the unlettered who know the Scripture not except from hearsay – they but guess.

Then woe to those who write the Scripture with their hands and then say: 'This is from Allah', that they may purchase a small gain therewith.

Woe unto them for what their hands have written, and woe unto them for what they earn thereby (Al-Baqarahh 77-79).

2- As explained earlier, traditional Christianity is of pagan and not divine origin

Allah says in this regard:

Say (O Muhammad): "O People of the Scripture! Exceed not the limits in your religion (by believing in something) other than the truth, and do not follow the vain desires (degraded religion conceptions) of people who went astray and fell away from the right path (Al-Maidah, 77).

3- Muhammad came to the Jews and the Christians as a Warner and a bearer of good tidings.

Allah sent down the Torah that guides into all truth, in it, there is light and guidance. Allah made it the standard of judgment and the canon law by which the prophets who conformed to Islam as defined by Allah (submitted themselves to Allah's Will), would administer righteousness and justice between the Jews. And so would the Rabin and the canonists who were entrusted with it and they were witnesses of its divinity.

Surely We sent down the Torah, wherein is guidance and light; thereby the prophets who had surrendered themselves gave judgment for those of Jewry, as did the masters and the rabbis, following such portion of Allah's Book as they were given to keep and were witnessed to. So fear not men, but fear Me; and sell not my Signs for a little price. Whoso judges not according to what Allah has sent down – they are the unbelievers (Al-Maidah, 44).

In their footsteps, Allah sent Jesus, the son of Mary, to succeed the Jewish prophets, confirming the Law of Moses that had come before him. Allah graced Jesus with the Gospel: therein was guidance and light for the people, and to confirm the statutes which were set forth in the Torah, and as an admonition to those who fear Allah. And just as it was mandatory that the Jews would use the Torah as the standard of judgment, so would the Christians, and he who does not use the standard judgment as revealed by Allah they are those who rebel.

And We sent, following in their footsteps, Jesus son of Mary, confirming the Torah before him: and We gave to him the Gospel, wherein is guidance and light, and confirming the Torah before it, as a guidance and admonition unto the god-fearing.

So let the people of the Gospel judge according to what Allah has sent down therein. Whosoever judges not according to what Allah has sent down – they are the ungodly (Al-Maidah 46, 47).

After the corruption and loss of the older revelations, it was the will of Allah that the rebels against Him will not be cut off in this life for their sins. Allah then sent down to Muhammad the Koran confirming the Torah and the gospel that were revealed before it, and serving as the Book of reference after the Jews and Christians tampered with their Books.

Muhammad came with a manifest Book revealing much of what the Jews and the Christians have concealed of the Scriptures. The Prophet of Islam came to show to the People of the Book the true path of salvation, and to help them abandon imagination so that they cannot later on claim innocence and say that no one came to them as a Warner. Muhammad came to them with the Book of Enlightenment so that they could race to the way of Allah and abandon polytheism, atheism and all iniquities leading to perdition. The Koran shows the path which draws people astray to Allah, haply they will prosper.

People of the Book, now there has come to you Our Messenger, making clear to you many things you have been concealing of the Book, and effacing many things. There has come to you from Allah a light, and a Book manifest whereby Allah guides whosoever follows His good pleasure in the ways of peace, and brings them forth from the shadows into the light by His leave; and He guides them to a straight path (Al-Maidah 15, 16).

People of the Book, now there has come to you Our Messenger, making things clear to you, upon an interval between the Messengers lest you should say, 'There has not come to us a bearer of good tidings, neither any Warner.' Indeed there has come to you a bearer of good tidings and a Warner; Allah is powerful over everything (Al-Maidah, 9).

4- The Koran came to serve as a reference Book for the reformation of earlier Scriptures

Islam came to correct and reform. One of the major purposes of Muhammad's mission was to bring about unity among the jarring sects from Jews and Christians. The Koran came specifically to reform the distortion and deviations which occurred in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Allah wished by delivering the Message of Islam that the Christians reform their religion, and revert from Trinity to monotheism, the original teaching of Jesus.

And We have not sent down upon you the Book except that you may make clear to them (Jews and Christians) that in which they differed, and as guidance and as a mercy to people who believe (An-Nahl, 64).

5- The Doctrine of Trinity in the sight of Allah is clear polytheism and open blasphemy.

The Koran teaches that never shall Allah forgive incorporating with Him other deities, but forgives He all else to whom He will. And he who incorporates with Allah other deities shall have committed the most heinous sin.

Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him; less than that He forgives to whomsoever He will. Whoso associates with Allah anything has indeed forged a mighty sin (Al-Nisa, 48).

There is no doubt that Islam opposes present Christianity in several points, the most important is the concept of Trinity. The Christians claim that they are monotheists because they believe in one God in three persons, but according to Islam the concept of Trinity is but clear polytheism and open blasphemy.

According to Islam, Allah is One, and belief in One Creator is Islam's most sacred creedal tenet. The Islamic religion does not contain any irrational or unbelievable tenet. There is not a creator besides Allah the Almighty. In Islam belief and logic do not contradict each other, which is the common blemish of other religions. The other religions are sunk in vague and mysterious ideas that suggest only a far-fetched mood of spirituality. They have nothing to do with real life situations. Islam, on the other hand, is a practical religion which guides man also in the trek of life.

Allah says in the Koran:

"They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity, for there is no God except One God (Allah)" (Al-Maidah, 73).

This charge however, is not taken lightly by Christians. They, in turn, accuse the Muslims of not even knowing what the trinity is, pointing out that the Koran sets it up

as Allah the Father, Jesus the son, and Mary his mother. While veneration of Mary has been a figment of the Catholic Church since 431 when she was given the title 'Mother of God' by the Council of Ephesus, a closer examination of the verses in the Koran most often cited by Christians in support of their accusation, shows that the designation of Mary by the Koran as a 'member' of the Trinity, is simply not true.

The Koran condemns trinitarianism:

People of the Book, go not beyond the bounds in your religion, and say not as to Allah but the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of Allah, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His Messengers, and say not 'Three.' Refrain; better is it for you. Allah is only one God. Glory be to Him – that He should have a son! To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth; Allah suffices for a guardian (An-Nisa, 171).

They are unbelievers who say, 'Allah is the Messiah, Mary's son.' For the Messiah said, 'Children of Israel, serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Verily whoso associated with Allah anything, Allah shall prohibit him entrance to Paradise, and his refuge shall be the Fire; and wrongdoers shall have no helpers (Al-Maidah, 73).

The Koran also condemns the worship of Jesus and his mother Mary:

And (remember) when Allah will say (on the Day of Resurrection) 'O Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)! Did you say unto men: 'Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah?' He will say, "Glory is to you! It was not for me to say what I have no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, you would surely have known it. You know what is within my soul though I do not know what is within your soul; truly you know the things unseen." (Al-Maidah, 116).

Nowhere does the Koran identify the actual three components of the Christian Trinity. The Koran clearly teaches that the very notion of a Trinity is an affront against the concept of the One God, Allah.

The doctrine of the Trinity is not a divine revelation to Jesus from Allah, but a concept conceived entirely by man. If Allah is three persons, He is assuredly not the single, unique, indivisible being which Allah is and which Christianity professes to believe in.

Ubodah narrated that the Prophet said:

"If anyone testifies that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, who has no partners, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger, and that Jesus is Allah's slave and His Messenger and His Word ('Be!' – and he was) which He bestowed on Mary and a spirit created by Him, and that paradise is the truth and Hell is the truth – Allah will admit him into Paradise with the deeds which he had done even if those deeds were few." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 4, Hadith No. 644).

In the Koran we find that the Oneness of Allah expressed in worshipping Him alone is clearly stated in a number of eloquent passages:

Say: 'I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your God (Allah) is one God. So let him, who hopes for the encounter with his Lord, work righteousness, and not associate with his Lord's service anyone.' (Al-Kahf, 110).

That is of the wisdom thy Lord has revealed to thee; set not with Allah another God lest you should be thrown into Hell, reproached and rejected (Al-Isra, 39).

Praise belongs to Allah who has sent down upon His servant the Book (the Koran) and has not assigned unto it any crookedness.

Right, to warn of great violence from Him, and to give good tidings unto the believers who do righteous deeds that theirs shall be a goodly wage therein to abide for ever.

And to warn those (Jews, Christians and pagans) who say, 'Allah has taken to Himself a son.

They have no knowledge of it, they nor their fathers; a monstrous word it is, issuing out of their mouths; they say nothing but a lie (Al-Kahf 1-5).

6- Jesus in the sight of Allah is not divine – he is no more than a servant and a Messenger sent to the Children of Israel

Allah's purpose is to give clear warnings of spiritual dangers and lead up to the highest bliss. The warning is not only needed for those who deny Allah or deny His Message, but also for those whose false ideas of Allah degrade religion in supposing that Allah begot a son, for Allah is One and is High above any ideas of physical reproduction.

As we read in the Koran, Allah instructed the Prophet to say to those who claim that Allah has taken up a son, that their life on this world is but a brief enjoyment and then unto Allah will be their return, then He shall make them taste the severest torment, because they strived on denying Him and on disobeying His commands.

They say, 'Allah has taken to Him a son.' Glory be to Him! He is All-Sufficient; to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth; you have no authority for this. What, do you say concerning Allah that you know not!

Say: 'Those who forge against Allah falsehood shall not prosper.'

Some enjoyment in this world; then unto Us they shall return; then We shall let them taste the terrible chastisement, for that they were unbelievers (Yunus 68-70).

The Prophet said:

"Avoid the seven great destructive sins: to join partners in worship with Allah, to practice sorcery, to kill without justification a living being whose life has been declared sacred by Allah, to practice usury, to misappropriate the property of an orphan, to flee from the battle field at the time of fighting and to slander the innocent believing women."

In another narration the Prophet said:

"The biggest of the major sins are: to join others in worship with Allah, to kill someone (unlawfully), to be undutiful to one's parents, and to bear false witness."

The criteria of true worship excludes the worship of anything else, whether idols, or defied men, or forces of nature, or faculties of man, or self. In other words he who acknowledges Resurrection and judgment and hopes to be welcomed in Allah's heavenly realm and be a recipient of His mercy and blessings will have to be god-fearing and never to incorporate with His Creator other deities nor should he invoke besides Him any.

Say: 'I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your God is one God. So let him, who hopes for the encounter with His Lord, work righteous and not associate with His Lord's service anyone (Al-Kahf, 110).

Jesus was not divine but human. He was a slave of Allah and one of the great teachers of mankind and a Holy Prophet of Allah, by whom he was appointed to reform the race of Israel.

He (Jesus) is not but a slave (of Allah) on whom We (Allah) bestowed favor and We made him an example for the Children of Israel (Az-Zukhruf, 59).

The Koran teaches that it is not possible that a man (Jesus) whom is given the Gospel and wisdom, and the Prophetic Office, would demand of the people to worship him rather than Allah's, on the contrary, he would say, 'Worship Allah your Creator, and practice your religion according to what Allah has imparted to you of knowledge, for you have taught the Book (Torah) and you have studied it earnestly. Nor would Allah ordain that His servants take angels and Prophets for Lords and patrons. Would He command people to deny Him after they have conformed their will to His blessed will and bowed their will to Him in Islam?

It belongs not to any mortal that Allah should give him the Book, the Judgment, the Prophet Hood then he should say to men, 'Be you servants to me apart from Allah.' Rather, 'Be you masters in that you know the Book, and in that you study.'

He would never order you to take the angels and the Prophets as Lords; what, would He order you to disbelieve after you have surrendered? (Al-Imran 79, 80).

It befitteth not (the majesty of) Allah that He should take unto Himself a son. Glory be to Him, when He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only 'Be!' and it comes to exist.

And lo! Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. That is the right path (Maryam 35, 36).

Jesus as well as all other prophets including Muhammad are servants of Allah and obeyed His law, thus winning the stamp of His approval. They never say anything before they receive Allah's command to say it, and their acts are similarly conditioned. This is also the teaching of Jesus as reported in the Gospel of St. John (xii. 48-50): **"For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me. He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I**

know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

If rightly understood, "Father" has the same meaning as "Allah", Sustainer and Cherisher, not Begetter, or Progenitor (2). Allah says in the Koran:

And they say: 'The All-Merciful has taken to Him a son.' Glory be to Him! Nay, but they are honored servants (Messengers and Prophets). They speak not before He speaks, and perform as He commands. He knows what is before them and behind them, and they intercede not save for him with whom He is well-pleased, and they tremble in awe of Him. If any of them says, 'I am a god apart from Him', such a one We recompense with Hell; even so We recompense the evildoers (Al-Anbiya 26-29).

7- In Islam the doctrine of vicarious atonement is condemned

Salvation of the wicked cannot be attained by the punishment of the innocent. One man cannot bear the burden of another, for that would be unjust. Every man must bear his own personal responsibility. Every person is responsible for his own actions, he cannot transfer the consequences of his actions to someone else, nor can anyone vicariously atone for his sins.

Allah says in the Koran:

No soul laden bears the load of another. We never chastise, until We send forth a Messenger (Al-Isra', 15).

...Every soul earns only to its own account; no soul laden bears the load of another. Then to your Lord shall you return, and He will tell you of that whereon you were at variance (Al-An'am, 164).

8- The religion with Allah is one religion (Islamic monotheism), thus forming one brotherhood

Muhammad was sent with the Koran – the Gospel of unity - to bring about unity among the jarring sects, for the Koran leads also to the unity of mankind. The Koran is a guide to right conducts and shows the path of repentance and salvation, and thus be the highest mercy to erring sinners.

The Koran teaches a straightforward concept of Allah, it is not marred by myths, superstitions or man-made philosophical ideas. It is made clear that there is nothing divine or worthy of being worshipped except for Almighty Allah. Islam is based on this concept which Allah has expressed in the Koran:

He is Allah, besides whom there is no other God, the All-knower of the unseen and the seen. Allah is the most Beneficent, the Most-Merciful. He is Allah, the King, the Holy, the One, free from all defects, the Giver of security, the Guardian, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Exalted be Allah from all that they associate as partner with Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Originator of all things, the Bestower of forms. His are the most Gracious names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise (Al-Hashr 22-24).

Say: He is Allah, He is One; the Self-Sufficient, the Eternal God; He begets not, nor was He begotten; there is none equal to Him (Al-Ikhlās 1-4).

Faith is not a matter to dispute about. The formation of sects is against the very principle of religion and unity. If man rejects faith after it has reached him, it can only be through selfish contumacy or envy. Allah's decree has allowed a certain term during which a rejecter of the faith has the chance of repentance and forgiveness. They get rope: perchance they may repent.

The Koran is a guide from Allah and appeals to reason and understanding. Allah's truth is continuous, and His Prophets from Adam, through Noah and Abraham, down to the last of the prophets, Muhammad form one brotherhood.

O Messengers eat of the good things (all kinds of lawful foods) and do righteousness; surely I know the things you do. Surely this community (brotherhood, religion, Islamic monotheism) of yours is one community and I am your Lord; so fear Me. But they split in their affair (religion) between them into sects, each party rejoicing in what is with them. What, do they think that because We have granted them abundance in wealth and sons, We vie in good works for them? Nay, but they are not aware (Al-Mu'minun 51-53).

Allah tells us over and over again in a Message that is echoed throughout all His revealed Scriptures:

Surely this brotherhood of yours (religion – Islamic monotheism) is one community, and I am your Lord; so serve Me (and no other) (Al-Anbiya, 92).

9- The People of the Book acknowledged the Koran and recognized Muhammad as they recognized their own sons

Those who received previous revelations (Jews and Christians) and were given knowledge beforehand, and had kept themselves free from corrupt ideas, when the Koran is recited to them, they fall down on their faces in tears and the Koran increases their humility. They find in the Koran and in the Messenger who brought it, the promise of Allah fulfilled.

Say: 'Believe in it or not; those who were given the knowledge before it when it is recited to them, fall down upon their faces prostrating, and say, 'Glory be to our Lord! Our Lord's promise is performed.' And they fall down upon their faces weeping; and it increases them in humility (Al-Isra 107-109).

If the people of the Book read the Torah and the Bible with careful scrutiny in search of the truth shall recognize what really proceeded from Allah and what has been adulterated by base admixture of false glosses. Such-like persons shall comprehend the truth and accordingly honor the Koran. Those who refuse to acknowledge the truth, the loss is their own.

Those to whom We have given the Book and who recite it with true recitation, they believe in it (the Koran), and whoso disbelieves in it, they shall be the losers (Al-Baqarahh, 121).

Even so We have sent down to thee the Book. Those to whom We have given the Book believe in it; and some of these (your people) believe in it; and none denies Our signs but the unbelievers (Al-Ankabut, 47).

Among the people of the Book are those who believe in Allah and believe in all that has been revealed to Muslims and to all that has been revealed to them in the Torah of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus; they humble themselves to Allah (like Abdullah ibn Salâm the leader and pontiff of the Jews in Medina and Negus the Christian king of Abyssinia who both embraced Islam), and never do they exchange or hide the divine verses of the Torah or the Gospel indicating the advent of Muhammad for a miserable worldly gain. For them is a reward with their Lord, and Allah is swift in account.

And some there are of the people of the Book who believe in Allah, and what has been sent down unto you, and what has been sent down unto them, men humble to Allah, not selling the signs of Allah for a small price; those – their wage is with their Lord; Allah is swift at the reckoning (Al-Imran, 199).

10- The People of the Book will get a double reward from Allah if they accept Islam - the religion of all prophets and the only religion accepted by Allah - as their religion.

Among the many benefits of embracing Islam are that once man or woman bears witness that: "There is no God except Allah, and Muhammad is His prophet" all his or her sins are forgiven and are transformed into merits with an enormous award awaiting him or her in Paradise. In addition, they receive the reward of believing in the religion of Prophet Jesus if they are Christians, or Prophet Moses if they are Jews, and the religion of Prophet Muhammad, which means that they receive two huge rewards, and they know that Allah loves them because He guided them to Him.

Allah says in the Koran:

O believers (Jews and Christians)), fear Allah and believe in His Messenger, and He will give you a two-fold portion of His Mercy, and will appoint for you a light whereby you shall walk, and forgive you; Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate (Al-Hadid, 28).

Those to whom We gave the Book before this believe in it (the Koran). And when it is recited to them, they say: 'We believe in it; surely it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed even before it we surrendered. These shall be given their wage twice over for that they patiently endured (suffered for its sake), and avert evil with good, and expend of what We have provided them (Al-Qasas 52-54).

The Prophet of Islam said:

"...If any man of the People of the Scriptures (Jews and Christian) believes in his own prophet and then believes in me too, he will get a double reward..." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol.7, Hadith No. 20).

Regarding the superiority of a person who embraces Islam sincerely the Prophet said:

"If a person accepts Islam sincerely, then Allah shall forgive all his past sins, and after that starts the settlement of accounts: the reward of his good deeds will be ten times to seven hundred times for each good deed, and an evil deed will be recorded as it is unless Allah forgives it." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 1, Hadith No. 40A).

Allah always extends mercy and forgiveness to those who wrong themselves in ignorance and repent thereafter and imprint their deeds with piety, Allah is indeed Forgiving, Merciful.

The spiritual kingdom is open to all to enter. But the entrance is not a mere matter of physical movement. It is a question of total change of heart. The heart must be purified and rendered fit for the reception of truth, light and bliss.

In his last days Jesus preached"

"Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you....While you have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light..." (John, xii. 35-36).

The light of Christ's gospel soon departed; his church was enveloped in darkness; then the light came again in the fuller light of Islam. The Koran asked the people of the Book to believe in the light, and to walk in it. Any wrongs they may have committed through ignorance or misconceptions in their previous religion will be forgiven them, as they have seen the new light and walked by it.

In the darkness of the Day of Judgment there will be a light to guide the righteous to their destination. This will be the light of their faith and their good works, for the blessed will receive their record of deeds in their right hand.

Upon the day when thou seest the believers, men and women, their light running before them, and on their right hands.

'Good things for you today! Gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein to dwell forever; that is indeed the mighty triumph.' (Al-Hadid, 12).

Paradise as the final reward for the righteous is the highest achievement, the highest felicity, the attainment of salvation, the fulfillment of all desires.

Allah says in the Koran:

Surely the god-fearing shall be in a station secure among gardens and fountains, robed in silk and brocade, set face to face.

Even so; and We shall espouse them to wide-eyed houris, therein calling for every fruit, secure.

They shall not taste therein of death, save the first death, and He shall guard them against the chastisement of Hell – a bounty from thy Lord; that is the mighty triumph.

Now We have made it (the Koran) easy by thy tongue, that haply they may remember.

So be on the watch; they too are on the watch (Al-Dukhan 51-59).

On the other hand, those who denied Allah and stood in the way to hinder men from His path shall have much to answer for. Allah will increase their punishment two fold. They shall be requited for the denial of Allah and also for obstructing divine truth and creating discord.

Those that disbelieve and bar from the way of Allah – them We shall give increase of chastisement upon chastisement, for that they were doing corruption (Al-Nahl, 88).

11 - Believing in some Prophets or Books while rejecting others is considered by Islam as an act of blasphemy

Unbelief takes various forms: 1) denial of Allah (God) and His revelations to mankind through inspired men; 2) a sort of nominal belief in Allah and His Prophets, but one which is partial, and mixed up with racial pride, which does not allow for the recognition of any Messengers beyond those of a particular race; and 3) a nominal belief in universal revelation, but so hedged around with peculiar doctrines of exclusive salvation, that it practically approaches to a denial of Allah's universal love for all mankind and all creation . All three amount to unbelief, for they really deny Allah's universal love and care (2).

True belief in Allah, the One universal God, necessitates believing in the messages delivered by all the prophets of the past. These are mentioned in the Koran in three groups: (1) Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes: of these Abraham had apparently a Book (lxxxvii 19) and the prophets who came from his seed followed his tradition: (2) Moses and Jesus, who each left a scripture; these scriptures are still extant though not in their pristine form; and (3) other Scriptures, Prophets, or Messengers of Allah, not specifically mentioned in the Koran. Muslims make no difference between any of these. Their Message in essentials was one, and that is the basis of Islam.

Muslims are thus in the true line of those who follow the One and indivisible Message of the One Allah, wherever delivered. If others narrow it or corrupt it, it is they who have left the faith and created a division or schism.

Say: 'We believe in Allah, and in that which has been sent down on us and sent down on Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and the Prophets, of their Lord; we make no division between any of them, and to Him we surrender.'
And if they believe in the like of that you believe in, then they are truly guided; but if they turn away, then they are clearly in schism; Allah will suffice you for them; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing (Al-Baqarahh 136, 137).

Those who deny Allah as the only Lord of the universe and refuse to acknowledge all His Prophets including Muhammad, and all His Books including the Koran, and wish to separate Allah from His Messengers, and recognize some Prophets and decline to accept others, and wish to take a middle course, such –like persons are the infidels indeed, Allah has prepared for them a humiliating punishment.

Those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and desire to make division between Allah and His Messengers, and say, 'We believe in part, and disbelieve

in part,' desiring to take between this and that a way – those in truth are the unbelievers; and we have prepared for the unbelievers a humbling chastisement. And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and make no division between any of them, those – We shall surely give them their wages; Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate (An-Nisa 150-152).

True faith means to believe in the unseen or what is not apprehended by sight, especially Allah who is perceived only by mind; to recognize all His angels and Messengers; to believe in the Hereafter; to faithfully believe in what has been sent to Muhammad (the Koran) and to credit all that had been revealed to those who were sent before Muhammad (Torah, Gospel, Pages of Abraham, Psalms).

That is the Book (the Koran), wherein there is no doubt, a guidance to the god-fearing who believe in the Unseen (Allah), and perform the prayer, and expend of that We have provided them; who believe in what has been sent down to thee (the Koran) and what has been sent down before thee, and have faith in the Hereafter; those are upon guidance from their Lord, those are the ones who prosper (Al-Baqarah 2-5).

True faith is therefore to believe in Allah, the One God, and acknowledge His Apostle Muhammad, and give credence to the Koran, and to all the Books which Allah sent down before. And he who denies Allah, His angels, His books, His Apostles and the Day of Resurrection, has gone far astray.

O believers believe in Allah and His Messengers and the Book He has sent down on His Messenger and the Book which He sent down before. Whoso disbelieves in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers, and the Last Day, has surely gone astray into far error (An-Nisa, 136).

It is obligatory to have belief in the Messenger ship of the Prophet Muhammad. Abu Haraira narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

"By Him (Allah) in Whose Hand Muhammad's soul is, there is none from amongst the Jews and the Christians who hears about me and then dies without believing in the Message with which I have been sent (Islamic monotheism), but he will be from the dwellers of the Hell Fire." (Sahih Muslim, the Book of Faith, vol.1, Hadith No. 240).

As mentioned before, believing in some Prophets or books while rejecting others amounts to blasphemy in Islam. In addition to the Torah and their Prophets, the Jews must also believe in Jesus and his Gospel, and in Muhammad and his Koran; likewise, the Christians must also believe in Muhammad and the Koran, otherwise Allah will not accept their belief in the Day of Judgment. To reject any of the prophets is open blasphemy – as their words are all the same -Word of Allah.

At the time of the Prophet there were sincere Christians who believed in the true teachings of Jesus - Allah is One and Jesus is his Prophet. Abyssinians to whom Muslim refugees went during the persecution in Makkah are a good example.

In the Koran, Allah addressed Muhammad that he will find the strongest among men in enmity to Muslims are the Jews and pagans; and nearest among them in love to the

Muslims are those who say, "We are Christians", because among these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant. And when they listen to the Koran they are excited to tears at the truth which they recognize; they pray: "Our Lord we believe; write us down among the witnesses. And why we do not recognize Allah and give credence to the truth (Islamic monotheism) which we have received when we hope that Allah would admit us (in paradise on the Day of Resurrection) along with the righteous people (Prophet Muhammad and his companions)".

In response to their recognition of the truth, shall Allah grace them with a distinguished reward. They shall be admitted to gardens beneath which rivers flow. Such is the recompense of the good doers.

Thou wilt surely find the most hostile of men to the believers are the Jews and the idolaters; and thou wilt surely find the nearest of them in love to the believers are those who say, 'We are Christians'; that, because some of them are priests and monks, and they wax not proud.

And when they hear what has been sent down to the Messenger, thou seest their eyes overflow with tears because of the truth they recognize. They say, 'Our Lord, we believe; so do Thou write us down among the witnesses.

Why should we not believe in Allah and the truth that has come to us, and be eager that our Lord should admit us with the righteous people?'

And Allah rewards them for what they say with gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever; that is the recompense of the good doers. But those who disbelieve, and cry lies to Our signs – they are the inhabitants of Hell (Al-Maidah 82-86).

In the Koran, Allah command the people of the Book to give credence to the Koran which authoritatively validates the Torah and the Gospel before He expunges faces and wipe their features beyond recognition, or afflict them with divine wrath and malignant fate just as He had cursed those who broke the Sabbath. The Koran states:

You who have been given the Book, believe in what We have sent down, confirming what is with you, before We obliterate faces, and turn them upon their backs, or cursed them as We cursed the Sabbath-men, and Allah's command is done (An-Nisa, 47).

This verse is a severe warning to the Jews and the Christians and an absolute obligation that they must believe in Allah's Messenger Muhammad and in his Message of Islamic monotheism and in the Koran (2).

12- Come to a word common between us

Allah warned Muhammad that some of the people of the Book wish they could lead him and his followers astray, when in point of fact they alienate themselves from Allah's purpose and path of rectitude, and they fail to perceive that their imagination is often at war with reason and fact. Allah ordered Muhammad to say to the people of the Book why they contend with opposing argument about Abraham whether he was a Jew or a Christian when they know that both the Torah and the Gospel were revealed long after his time. The Jews and the Christians contended with opposing argument about what they know about their system of faith and the mission of Jesus, son of

Mary, but why bring forward reasons in support or against a matter of which they have empty knowledge. Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian but an orthodox Muslim and never did he incorporate with Allah other deities. Indeed those who best deserve a rightful claim to spiritual affinity to Abraham are those who followed his system of faith and worship, and the Prophet Muhammad and his followers.

People of the Book! Why do you dispute concerning Abraham?

The Torah was not sent down, neither the Gospel, but after him. What, have you no reason?

Ha, you are the ones who dispute on what you know; why then you dispute touching a matter of which you know not anything? Allah knows and you know not.

No; Abraham in truth was not a Jew, neither a Christian; but he was a Muslim and one of pure faith; certainly he was never of the idolaters.

Surely the people standing closest to Abraham are those who followed him and this Prophet (Muhammad) and those who believe; and Allah is the protector of the believers.

There is a party of the people of the Book yearns to make you go astray; yet none they make astray, except themselves, but they are not aware.

People of the Book! Why do you disbelieve in Allah's signs (the verses about the coming of Prophet Muhammad in the Torah and the Gospel), which you yourselves witness (Al-Imran 65-69).

Or do they say, 'Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes – they were Jews, or they were Christians?'

Say: 'Have you then greater knowledge, or Allah? And who does greater evil than he who conceals a testimony received from Allah? And Allah is not heedless of the things you do.' (Al-Baqarahh, 140).

Allah instructed the Prophet to say to the people of the Book: 'Do you dispute with us about Allah, seeing that He is our Lord and your Lord, and we are accountable for our deeds, and you are accountable for yours. We obey His orders, and we worship Him alone and none else.'

Say: 'Would you then dispute with us concerning Allah who is our Lord and your Lord? Our deeds belong to us, and to you belong your deeds; Him we serve sincerely (Al-Baqarahh, 139).

Allah instructed the Prophet to declare in explicit terms that Muslims believe in Allah (God) and in all that has been imparted to them in the Koran and in all that was imparted to Abraham and Ishmael, to Isaac and Jacob and to the tribes of his twelve sons and in what was imparted to Moses and Jesus. Muslims do not discriminate one of them from another and they conform their will to Allah's blessed will; Allah is the heart of their purpose.

Say: 'We believe in Allah, and that which has been sent down on us, and sent down on Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Tribes, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and the Prophets, of their Lord; we make no division between any of them, and to Him we surrender (Al-Imran, 84).

Allah also instructed the prophet to say to the people of the Book: 'Come to a word that is just between us, that we worship no one but Allah and shall not incorporate with Him other deities nor shall any of us take another for a godhead besides Him.

'People of the Book: come now to a word common between us and you, that we serve none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and do not some of us take others as lords, apart from Allah.' And if they turn their backs, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.' (Al-Imran, 64).

The Koran has strongly negated that Paradise is the right of any particular religious group or creed. This passive and false belief shall have absolutely no importance on the Day of Judgment. The criterion for success in the hereafter is going to be the true faith of the individual in the one God, Allah, and in the Day of reckoning.

On the Day of Judgment each soul would have to answer for its own deeds: it cannot claim merit from others, nor be answerable for the crimes or sins of others. If the Jews or Christians claim the merits of father Abraham, and the Patriarchs or Jesus, Muslims cannot follow them. The doctrine of personal responsibility is a cardinal feature of Islam.

The Koran unequivocally states that the mission of Muhammad is addressed to all of humanity and not merely to a particular nation or tribe, and therefore it is the duty of everyone to respond to this Message.

Say: "O mankind! Truly I am the Messenger of Allah to you all; to Whom belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. There is no God save Him. He gives life and He gives death. So believe in Allah and His words, and follow him that you may be rightly guided (Al-A'raf, 158).

In Islam there is no compulsion in religion. No Muslim has to force a non-Muslim to become a Muslim

Let there be no compulsion in religion (Al-Baqarahh, 256).

Muslims are taught to be tolerant towards others. The Koran not only prohibits compulsion in religion, but it also prohibits aggression as well, although it allows defense.

And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight you, but aggress not; Allah loves not the aggressors (Al-Baqarahh, 190).

In the Koran, Allah tells Muslims that their duty is simply to convey the Message of Islam. They must convey the Message with wisdom and discretion. The preaching must not be dogmatic, not self-regarding, not offensive, but gentle, considerate, and such as would attract their attention. The manner and arguments should not be acrimonious, but modeled on the most courteous and the most gracious example.

Call thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and good admonition, and dispute with them in the better way. Surely thy Lord knows very well those who have gone astray from His way, and He knows very well those who are guided (Al-Nahl, 125).

Allah will guide to His path of rectitude whom He pleases and as He pleases. He alone knows best those who are willing to lift to Him their inward sight.

Thou guidest not whom thou likest, but Allah guides whom He wills, and knows very well those that are guided (Al-Qasas, 56).

Had Allah willed He would have made all people one nation united in belief and thought, but He deafens the ears of the hearts of the evildoers and open the eyes of the minds of whom He will.

If Allah had willed, He would have made you one nation, but He leaves straying whom He pleases, and guides whom He will; and you will surely be questioned about the things you wrought (Al-Nahl, 93).

Allah has sent a Messenger to each people to point out the right way. Such a Messenger will be on the Day of Judgment a witness that he preached Allah's Message to his people. There will then be no excuses of any kind. Those who rejected Allah after repeated warnings cannot reasonably ask for more respite, as they had every kind of respite during their life of probation. They will not be allowed to seek Allah's grace by repentance. When they see the terrible penalty that is laid upon them, it will be too late for repentance and for asking for mercy. Justice must take its course.

And the day We shall raise up from every nation a witness, then those who disbelieved will not be given leave (to put forward excuses), nor will they be allowed (to return to the world) to repent and ask for Allah's forgiveness (of their sins).

And when the evildoers behold the chastisement, it shall not be lightened for them, and no respite shall be given them (Al-Nahl 84, 85).

On the Day of Judgment Prophet Muhammad will be witness against all those who rejected the Message he brought. For those who believe in him of all races and peoples, the Koran which he brought will be an explanation, a guide, a mercy and a Gospel.

And the day We shall raise up from every nation a witness against them from amongst them, and We shall bring thee as a witness against those (Al-Nahl, 89).

I strongly call on Christians not to turn from the truth and turn aside to myths. I call on Christians to reform their religion by taking it back to unity instead of trinity. I stress the point that the Christians must use their logic, reasoning and intellect. How much wiser would it be if Christians humble themselves and sought the light of Allah. It is a chance given them; will they exercise their free will and take it! The truth has been brought plainly before them; will they resist it and go after false gods, the creation of their own fancy?

As we have seen the Koranic contentions regarding Christianity are clear and obvious, however, the hatred of the wicked does not justify hostility in our part. We have to help each other in righteousness and piety, not in perpetuating feuds of hatred and enmity. We may contradict, but always in a spirit of justice and righteousness. In this regard, Muslim's refutation of Christian teachings is not based on personal whim or

malice. Muslims are simply stating Allah's judgment on the matter - whoever ascribes partners to Allah has rejected faith.

Instead of wasting their time attacking Islam, thus gaining more sins and putting themselves in jeopardy with Allah, the Christian leaders must seek integrity, insight, foresight and courage in pursuing truth in the realm of their religion. They must rethink all of the images of Christianity and try to reach the final truth, which is: Allah is one; there is no other deity to be worshipped but Him alone and Jesus is His servant and Prophet. This must be complemented by believing in the Koran as the last divine revelation to mankind, and in Muhammad – peace be upon him - as the seal of the prophets.

Chapter 2

No for Theological Dialogue – Yes for Accepting the Other

Muhammad is the last Prophet of Allah to mankind. He is the final Messenger of Allah, and Islam is the last religion until the Day of Judgment. It is the final expression of the Abrahamic tradition. The Message of Islam was and is still addressed to the Christians, the Jews and the rest of mankind. Muhammad was sent to those religious people to inform them about the true mission of Jesus, Moses, David, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham. Muhammad is considered to be the summation and the culmination of all the prophets and messengers that came before him. He purified the previous Messages from adulteration and completed the Message of Allah for all humanity.

Today I have perfected your religion for you and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam for your religion (Al-Maidah, 3).

Because Allah has perfected His last of religions, and guarded it against loss and adulteration, He made it superior over every religion, even though the pagans may detest it.

It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may uplift it above every religion, though the disbelievers be averse (At-Tawbah, 33).

The Koran teaches that there is only one God (Allah) who created one race of human beings and communicated to them one Message: submission to the worship of Allah alone and following His instruction – known in Arabic as Islam. That Message was conveyed to the first human beings on this earth, and reaffirmed by all of the prophets of Allah who came after them throughout all the ages. Therefore, on the Day of Judgment, Allah accepts only Islam (submission to Allah) as a religion from His servants.

The Koran says:

What, do they desire another religion than Allah's, and to Him has surrendered whoso in the heavens and the earth, willingly and unwillingly, and to Him they shall be returned?

Say: 'We believe in Allah (God), and that which has been sent down on us, and sent down on Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes, and in that which was given to Moses, and Jesus, and the prophets of their Lord; we make no division between any of them, and to Him we surrender.'

Whoso desires another religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him; in the next world he shall be among the losers (Al-Imran 83-85).

Reiterating the same point, the Koran says:

Allah bears witness that there is no God but He, and the angels, and men possessed of knowledge – upholding justice; there is no God but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

The true religion with Allah is Islam.

Those who were given the Book were not at variance except after the knowledge came to them, being insolent one to another, and whoso disbelieves in Allah's signs, Allah is swift in the reckoning (Al-Imran 18-19).

The reality of the prophets, their uniform Messages, and the way of life which they followed, can only be found preserved in the religion of Islam, the only religion prescribed by Allah for man. Furthermore, only Muslims today actually follow Jesus and his true teachings. Their way of life is much more in tune with the way of life Jesus practiced than any of the modern day Christians. Love and respect of Jesus Christ is an article of faith in Islam, and Allah stressed the importance of belief in Jesus in numerous places in the Koran (1).

The religious wars erupted in Europe as a result of the unresolved doctrinal controversies surrounding the person of Jesus. In Islam there are no controversies as to who Allah is, His names, His essence, and His attributes.

It is derogation from the glory of Allah – in fact it is blasphemy – to say that Allah begets sons like a man or an animal. Saying or believing that Allah has sons would mean an attribution to Allah of a material nature, and of the lower animal functions of sex.

They say: 'Allah has begotten a son! Glory be to Him – nay, to him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and all surrender in obedience (in worship) to Him (Al-Baqarah, 116).

The Koran's call remains ever relevant:

**They are unbelievers who say: 'God (Allah) is the Messiah, Mary's son.'
Say: 'Who then shall overrule Allah in any way if He desires to destroy the Messiah, Mary's son, and his mother, and all those who are on earth?'
For to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and of the earth, and all that is between them, creating what He will. Allah is powerful over everything (Al-Maidah, 17).**

Allah says:

And verily this is my straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His path. This He has ordained for you; haply you will be godd-fearing. (Al-An'am, 153).

Taking men for gods or sons of God was not a new thing. All ancient mythologies have fables of that kind. Before Muhammad came to the world with the Message of Islam which glorifies the Oneness of Allah, the people of the Book exceeded in their religion the bounds of what is proper, and followed the vain desires of the pagan Roman Emperor, Constantine and his bishops and priests who misled many, and strayed themselves from the even way. The truth regarding the Oneness of Allah was concealed and trampled upon, and Allah's name was dishonored by blasphemies. Now, there is no excuse for such blasphemies after Muhammad the last of the prophets had clearly explained man's true relation to Allah.

The truth does not necessarily come from priests, or from the superstitions of people, it comes from Allah and where there is a direct revelation, there is no room for doubt.

Throughout the centuries Muslims had no difficulty living in peace with people of other religions. Ever since the time of the Prophet, Muslims never considered the Jews and the Christians as the religious other. Instead, they took them as their natural allies, as people of the Book, while the pagan Arabs of Makkah despite their kinship to the Prophet and his followers were considered as nonbelievers or the religious other.

This sense of religious pluralism that pervaded Islam helped flourish a full-pledged religious life of other believing nations under Islam. History records the Prophet's treaty with the Christians of Najran which guaranteed the protection of their religious life and preservation of their religious institutions. And when Muaz was sent to Yemen as a governor, the Prophet instructed him not to disrupt the religious life of the Jews. In Islam, socializing with the people of the Book was a norm as the Koran openly declared their food lawful for Muslims and Muslim food lawful for them. Muslims are even allowed to enter into marital relations with the Jewish and Christian women.

In this respect we must not forget that many local churches, such as the three ancient Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of the East (Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch), live today in the Islamic world.

Had there been no inquisition, no crusades, no colonialism, no attack on Islam under the false pretension of war on terror, the world would have been a much better place today. These incidences have cast their legacy by severely damaging relationships between the Muslims and the Christians as well as giving birth to silly and false terminologies like Islam phobia and Islamic terrorism (8).

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 have suddenly brought the Islamic civilization to the focus of the Western world's attention in a way that fits into the kind of the enemy stereotype created by Samuel Huntington's theory known as 'Clash of Civilizations' raising the argument that the future conflict in the world will be based on cultural grounds, and that the eastern civilizations, including Chinese and Islamic, pose a threat to the decaying western civilization. Since September 11, 2001 Huntington's theory is even forcefully propagated on a global level and put in the context of a new 'crusade' a term used by President Bush shortly after the September 11 attack. Accordingly, the recent developments have been exploited for the sake of a 'cultural crusade' against Islam and for the creation of a new geostrategic design according to which the West and its dominating power, the United States, has the right to pacify the Muslim world according to western standards of humanity and secularism.

The false accusations against Islam, and the tyrannical attack on Muslim lands had its bad influence on Christian-Islamic dialogue. Due to political and military hegemony over Muslim countries and out of unreasonable arrogance, now we can see some Christians calling upon Muslims to compromise their religion in order to cope with the civilized West! As a pre-condition for a theological dialogue, the Vatican demands that Muslims change their belief that the Koran is the Word of God. The Vatican claims, "Muslims do not accept that one can discuss the Koran in depth

because they say it was written by dictation from God. With such an absolute interpretation, it is difficult to discuss the contents of faith."

The traditional Christian polemics with Islam have pursued the four principle objectives: the faith of Muslims is unsound as compared with Christianity, the pretensions of Muhammad for a prophetic mission are groundless and the Muslim claim that the Koran is the word of Allah (God) is unfounded. Most Christians and Jews consider Muslims sinners who are not chosen by Allah or saved and are therefore, not entitled to equal or humane treatment.

Islam is not to be changed or reformed because it is already perfect and complete. In Islam there is absolutely no room for compromise. There is no evidence that the Prophet ever did so, neither did his companions, nor does the Koran provide scope for it.

The Koran is the eternal and the infallible Word of Allah, and contains the whole of Allah's final revelation to man, and must be obeyed in all its details.

The Koran is taken by Muslims to be the revealed Word of Allah and is therefore immutable and not open to human interpretation. The duty of the Prophet is to deliver Allah's Message exactly as it is revealed to him, whether it pleases or displeases those who hear it. Selfish men want to read their own fancies and desires into religious percepts, and thus they are always willing to use religion for their own ends. Most of the corruptions of religion are due to this cause. But religion is not to be forged or adulterated. We should be grateful to Allah for His guidance instead of carping at it. What a glorious privilege it is for mankind to receive true guidance from Allah?

When Muhammad recited the Koran to the Arab pagans of Makkah, they rejected the Koran and insolently said, "Bring a Koran that is different from this or substitute the words which we do not like for others to our taste." Here Allah commanded the Prophet to say, "It is not within my power to make any changes of my own accord; I only follow all that is inspired to me, nor do I dare to disobey Allah, my Creator, for the penalty in this case shall be the torment that is suffered on a Momentous Day."

And when Our signs are recited to them, clear signs, those who look not to encounter Us say, 'Bring a Koran other than this, or alter it,' Say: 'It is not for me to alter it of my own accord. I follow nothing except what is revealed to me. Truly I fear, if I should rebel against my Lord, the chastisement of a dreadful day.' (Yunus, 15).

Muslims believe that the Koran is a faithful and unalterable reproduction of the original scriptures which are preserved in heaven. They see the Koran as the correct version of the divine Message Allah conveyed to earlier Jewish and Christian prophets from Abraham and Moses to Jesus.

As indicated earlier, the Sharia or Islamic Law is based on four principles: The Koran; the Sunna of the Prophet; the consensus of the scholars of the orthodox community; and the method of reasoning by analogy (qiyas). For Muslims, submission to Allah's will means following Sharia. If the Koran is immutable, unchangeable, unreformable, then so, too, is the Sharia, immutable, unchangeable, unreformable. However, without violating its principles, and due to its comprehensiveness, the Sharia could be adapted

to modern times in a way that would make it flexible enough to contain the newly emerging human necessities and needs.

No believing man or woman be in a position to exercise choice when once Allah and His Prophet have decided on a course of action, pronounced a judgment, or brought a cause to a decision. Those who disobey Allah and His Prophet will have deviated from sense and are indeed on a wrong path. Muslims make their will consonant to Allah's will and do their best to carry it out without the slightest deviation.

Those who call for compromise must remember the Words of Allah:

It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger decreed a matter to have a choice in the affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has gone astray into a manifest error (Al-Ahzab, 36).

Islam seeks the destruction of all forms of evil, through pure ways, not the manipulation of evil to reach a pure goal. This is not possible or permissible. The Muslims were ordered not to deviate from Allah's path, the only way that leads to righteousness.

And that is My path, straight; so do you follow it, and follow not divers paths lest they scatter you from His path. This He has ordained for you; haply you will be god-fearing (Al-An'am, 153).

Showing Islam in a soft light will only give the wrong image of an already perfect religion.

As frequently mentioned in this book, the literal words of Allah are not negotiable. There is no need at all to be apologetic about the divine Koranic verses reprimanding or rebuking the Jews and the Christians. No Muslim would ever dare change one single letter Allah has descended upon His Prophet in the Koran. The Koran clearly indicates in several verses that the recompense of those who change Allah's words whether in the Torah, the Gospel or the Koran is a blazing Fire.

When Muslims discuss their religion with others, the main objective is to explain the religion to those who are willing to learn about Islam. But to Muslims, Islam is not a religion to be discussed or argued about. As the last divine revelation to mankind, Allah made the religion of Islam perfect and complete since it has first descended on the Prophet more than 1425 years ago. To Muslims, and as indicated in the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet, following the principles of Islam in all its aspects, is the road to salvation, and consequently the road to eternal happiness in the Hereafter. Therefore, whether Islam is attacked by others or not, Muslims in all ages stick firmly to their religion and follow its principles without lingering or delay.

The Koran teaches that if Muslims are to deliver the Message of Islam to non-Muslims that must be without the slightest deviation or alteration and also without force or compulsion.

Islam as a complete, perfect, and well preserved religion came originally to purify and reform Judaism and Christianity from the falsehood that was added to them. The fact is, Judaism and Christianity are the ones that need to be reformed, but the amendment

this time must be based upon the injunctions of the Koran - the only unified divine Book existing today - and not the opposite. Reformation of the preceding religions based on the injunctions of the Koran is in fact, a wonderful chance Islam is offering to both religions, a last chance that must be emphatically grasped and not to be bigoted or rejected.

I call upon Christendom that instead of slandering Islam and its Prophet, thus gaining unforgivable sins, to rather follow the true line of those who believe in the one and indivisible God, Allah. If others narrowed the doctrine of Allah's oneness or corrupted it, it is they who have left the faith and created a division or schism. A person should never follow a religion merely because it was that which he was born into, nor should he take religion to be a new age fashion.

If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion of Islam. The Prophet said:

"If Allah wants to do good to a person, he makes him comprehend the religion (the understanding of the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet). I am just a distributor, but the grant is from Allah. And remember that this nation (true Muslims, real followers of Islamic monotheism) will remain obedient to Allah's orders (following strictly the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet) and they will not be harmed by anyone who will oppose them till Allah's Order (Day of Judgment) is established (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 1, Hadith No. 71).

Those who listen to Allah's Message find at each stage Allah's grace helping them more and more to receive His light, so that they travel farther and farther to their goal in the path of truth and righteousness. They are not to be compared to those who shut out Allah's light from their hearts. Just as there is a spiritual progress for those who seek Allah, so there is more and more spiritual retrogression for those who close their hearts to Allah. Their hearts get hardened, and they allow less and less Allah's grace to penetrate within. Those are in plain error.

Is he whose breast Allah has expanded unto Islam, so he walks in a light from his Lord (as he who is a non- Muslim)? So woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allah! Those are in manifest error (Al-Zumar, 22).

The way of Allah is a straight way, but men have strayed from it in all directions. Man is demanded to strive in Allah's cause in order to be guided to the right path. As soon as he strives with might and main, with constancy and determination, the Light and Mercy of Allah comes to meet him. The Light cures his defects and shortcomings. It provides him with the means by which he can raise himself above himself. It points out the right way, and all the paths leading up to it.

But those who struggle in Our cause, surely We shall guide them to Our paths; and Allah is with the good-doers (Al-Ankabut, 69).

Allah guides whom He wills and sends astray whom He wills. The Prophet cannot guide the blind to the truth and bring them back from their misguidance. The Prophet is only a Warner.

Surely you cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He pleases, and He knows best the followers of the right way... (Al-Qasas, 56).

Due to the wrong and false ideas of some Christian leaders about Islam, I do not promote theological dialogues between Islam and Christianity. I am totally against reconciliation between religions because this would be totally ineffective and would certainly lead to nothing but hatred and opposition.

Islam is a complete religion and needs not to be compromised. Islam as the last Message from Allah to His servants is designed to be followed by all and not to be discussed or argued about. The purpose of any theological discussions between Islam and other preceding religions should be only to correct and reform them by omitting the superstitions that had been added to them and not to judge the validity of Islam or the authenticity of the Koran. The Koran as a unified Book and the last divine revelation to mankind is destined to serve as a reference for correcting, reforming and amending and not to be charged as fraud. Until this crucial point is perfectly understood by the Christians, theological dialogue between Islam and Christianity is worthless and would never prosper.

In other words, the Islamic-Christian dialogue is completely useless unless the Church confesses, admits and recognizes that Prophet Muhammad – peace be upon him - is the last of the Messengers, and Islam is universal and the last divine revelation to mankind.

Based on the above, any future dialogues between Islam and other religions must not be based on theological matters, but rather on worldly issues. What we should concentrate on however, is fellow man. Muslims and non-Muslims ought to focus attention on common goals, such as world peace, justice, freedom, equality, love, understanding, and respect for one another, tolerance, cooperation, as well as other important topics such as mother earth and the environment, occupation of land by force, plundering the natural resources of defenseless countries, the lack of world justice and peace, hunger, poverty, nuclear threat, double standards etc. All these are issues which touch the soul of the unfortunate man of our time. The matter is how to tackle the question of co-existence in the concrete terms of politics, economy, history, tradition and culture. The world is tired of religious wars and conflicts.

Interfaith dialogue should presently concentrate on building bridges of good will and co-existence. Let us first build trust. We must start sowing the trust and good will now and move on to address other immediate concerns on which depends our common survival and survival of the world at large.

We must accept each other as we are, with all our intellectual and religious differences. Confronted as we are with gigantic crisis today, no single nation on her own, can solve the world's problems. It is incumbent on all the inhabitants of planet earth, no matter which religious tradition he or she comes from, to contribute his maximum share to the great rescue mission of humanity.

The world needs a major shake-up. Democracy is ailing and the capitalist system despite its worldwide popularity is already crumbling. It is for the believing nations to bury their differences in the greater interest of humanity and come out with a viable alternative. The purpose should be to serve the goals of the inhabitants of this earth, to

bring about the co-existence and peace that emanate from a spirit of tolerance, from human accord, from ties of love, and from the enhancement of knowledge and economic integration among peoples.

There is no remedy to the ills of our world other than to accept the "other" as he is. What draws people together is far more important than what sets them apart. There is immense bounty in diversity, and by accepting the other every side would appreciate every community's own differences whether in history, language or tradition.

The call for dialogue among civilizations should not be perceived as a defensive tool promulgated by some in the Muslim World in the face of the calls for clash of civilizations as well as some provoking circles in the West that call for hatred towards Islamic civilization. It is our duty, one and all, to pursue our dialogue without any intellectual or ideological prejudice or misinterpretation of reality or history, for that would not help in creating a climate that is conducive to objective dialogue or effecting reforms. In fact, our common and most noble goal must be to create a sustainable and peaceful future for people everywhere. We must be able to demonstrate to each other that we are capable of living together and not to drift apart.

Tolerance is the ability to accept the other with all his differences. Tolerance is the only way of really understanding each other. Let our differences not cause hatred between us. Let us respect each other, be fair, just and kind to one another. Let us live in truth, honesty, sincere peace, harmony and mutual good will. Let us mobilize all human efforts to reach agreement on a common set of minimum agreed parameters based on mutual respect and understanding.

As we have seen in previous chapters, the Koran and the Prophet accept entirely the concept of freedom of thought, welcome diversity of creed, respect the opinion of others and leave the matter of judging to Allah on Judgment Day.

With all the differences between us why can't we just get along? The universe is big enough for both of us.

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