

How Islam looks at Traditional Christianity

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Introduction

Spreading the Message of Islam is a duty incumbent upon all Muslims. Muslims are strictly ordered to deliver the words of Allah without any deviation. Violation of Allah's words to acquire worldly gain is considered in Islam a grievous sin.

It is not my purpose at all to make compromises between Islam and other religions, but rather to show the differences, and what is required to understanding the proper worship of Allah, the only Creator and sustainer of the universe.

This book is never meant to attack other religions. No one is compelled to accept the truth, but the truth must be told at all costs without adornment.

The book tackles the evolution of the doctrine of Trinity.

The book emphasizes the true religion of Jesus as mentioned in the Gospel, the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet.

The second coming of Jesus as revealed by the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet is also explained.

The term "Chosen People" was also dealt with from the stand point of Islam. The Jews had been the chosen people of Allah until the advent of their last great Prophet Jesus the Messiah, who gave them their last chance for reform and repentance. Having rejected their last Prophet they consequently lost this burden-privilege. The burden was therefore moved to their brethren the Arabs, descendants of Ishmael son of Abraham.

Chapter 1

Traditional Christianity is of pagan and not divine origin

Craig Bluemel in his article "The Origin of the English Word for God - part one" explained that the word 'God', comes from a very pagan origin. It is connected with the pagan worship that existed long before the advent of Moses. The name God was derived from the ancient word Gad. Gad was a Syrian idol and the first whose name is mentioned in scripture Isaiah 65:11. The Gadites who settled in the east side of the Jordan River incorporated the worship of the false deity Gad, mingling it with Yahweh worship. The Syrian idol Gad, considered a very powerful deity that controlled the planet Jupiter, is part of ancient Semitic people's worship and later embraced by successive nations, notably Greece and Rome.

Before talking about the true religion of Jesus and his exact words to the Children of Israel, it is important to have a fair background about pagan religions prevailing in the Mediterranean countries just before the advent of Jesus. After the ascension of Jesus to the heavens, these pagan religions were used to alter the true words of Jesus to his followers.

Dr. Muhammad Fazl ur-Rahman in his book, "Islam and Christianity" (1), introduced comprehensive studies of eminent Christian scholars revealing a striking resemblance between Christianity and paganism. It seems that the Christian Church at its early days borrowed pagan ideology and rituals wholesale and threw of the Message of Jesus. These scholars devoted their whole lives to the study of Christianity in the light of comparative religion, as for instance, Sir J.G. Frazer (The Golden Bough), J.M. Robertson (Chrystianity and Mythologie, Pagan Christs), Dupuis (The Origin of All Religious Worship), Knight (The Symbolical Language of ancient Art and Mythology), Edward Carpenter (Pagan and Christian Creeds), T.W. Doane (The Bible Myths and their Parallels in other Religions).

Sun-worship was at the time of the appearance of Jesus, the universal prevalent religion of the Roman Empire, though the names given to the sun-god in different countries were not the same. The well known sun gods, whose worship had been populpar in the Medeterranean countries at one time or the other, were: Attis of Phrygia, Adonis of Syria, Dionysius of hours of Egypt, Mithras or Mithra of Persia.

Dr. Muhammad Fazl ur-Rahman introduced brief sketches of the legends of the sun-gods to reveal the sources of the Christian legend. To take a few examples of the kinds of belief of the ancients in son-gods and the great similarity between their rituals and those of Christianity, the author introduced in his book the following sketches:

Attis

He was born of a virgin named Nana and was regarded as the "Only Begotten Son" and "Savior". He was bled to death on March 24th at the foot of a pine-tree and his votaries believed that his blood had renewed the fertility of the earth, and thus brought a new life to humanity. He however, rose from the dead, and his resurrection along with his death was celebrated by his votaries. Every year on the 24th day of March,

they would first fasten his image to a pine-tree and then lay it in a tomb with wailing and mourning. On the next day they would find the tomb empty and celebrate the resurrection with great rejoicing. Sacramental meal and baptism of blood were special features of his church.

Adonis or Tammuz

He was the virgin-born "Savior" of Syria. He suffered death for the redemption of mankind, but rose again in the spring. His resurrection was commemorated by a great annual festival. The Old Testament refers to the weeping and wailing of women over his idol (Ezekiel, viii, 14). The Rev. Sir G.W. Cox calls him the crucified Tao (divine love personified) (2), and the Rev. Dr. Parkhurst in his Hebrew Lexicon, remarks: "I find myself obliged to refer Tammuz to that class of idols which were originally designed to represent the promised Savior (i.e. Jesus), the desire of all nations."

Dionysius or Bacchus

He was the "Only Begotten Son" of Jupiter and was born of a virgin named Demeter or Semele on December 25th. He was a Redeemer, Liberator and Savior. "It is I," so says Bacchus to mankind, "Who guide you; it is I who protect you, and who save you; I am Alpha and Omega." (3).

Wine had an important place in his cult. He was slain for redeeming humanity and was called, "The Slain One, The Sin –bearer, the Redeemer." His passion play was celebrated every year representing his death, descent in Hell, and resurrection.

Bel or Boal

He was the sun-god of Babylon and the story of his life extremely resembles the Christian passion story even in details. The Jews had passed a long time in captivity in Babylon, during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and this might account for the close resemblance between the Babylonian mythology and that of Jesus claimed by early Christians.

Archaeological research had brought to light some bewildering facts which proved that Babylonian mythology played an important role in the early stages of Christianity. In 1903-1904, the German excavators at Kala Shergat (the site of ancient Assur) discovered two Cuneiform documents. When deciphered, they were found to contain the narrative of the Passion Play of Bel. An English journal (The Quest, London, Jan. 1922) published its translation along with the story of the Christian Passion Play. The following is an account of it:

The Babylonian Passion Play

- 1- Bell is taken prisoner.
- 2- Bell is tried in the House of the Mount.
- 3- Bell is smitten (wounded).
- 4- Bell is led away to the Mount.
- 5-Together with Bel a malefactor is led

The Christian Passion Play

- 1- Jesus is taken prisoner.
- 2-Jesus is tried in the House of the High Priest and the Hall of Pilate.
- 3- Jesus is scourged.
- 4- Jesus is led away to crucifixion in Golgotha.
- 5- Together with Jesus two malefactors

away and put to death. Another, who is also charged as a malefactor, is let go, thus not taken away with Bel.

6- After Bel has gone to the Mount, the city breaks out into tumult, and fighting takes place in it.

7-Bel's clothes are carried away.

8- A woman wipes away the heart's blood of Bel flown from a drawn-out weapon.

9-Bel goes down into the Mount away from sun and light, disappears from life, and is held fast in the Mount as in a prison.

10- Guards watch Bell imprisoned in the stronghold of the Mount.

11- Agoddess sits with Bel; she comes to tend him.

12- They seek for Bell where he is held fast. In particular a weeping woman seeks for him at the "Gate of Burial". When he is being carried away, the same lamented: "O, my brother! O, my brother!"

13- Bel is again brought back to life (as the sun of spring): he comes again out of the Mount.

14- His chief feast, the Babylonian New Year's festival in March at the spring equinox, is celebrated also as his triumph over the power of darkness.

(cf., the creation hymn: "Once when on high" as the New Year's festival hymn).

Osiris

He was born on December 29th, of a virgin called by the Egyptians the 'Virgin of the world'. He preached the gospel of gentleness and peace. Wine and corn were regarded as his celebrated discoveries. He was betrayed by Typhen, slain and dismembered. He was interred, but came again to life after remaining in Hell for two or three days and three nights. After his death, it was the custom of his votaries to keep his image in a box and bring out the image at the time of worship with the cries "Osiris is raised!"

"The sufferings and death of Osiris", say Rawbinson (4) were the great mystery of the Egyptian religion. His being the divine goodness, and the abstract idea of "good", his

are led away and put to death. Another (Barabbas) is released to the people, and thus not taken away with Jesus.

6- At the death of Jesus the veil in the temple is rent, the rocks are rent (Synopt.) asunder, the graves are opened and the dead come forth into the holy city (Matt.).

7- Jesus's robe is divided among the soldiers. (Synopt., John Cp. Ps. xxII, 18).

8- The lance-thrust in Jesus's side and outflow of water and blood (John). Mary Magdalene and two other women busy themselves with the washing and embalming of the body (Mark, Luke).

9- Jesus, in the grave, in the rock tomb (Synopt.), goes down in the realm of the dead (1 Pet. III, x, 17: "descent into Hell" dogma).

10- Guards are set over the tomb of Jesus (Matt.).

11- Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sit before the tomb (Matt., Mark).

12- Women, in particular Mary and Magdalene, came to the tomb to seek Jesus where he is behind the door of the tomb. Mary stands weeping before the empty tomb because they have taken her Lord away (John).

13- Jesus' restoration to life, his rising from the grave (on a Sunday morning).

14- His festival approximately in the spring equinox is also celebrated as his triumph over the power of darkness (cf. e.g., col. II, 15).

manifestation upon earth, his death and resurrection, and his office and judge of the dead in a future life, look like the early revelation of a future manifestation of the deity converted into a mythological fable (i.e., the incarnation of God in Jesus).

"Belief in the god-man in the form of Osiris became the chief element in Egyptian religion, and remained for thousands of years the faith of the people through the tangled skein of religious life in Egypt until Osiris passed into the form of the god-man Jesus Christ" said Sir Richard Gregory (5).

In a study entitled, "The Origin of the English Word of God (Part Two)" Craig Bluemel wrote:

"The influence of Egyptian deities during Israel's captivity there deepened the roots of Gad-Jupiter worship through Amon or Ammon, ancient Egyptian deity. Originally a local Theban god of reproductive forces, represented as a ram. Amon, his wife, Mut (Egyptian, "the mother"), and his son, the moon god Khon (Egyptian, "to traverse the sky"), formed the divine triad of Thebes. Later Amon was identified with the sun god Ra of Heliopolis, and was known as Amon-Ra, "the father of the gods, the fashioner of men, the creator of cattle, and the lord of all-being."

As a universal god Amon became the god of the Egyptian nation and empire. The power of his high priest rivaled that of the Pharaoh, provoking political problems similar to modern church-state rivalry. The most massive temple ever built was constructed for Amon-Ra at Al Karnak. Amon was worshipped in the ancient Greek colonies of Cyrene, where he was identified with Zeus, and in Rome, where he was associated with Jupiter."

The Romans identified Jupiter with Zeus, the supreme god of the Greeks, and assigned to the Roman god the attributes and myths of the Greek divinity; the Jupiter of Latin literature, therefore, has many Greek characteristics, but the Jupiter of Roman religious worship remained substantially untouched by the Greek influence."

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity merged Roman polytheism's principal gods with Neo-Platonic concepts and renaming Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva as God the Father, Goddess Mother, and God the Son. Goddess Mother was later dropped due to rigorous opposition and replaced with, 'God the Holy Spirit'"

Mithras or Mithra

He was the virgin-born sun-god of the Persians, the perfect prototype of Jesus Christ and the founder of an international church in which Christmas and Easter were two important festivals. This divine savior came into the world as an infant. His first worshippers were shepherds, and the day of his nativity was December 25th. His followers preached a severe and rigid morality, chief among their virtues being temperance, chastity, renunciation and self-control. They kept the seventh day holy, and the middle day of each month was a special feast of Mithra, which symbolized his function of Mediator. They had seven sacraments of which the most important were baptism, confirmation, and Eucharistic supper, at which the communicants partook of the divine nature of Mithra under the species of bread and wine (6, 7).

Modern scholars have produced a vast mass of evidence which proves without doubt that not only the life of Christian Jesus but the whole superstructure of Christianity as such has been built up on pagan foundations (1).

In fact Christianity, as it has existed since the transformation wrought by the neo-Platonist Paul, is simply a continuation of pre-Christian Paganism. Its introduction in the world marked no spiritual revolution but a mere change of labels brought about under the stress of political complications. Its very success against the other pagan churches was due not to anything new in its dogma or its promise. It succeeded, firstly, because its leaders could transform it into a pagan cult with certain slight modifications suited to meet the needs of the times, and, secondly, because they could play with the politics of the Roman Empire with greater success than their pagan rivals (8).

Dr. Muhammad Fazl-ur-rahman (1) also talked about Christian and pagan festivals, rites and symbols. Based on the works of Christian scholars he presented their views confirming the fact that the major festivals, rites and symbols of Christianity today carries on the tradition of earlier pagan beliefs which the early church has adopted and transformed in the service of the Christian faith (13).

The Christians believe that the birth date of Jesus is the 25th of December, but this date is the date of nativity of the sun in the Julian calendar. As previously mentioned many of sun-god of the ancient world was born on this or neighboring dates. The fact that even today the Greek Church and the Egyptian Church observe Christmas on January 7th and not on December 25th is significant (9).

The festival of Easter derived its significance from the goddess of light and spring in the ancient world. Her festival which fell after the commencement of the spring season was celebrated in Ireland and Egypt by eating eggs much in the same way as the Christians do today in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus.

The position of the altar in the Christian churches always faces the east. The reason is that the East is the rising' place of the sun, while West is its setting place, and the abode of the devil of darkness according to Roman mythology. This rule was not strictly observed during the early days of the Christian church, and that it acquired the status of law only after Christianity had become the popular religion of the Roman Empire (1).

The institution of monks and nuns has been similarly borrowed from paganism. Buddhism had its monks and nuns, and, among the sun-worship cults, it was a very important institution in the cult of Mithra.

The cross did not originate with Christianity. It was not included in the early lists of Christian symbols. It was first of all adopted as a symbol by Constantine who is alledged to have seen it in a vision. Among the sun-worshippers it was esteemed as the symbol of life, and so it is with the Christians.

There is an Egyptian cross in the municipal museum of Alexandria. Another non-Christian cross has been discovered in Ireland. It belongs to the cult of Mithra and bears a crucified effigy (1).

These evidences are enough to believe that Christianity is not a religion based on an immutable divine revelation but a survival of the pagan cults of primitive mankind. This fact was known even in the early days of Christianity, when many Christian fathers had to frame apologies to meet the charge of plagiarism. Just to give an example, the following is the accusations of Faustus addressed to St. Augustine:

"You have substituted your agape for the sacrifices of the pagans; for their idols your martyrs, whom you serve with the very same honors. You appease the shades of the dead with wine and feasts; you celebrate the solemn festivals of the gentiles; their manners, though you have retained without any alteration. Nothing distinguishes you from the pagans except that you hold your assemblies apart from them." (10).

The early fathers tried to reply to such allegations by laying the whole blame on the shoulders of Satan (11, 12, 13).

The Christian apologists of the present day have become convinced, however, that it is futile to deny the independent origin of pre-Christian pagan ideology. Many of them, like the modernists, have gone so far as to admit frankly that it was not the devil who in his own devilish way introduced the beliefs and rites of the Christian Church into the pagan cults before the advent of Jesus, but that it was Paul, who in order to make the way smooth for the pagans to enter the Christian Church, borrowed their beliefs and rites wholesale and incorporated them in the simple faith of Jesus. The modernists consequently confine their faith to a mystic consolation derived from the idea of Christ (1).

The more conservative section of Christian thinkers seems to be either groping in the dark in utter confusion or else playing with religion. They cannot deny the pagan character of Christianity, yet they claim its uniqueness and originality. They are certain that they are not on solid ground, but still they try to console themselves with some subterfuge (14).

Dean Inge, the great Christian scholar gives the whole case in a nutshell:

"Christianity for the historian is a great river which had its head-waters in Palestine, but received affluent from all sides. Its founder appeared to his contemporaries as 'the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee'. He followed and far surpassed John the Baptist, who revived the old Prophetic tradition after a long interval. The function of the Prophets had been to preach moral, including social reform, to denounce idolatry and oppression, to warn their countrymen that national vices lead to national disasters, and to spiritualize and moralize religion which was always in danger of becoming external and formal under the domination of priests and legists.

"These were the main topics of John the Baptist's preaching and Christ took up his Message where he left it. There is no evidence that Christ, during his ministry on earth attempted to found a new institutional religion. His disciples in Palestine were content to remain orthodox Jews, who obeyed the Law, and, like many other Jews, expected the coming of the Messiah who was to deliver their country.

"The greatest of all crisis through which Christianity has passed was the transplantation into the soil of European culture which was the work of St. Paul life. The Church then made its choice; it gained Europe and lost Asia. Compared with this momentous development even the reformation was of secondary importance.

"The reformers believed that they were clearing away a mass of pagan accretions from Christianity, and that they were returning to the original Gospel. They were really doing the first, but not the second. Latin Christianity was and is a Mediterranean religion. It is the form Christianity had to take among the subjects of the Roman Empire...Christianity was afterwards corrupted and mixed up with the original Gospel. Christ new nothing of Greek philosophy; but the theology of the church is built upon the speculations of the Platonists and on what medieval schoolmen believed to be the doctrines of Aristotle" (15).

Sir Richard Gregory supports the Dean with these words:

"Christian societies have developed along different lines according to the conceptions of different peoples and they include survival of paganism...It was a development of the native religion under the influence of the new teaching, and not an imposition of, or conversion to, Christianity itself, which produced these different attitudes of mind (5).

Chapter 2

Arianism

Arius, a priest in Egypt, was born in 250 AD to parents thought to be of Libyan origin. He grew up in Alexandria. He became a priest in the spring of 312 under the episcopacy of Achillas, who was later followed by Alexander with whom Arius was to clash. Arius was greatly influenced by Lucian of Antioch, who had laid great stress on the Judaic monotheistic origins of Christianity (16).

Arius caused a storm as he started to propagate the view that Jesus was distinct from the Father. He believed that Christ was created (begotten) and hence before that point, would not have existed. He therefore concluded that Jesus had a finite nature, whereas the Father had an eternal infinite nature. If the father begat a son, he that was begotten had a beginning of existence, hence it is clear that there was a time when the son was not. It follows then of necessity that he had his existence from the non-existent.

Arius's view was based on the fact that God is unbegotten; hence God is unique and eternal. Consequently Christ who was begotten (and referred to himself constantly as 'son of man') couldn't be the true God. The terminology that Arius used e.g. 'there was a time when the son was not' was to get Arius into serious trouble.

Arius said of Christ that he was: "...alien and dissimilar in all things from the father." And continued: "There was when he (Christ) was not." He is thought to have referred to Christ as the: "Eldest and highest of creatures." Hence, he is re-affirming his claim that Christ is not eternal.

Arius had picked up on the idea that Christ was not the literal son of God, but was the Jewish Messiah, an idea that his teacher Lucian would have found favor with. He would have found ample evidence of this from the gospels themselves:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God (Matthew 5: 9).

Arius wrote: "Indeed we can become sons of God, like Christ."

Here Arius is accepting that Jesus was a son of God in the spiritual sense, and that there was scope for all men to attain a similar status, although Jesus was superior as he was God's chosen Messiah.

Arius referred to verses from the Bible quoting Jesus such as the time when during the crucifixion, he said, "Eloi, eloi, lema sabachthani? (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?) (Mark 15: 34).

Would such a quote indicate that God was speaking to himself, blaming himself, doubting himself, or would they be the words of a Prophet of God uncertain as to his future, and whether he would be able to fulfill his mission to preach to the remaining lost tribes of the Israelites.

As pastor of Banealis, a district of Alexandria, Arius preached his views to a large audience. His audience respected him due to his ascetic lifestyle, manners and learning. He used such arguments from the gospels to back up his own claims that Christ was distinct and inferior to the Father, and finite. If Christ had been infinite, he would have had no reason to worry about a temporary crucifixion.

News of Arius preaching angered Bishop Alexander of Alexandria, who called a series of conciliatory conferences to try to get Arius to change his views. Speaking of Arianism, Alexander is recorded by Athanasius – Alexander's chief deacon assistant, who had taken over from Alexander the task of refuting Arius – as having written: "It had spread through all Egypt, Libya and the Upper Thebais. Then we, being assembled with the bishops of Egypt and Libya, nearly one hundred in number, anathematized both them and their followers."

But this was to no avail, and hence in 318m Arius and his followers were excommunicated. Arius was expelled along with Bishops Theonas and Secundus, six priests and six deacons.

Before going to exile, he wrote his beliefs in poetic form in the *Thalia* (the banquet). He went to Palestine and Bythynia where he was supported by many of the local clergy including Eusebius of Caesarea (16).

The views of Arius regarding the nature of God and Christ were dynamite and split the Church in two. His ideas regarding the unity of God and that He is distant from His son that had begun in the church of Alexandria was spreading like fire through all Egypt, Libya, Upper Thebes, Palestine, and Asia Minor.

With the rise of Constantine to power Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine had politically united the Empire but he was distressed to find a divided Christianity. Constantine was concerned about the de-stabilizing effects that such a feud might have. He regarded unity as the mother of order. Constantine, certainly not understanding the significance of the controversy, sent Hosius the Bishop of Cordoba, and his main ecclesiastical adviser with letters to both Alexander and Arius. In the letters he tried to reconcile them by saying that their disagreement was merely just a matter of words. The letters failed to have an effect

Yet, it soon became clear that simple politics would not resolve such situation. The quarrel was blazing furiously in every city. Bishop was contending against bishop, and the people were contending against one another, like swarms of gnats fighting in the air. There had been bloodshed in the streets; Alexandria and Nicomedia were exchanging defiant taunts (17).

On the recommendation of Bishop Hosius, Constantine called a world Church Council in 325, the first of that long series of Church councils that ended with the Council of Trent (1545-1563). He chose as the seat of the council the small city of Nicea in Bithynia, a few miles from Nicomedia. Indeed, it is suggested that Constantine changed the venue of the council from Ancyra to Nicaea to make it easier for the Western bishops to attend, and hence turn the balance against the Eastern Church which still sympathized with its Jewish origins (16).

There had been twenty Arian Sympathisers among the attendees to the council, who are thought to have numbered more than three hundred.

At once the Arians and the anti-Arians were at one another's throats. Denunciation and angry accusation flew across the hall. Constantine had invited Arius to be present and listened earnestly when Arius explained the nature of his beliefs and he was not particularly surprised when Arius burst into a long chant, having set his beliefs to music. These chants and songs were sung by the people in every country of the Eastern Roman Empire.

When the matter became more complicated Hosius the Bishop of Cordoba announced that the simplest way of reaching agreement would be to draw up a creed.

The first creed presented to the council was written by 18 of the Arian Bishops expressing clearly their views about the nature of God and Christ. But this creed was strongly opposed by the other anti-Arian bishops. At this point, Eusebius of Caesarea suggested a creed that he had first heard as a child. Eusebius was careful to say he advanced this creed only because he believed divine things cannot be fully expressed in human language: it was not perfect, but it was as close to perfection as he ever hoped to reach (18). This creed read:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God from God, Light from Light. Life from Life, the only begotten Son, the Firstborn of every creature, begotten of the Father before all worlds, through whom also all things were made. Who for our salvation was made flesh, and lived among men, and suffered and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the father, and shall come again in glory to judge the quick and the dead. And in the one Holy Ghost.

The anti-Arian Bishops rejected this creed and saw that it was necessary to state the creed in such a way that the Arians would be forced to deny their essential tenets.

Constantine turning against the Arians suggested that Christ should be defined as homoousios – one in essence with the father – and this definition should be included in the creed. Accordingly, a new creed was formed by patching together the old creed and a new, more vigorous statement of the anti-Arian position, was finally announced by Hosius on June 19. It reads:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the father, only begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, very God from very God, begotten not made, of the same substance as the Father, through whom all things were made, both things in Heaven and things in earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was made flesh, was made man, suffered and rose again in the third day, ascended into Heaven, and shall come to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy ghost. And those who say "There was a time when he was not" and "He did not exist before he was made" and "He was made out of nothing" or those who pretend that the Son of God is "of another hypostasis or substance" or "created" or "alterable" or "mutable," the Catholic Church anathematizes.

Arius refused to sign acceptance of the Nicene Creed. He would suffer the consequences.

Many commentators have noted Constantine's political ambitions, and the fact that he wanted a united Church in order to maintain a stable power base around the Mediterranean. He therefore had to take a strong action against Arius, and he needed to be seen to be taking such action in order to gain support from the clergy throughout the known world. Accordingly, Constantine issued an imperial prescript ordering that all the books of Arius should be burned. The punishment for concealing any book compiled by Arius was death. Such sentiments from the Church leader made it very difficult for Arius to propagate his views.

The bishops assembled at Nicaea sent a letter to the churches of Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis:

"Since the grace of God and the most pious emperor Constantine have called us together from different provinces and cities to constitute the great and holy synod in Nicaea, it seemed absolutely necessary that the holy synod should send you a letter so that you may know what was proposed and discussed, and what was decided and enacted. First of all the affair of the impiety and lawlessness of Arius and his followers was discussed in the presence of the most pious emperor Constantine. It was unanimously agreed that anathemas should be pronounced against his impious opinion and his blasphemous terms and expressions which he has blasphemously applied to the Son of God, saying, "he is from things that are not", and "before he was begotten he was not", and "there once was when he was not". Saying too that by his own power the Son of God is capable of evil and goodness, and calling him a creature and a work."

The letter was meant to be a clarification for the Alexandrians that Arius and his followers were outlawed, and also a clear Message that the emperor was now personally involved in the affairs of the church and would frown upon further schisms, or misunderstandings regarding the Trinity (16).

Following the Nicea Council, Arius was publicly anathematized, and was banished to Illyricum. Those who believed in the Oneness of the Creator were murdered on their return home from Nicea and anyone found in possession of books proclaiming the Oneness of the Creator was put to death and their books destroyed. Arius however, was undeterred, and maintained his views.

After 57 years from the Council of Nicaea, when Gregory Nazianzus was summoned to Constantinople, he found only one small congregation in the city that had not become Arian. In spite of the anathemas, Arianism was still a living force in the land (17).

Arius said of his maltreatment:

"We are persecuted because we say that the son had a beginning, but God is without beginning...and this we say because he is neither part of God nor derived from any substance."

Following the council of Nicaea, many Christians who had held unorthodox views were forced to change, or suffer the consequences. There were years of torment for Gnostics in Egypt who went into hiding. Fearing for their lives, they hid their literature and books which were uncovered by chance in Nag Hammadi, Egypt.

It wasn't until 451, at the council of Chalcedon that, with the approval of the Pope, the Nicene/Constantinople Creed was set as authoritative. Further words, which gave depth and resonance to the Creed, were added at the Council of Constantinople in 381, and finally approved at the council of Chalcedon in 451. Then the second clause came to read:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light from light, very God from very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from the Heavens and was made flesh of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and went up into the heavens, and sits on the right hand of the Father, and is to come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

A later Council in Ephesus resulted in Mary being referred to as Mother of God, and this resulted in yet more trouble for Christians who could not accept this concept.

As a result of the Council of Nicaea, and the successive other councils over the years designed to strengthen the doctrine of Trinity, the Trinity became officially recognized, and the Creed has stood to this day.

Chapter 3

The Doctrine of Trinity

The three monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – all share in common one fundamental concept: belief in one God (Allah) as the Supreme Being, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

The Oneness of Allah, which is the core and principle belief in the three religions, was stressed by Moses in the Jewish creed of faith: "**Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.**" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

Prophet Jesus, the Messiah, a Prophet and Messenger of Allah sent only to the Jews, preached the essential Message of the Oneness of Allah, the Creator. He called his fellow Jews, the 'Lost Sheep of Israel', back to the true teachings of Moses and John, the Baptist. Jesus teachings concentrated on worshipping the One God, the Creator alone, and correcting the tampering of certain Rabbis who, for secular gain, had corrupted the Book given to Moses. Jesus said to his people, "**...The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord.**" (Mark 12:29).

Jesus also taught love and care for one another together with many other good, ethical manners.

Muhammad came along approximately 600 years later, bringing the same Message again: "**And your God is One God: There is no God but He...**" Al-Baqarah, 163).

After the ascension of Jesus, only a few true Jewish Nazarenes remained. Some had chosen to remove themselves from society and lived in hermitages awaiting the coming of the last Prophet of Allah. There, they were free to practice the true teachings of the Prophet Jesus. These teachings were the worship of the One God together with the adherence to the original Law of Moses, the Mosaic Law, that Prophet Jesus had restored, rather than the corrupted version the Jews selected to follow.

Paul of Tarsus, the man who could rightfully be considered the true founder of Christianity, was neither the Messiah, nor a Messenger and was not given a Holy Book. Paul however, formulated many of its doctrines. The concept of Trinity was not among them, but he was the one who laid the foundation of Trinity when he put forth the idea of Jesus being a "divine Son". In essence, Paul named the principal players, but it was the people of the Church who came years after him who put the matter together.

As historically known, Paul at the beginning, was a staunch opponent of Prophet Jesus and remained so for many years after his ascension. When he did join the followers of Jesus later on, he initiated many alterations in the teachings of Jesus in hopes of winning over the Gentiles (non-Jewish people). He introduced the following concepts into Christianity:

- a. The concept of Jesus as son of God;

- b. Jesus died on the cross to wash the sins of Adam's children through his blood; and
- c. The Law of Torah was renounced. He eliminated all regulations concerning food and abrogated the injunctions of circumcision.

During the first three hundred years of Christianity there were divisions between the major Church centers of thought over the nature of Jesus. Several ideas about the nature of Jesus emerged during the course of time. These ideas developed in different directions in different areas, depending upon the local influences. Roman Christianity was strongly influenced by the paganism in which it grew up and had to survive. Hence a belief in God-system which would be understandable to the pagans was essential for the church to survive. Son of God equated to the Sun God or 'Sol Invictus' which was very popular among the Roman elite including the emperor Constantine. Elsewhere Greek and Egyptian culture had a major influence.

In Palestine, Judaism had a strong effect and many of the early sects thought of Jesus as a human Messiah, a Prophet from God. Such groups included the Ebionites and Elchasaites.

Elsewhere, there was a view that Jesus was the literal 'Son of God', and hence part of the God-head (Father, Son and Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost). There were others that argued that all three were co-existent and from one being, while the Sabellians preferred to think of Jesus as one mode of God, i.e. the trinity represented three states of God, but that there was essentially only one God. This preserved their view of Monotheism.

Yet another theory was that in actual fact, Jesus was created, and hence not eternal, and therefore could not be God, and was in fact inferior. Whatever views are reported, there was no common accepted view, and the Church faced potential conflict due to these misunderstandings. (16).

The writings of the Apostolic Fathers do not indicate any metaphysical speculations or new concepts of God. Such apologists as Ignatius of Antioch saw no relevancy in placing the Holy Spirit on the same level as the Father and the son. Justin Martyr had no dogmatic view with regard to the Holy Spirit and did not describe any kind of relationship between the father and Son. Athenagoras did mention a triad early in his writings, but Justin's disciple, Tatian, made only a vague reference to a triad and had no doctrine regarding the trinity (19).

At the time of the Apostolic Fathers, most Christians were unconcerned about the interrelations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They felt sufficiently informed without any knowledge of a triad (20). Over a period of time concepts did eventually arise because the changing environment in which the Church found itself – an environment which contributed considerably to the shaping of faith and theology. The heavenly Father described by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount was altered to the Trinity – a concept which both Hatch and Harnack describe as degeneration rather than a development. It was a corruption of the Truth from its earliest simplicity (21).

Trinitarians continue to hang onto their beliefs citing Matthew 28: 19 as proof there is a Trinity. Yet, most scholars view this text as triadic, that is, it only makes reference

to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, means one is joined to the Father and the Son by the Spirit. The fact is: there is no sensible reason God should speak of Himself in the plural unless He is plural. The Bible nowhere states that God is three persons. Augustine described the members of the trinity as having "internal relations" within the one personal God. Much confusion has arisen because how can three relations have the capacity to love? Persons may love but not "relations." This personalization of relations has led to untold perplexity. God does not love His thought of himself, nor can His thought of Himself love Him in return. (34).The doctrine of the Trinity was forced upon the Church. It is quite apparent that the concept of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit do not constitute a genuine Trinity. The whole concept is wrapped up in a degree of artificiality, which is arbitrary and poses insoluble problems (ibid, 142-144).

In the Post Apostolic Age (AD 90-140) there were several ideas concerning the nature of God. Clement of Rome confessed the deity of Jesus and stated that Jesus is the specter of the majesty of God. He did recognize a distinction between the Father and Son.

Ignatius also confessed the deity of Christ in a profound manner. Jesus is none other than the eternal God made manifest in the flesh. Polycarp endorsed Ignatius theology. Hermas, the author of "The shepherd" viewed that, "The son of God is older than all His creatures, so that he was a fellow-councilor with the Father in His work of creation.

Hermas also stated, "The Holy pre-existent Spirit that created every creature, God made to dwell in flesh which He chose. The flesh, accordingly, in which the Holy Spirit dwelt, was nobly subject to that Spirit,...and after laboring and cooperating with the spirit, and having in everything acted vigorously along with the Holy Spirit, He assumed it as a partner with it.

The Post-Apostolic Fathers maintained that there was one God, and that Jesus Christ was God. They did distinguish between the Father and Son. The Spirit did not receive much attention, but when He did, He was spoken as being God's Spirit, revealed to humanity through the person of Jesus Christ.

In the age of Greek apologists (AD 130-138) the Logos was propagated and developed. This age was characterized by Greek philosophers who wrote literary works to be read by pagans, in order to defend and explain the Christian faith to unbelievers. It was an attempt to demonstrate the Christianity was good philosophy, so that it would be accepted by the pagan contemporaries (22).

Justin Martyr was the first prolific writer to clearly teach a plurality within the Godhead. He even numbered them saying, "We reasonably worship Jesus Christ, having learned that he is the Son of the true God Himself, and holding Him in the second place, and the prophetic Spirit in the third."

The Logos was the second person next to the Father, and was subordinate to the Father. In fact, he was the first creation of the God: "The Word ...is the first-birth of God." (22). The Spirit was not mentioned much but it seems to be equated with the Logos. The Logos was second to the Father in time and sequence, and in authority, but not in will.

Justin's disciple, Tatian, made it clear that the Logos was not equal to the Father, but was His first creation. He existed in God, but emanated forth from Him before the creation of the world, and eventually became revealed physically in the person of Christ.

Irenaeus, seemed to affirm a pre-existent Son when he said the faith of the Church was belief "in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven, and earth...and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate of our salvation, and in the Holy Spirit..."

In contrast to the Apologists who taught that the Logos was created in time, Irenaeus taught that the Logos was God's visible manifestation and self-revelation even before the incarnation.

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are seen as having three separate activities to accomplishing one goal, but each aspect is carried out by a different member of the triune God: "the father planning everything well, and giving His commands, the Son carrying these into execution and performing the work of creating, and the Spirit nourishing and increasing what is made.

Tertullian (150-225), a lawyer and presbyter of the Church in Carthage, was the first to speak of God as a trinity, and as three persons in one substance. God is 'the Trinity,' which consists of three persons.' In regard to the Spirit, Tertullian seemed to connect Him with the Logos. He also explained the Holy Spirit as "proceeding from no other source than from the Father through the Son."

Origen (185-254) was the greatest contributor to the development of the Trinitarian doctrine in the Eastern Church, as Tertullian was in the Western Church. He was the first to teach "an eternal trinity of persons." The Son was not only eternal, but was eternally begotten by the Father. He concluded that there are three hypostases (persons), the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...The Holy Spirit is the most excellent and the first in order of all that was made by the Father through Christ...The Holy Spirit seems to have need of the Son, to minister to Him His essence, so as to enable Him not only to exist, but to be wise and reasonable and just.

The final result was the belief in one God who exists in three distinct essences (persons). The father is not begotten; the Son is begotten; and the spirit is proceeding. Each person in the trinity has a certain function in the divine economy, although each person participates in the work of the other two. The father is seen in creation, the Son in redemption, and the spirit in sanctification. These three are coeternal, coequal, and consubstantial. The trinity is an indivisible unity, the persons being distinct, yet not separate (22). This terminology presents a skewed view of that which would later become the orthodox view of the trinity.

Since that time the church forced with lance, sword and torture its doctrine upon all.

Chapter 4

Comments on the doctrine of Trinity by Christian scholars and researchers

A look at the Scriptures makes it plain the Trinitarian doctrine is not found in the Bible. It is the product of Greek speculation and a faulty interpretation of the Bible based on preconceived ideas. Today, the doctrine continues to generate more problems than it solves. It came about in an attempt to define the nature of the Godhead based on Jewish monotheism and gradually evolved into a threefold manifestation of the divinity. Unitarianism is also the result of the attempt to define the Godhead in terms of Jewish monotheism. It denies the divinity of Christ based on a faulty understanding of how the Jews viewed God. The Jews upheld a two power concept in their monotheism. Neither a threefold deity, nor a unitary deity, depicts the Bible revelation. Both the Old and New Testaments reveal God as a duality – God the Father and the Yahweh, the One who became Jesus Christ. Many clear and explicit texts uphold the binitarians view.

It is inconceivable to Trinitarians that the Old Testament says nothing about the Trinity. Many authors admit, however, that those who depend upon the Old Testament for any proof of the Trinity find none. Those who already believe in the trinity often see underlying suggestions of it in the Old Testament. The same is true in the New Testament. The doctrine of the Trinity is built upon assumption; it is found in the New Testament on the form of allusion rather than any solid teaching (21).

Trinity was the result of an irreconcilable argument between Jewish and Christian monotheism. It was believed the Jews had a firm conviction that there could not be the slightest hint of a multiplicity of Gods. And that they utterly rejected the fact that Jesus, who was God, had revealed the Father, who was God. For the Christians the dilemma was resolved by making the three one.

Augustine had argued that even one in the Trinity was a relationship rather than a person, the representation of three persons would be dissolved into a mist. The doctrine of the Trinity does not belong to the fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith and is not found in any singular New Testament passage (23).

During the early second century most theologians regarded the Holy Spirit to be a substance emanating from the Father and the Son. Even Justin had this view, regarding the Holy Spirit as a substance of all the gracious gifts proceeding from the Father (35). Church Fathers used the same tools as the pagan philosophers. The end result was that the concepts that were developed differed radically from the scriptures. Trinitarian doctrine ended up as mystical theology (23).

The Christianity that Jesus brought rapidly retired after the first century AD. There were a number of reasons. Many regarded the morality of the Gospel too severe. There were many popular pagan beliefs stored up from tradition. There was a lack of central authority, with the churches in a loose confederation. There was a misunderstanding of apostolic teachings. And there was a fusing of the Gospel with Hellenism (19).

Harnack tells us there was no definite doctrine of faith in the principal elements of Christianity. Harnack, of course, is referring to what Christianity became after the first century. The end result was speculation, rampant imagination, and a spiritual interpretation of the Old Testament (24).

The idea that the doctrine of the Trinity is a distinctively Christian concept is completely misleading. It is an idea that was formed after being adopted from Hellenism. The truth is: there is no doctrine of the trinity in the Bible and frankly no need for such a doctrine. The distinction between the Father and the Son is strictly a philosophical consideration, the product of metaphysics (25).

Trinitarians insist the doctrine of Trinity was revealed. That depends on how one determines revelation. One thing is certain: the doctrine was not revealed in the sense the Bible uses the word revelation; it decidedly was not revealed from heaven. No spokesman for God was inspired to speak God's words. It came about as a result of a derivation, and no language on earth can presume to define the inner nature of God (26).

The fact is: none of the various doctrines regarding the Trinity is satisfactory, and all of them, in one way or another, involve confusion. The modern, as well as the ancient views, create more problems than they solve. Every solution no matter how ingenious conceals the paradox one way or the other. The distinctions in the Godhead are ambiguous. There are contradictions that have generally not been recognized (34). There is artificiality in the threeness. The Question remains: How can three be one and one three? Is God a single center of self-consciousness, or is He three centers? If there are three centers of consciousness, are there not three Gods? The fact is: there is no way the human mind can make this concept actual. The doctrine of the trinity meets with bewilderment rather than faith (27).

The reader should be aware that the doctrine of the Trinity is not the product of early Christianity. It was not even expressed until the end of the second century. Novation of Rome wrote one of the earliest treatises regarding Trinity and at that time affirmed the existence of two Gods. Even after the Council of Nicea, there was no clear picture of the personality of the Holy Spirit and its relationship with the Father and the Son. The definition of the Holy Spirit given at the Council was so incomplete that it was a cause of schism between the Eastern and Western Church five hundred years later. What is clear is that as late as AD 170-180, the theological ideas about the Spirit had not been clarified, but by the end of the fourth century the debates included the Spirit as well as the Son (20).

The last stage in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity was accomplished by Augustine. He was the first one to give classic expression to the distinctive nature of the Spirit and where it fit into the Trinity. It was his view that the Spirit proceeded from both the Father and the Son, co-equally. He preserved the tradition of three persons in one substance but was never able to overcome the contradictions of mingling philosophy and religion. He held that the whole Godhead is active and involved in all that God does (40). The solution regarding the Holy Spirit was reached by putting to use arbitrary distinctions not found in the Bible (26).

Protestant reformers accepted the doctrine of the Trinity as formulated by the Creeds (39). Harnak says that Augustine's speculations could not give clear expression to its new and valuable thought and that the doctrine of the Trinity can scarcely be said to promote piety anywhere or anytime. Rather, it has drawn men's minds off the living realities of the historical Jesus (24).

In the actual life of Christendom, the doctrine of the Trinity has never been interwoven with thought and expression (21).

When the doctrine of the Trinity was formulated, it was only natural to bring the Holy Spirit into the equation. In its final form in the fifth century, the result was not a Trinity (a plurality of Gods) but a trinity (God is one, consisting of three persons). This unity, of course, was made up of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Without this unity the outcome would have been tritheism (the worship of three distinct Gods), which would have been nothing more than polytheism. There has been much difficulty in defining and defending this trinity, not only in admitting the "threeness" but in preserving the unity. There is difficulty in keeping the unity precise and clear when one or another of them exerts influence on the salvation of men. The fact is: the doctrine of the Trinity is the most abstract of concepts and perplexing even when regarded as vital (31). In effect, it has been basically absent from large areas of Christian thought (42). Furthermore, to try to define the relations between Father and Son, or to try to deduce the place and function of the Holy Spirit, is an attempt to set ourselves up as God, forgetting that His ways are not our ways (20).

After the council of Chalcedon in 451, the God of the Christians was now seen as having three essences, or natures, in the form of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of Trinity was far from being settled. Brutal punishments and even death did not stop the controversy over the doctrine of Trinity even today. The majority of Christians, when asked to explain this fundamental doctrine of their faith, can offer nothing more than "I believe it because I was told to do so." It is explained away as "mystery" – yet the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 14:33 that "**...God is not the author of confusion...**" (28).

A common argument used against Arius is that his views would have led to polytheism, and that they originated in paganism. Such an argument was first used by Athanasius who said that if Christ and the Father were separate entities as suggested by Arius, then the natural conclusion would be that there was a plurality of gods, and hence the heretic Arius was proposing polytheism.

Such a view is absurd. It assumes that Arius accepted a divine nature for Christ. However, Arius had identified a weakness in the argument for an eternal co-existent Christ alongside the Father, and had proved that Christ could not have been eternal, and therefore not equal to the Father. In fact, he had gone further, and said that Christ was inferior to the Father, but superior to creatures created by God.

An obvious implication of this statement bearing in mind his mentor Lucian's preference for the Jewish heritage is that Christ was actually a mortal Prophet of God (16).

The doctrines of Trinity, equality with Allah, and sonship, are repudiated as blasphemies in the Koran. Allah is independent of all needs and has no need for a son to manage his affairs.

In Islam the doctrine of Trinity is considered as clear polytheism, a matter that is totally rejected and forbidden by Allah. Trinity is denounced in the strongest language in the Koran. The Christians pervert words from their meanings when they say, "the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are one God".

Associating partners with Allah is considered in Islam as a mighty sin that is unforgivable under any circumstances unless the sinners sincerely repent and worship the One and only true God, Allah, without associating with Him any partners.

Allah forgiveth 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).

Allah forgiveth not (the sin of) joining other gods with Him; less than that He forgives to whomsoever He will. Whoso associates with Allah, has gone astray in far error (Al-Nisa, 116).

The Koran is very clear in rejecting Trinity:

They are unbelievers who say, 'Allah (God) is the third of three.' No God is there but one God. If they refrain not from what they say, there shall afflict those of them that disbelieve a painful chastisement (Al-Maidah, 73).

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

The Koran clearly emphasizes the Oneness of Allah:

**Say: 'He is Allah, the One
Allah, the Everlasting Refuge,
Who has not begotten, and has not been begotten,
And equal to Him is not anyone.' (Al-Ikhlâs 1-4).**

Just as in the earthly kingdom the worst crime is that of treason, as it cuts at the very existence of the state, so in the spiritual kingdom, the unforgivable sin is that of contumacious treason against Allah by putting up Allah's creatures in rivalry against Him. This is rebellion against the essence and source of spiritual life. But even here, if the rebellion is through ignorance, and is followed by sincere repentance and amendment, Allah's mercy is always open (29).

Allah shall turn only towards those who do evil in ignorance, then shortly repent; to them will Allah turn in mercy; Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

But Allah shall not turn towards those who do evil deeds until, when one of them is visited by death, he says, 'Indeed now I repent,' neither to those who die disbelieving; for them We have prepared a painful chastisement (Al-Nisa, 116).

Just as a foolish servant may go wrong by excess of zeal for his master, so in religion people's excess may lead them to blasphemy. The Koran condemns the Christian attitude which raises Jesus to an equality with Allah; in some cases venerates Mary almost to idolatry; attributes a physical soul to Allah; and invents the doctrine of Trinity, opposed to all reason, which according to the Athanasian Creed, unless a man believes, he is doomed to Hell.

Christ attributes are mentioned in the Koran: (1) that he was the son of woman, Mary, and therefore a man; (2) but a Messenger with a mission from Allah, and therefore entitled to honor; (3) a spirit proceeding from Allah, but not Allah: his life and mission were more limited than in the case of some other Messengers, though Muslims pay equal honor to him as a Prophet of Allah; (4) a Word bestowed on Mary, for he was created by Allah's Word "Be" (*Kun*) And he was.

The similitude of Jesus before Allah is that of Adam. He created him from dust, and then said to him: "Be". And he was (Al-Imran, 59).

Christ often watched and prayed, as a humble worshipper of Allah; and his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane was full of human dignity, suffering, and self-humiliation (Matt.xxvi. 36-45).

Allah says in the Koran:

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 in the earth; Allah suffices for a guardian.

The Messiah will not disdain to be a servant of Allah, neither the angels who are near stationed to Him. Whosoever disdains to serve Him, and waxes proud, He will assuredly muster them to Him, all of them (Al-Nisa 171, 172).

Allah sends down the angels with divinely inspired Messages, on whom He chooses of His servants as He will, enjoining them to inform people of the danger of polytheism and relate to them the fact: "There is no God but I, so fear me by abstaining from sins and evil deeds."

He sends down the angels with the Spirit of His command upon whomsoever He will among His servants, saying: 'Warn mankind that none has the right to be worshipped but I; so fear you Me.' (Al-Nahl, 2)

The Christians wonder if the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Koran is the third of three of their Trinity beliefs. The Holy Spirit in the Koran refers to the angle Gabriel and

has nothing to do with Trinity or part of a Trinity. The Task of Gabriel is to communicate divine revelations to the true prophets of Allah and give them help and support by Allah's leave. The Koran calls Gabriel: Holy Spirit, Our spirit, Honest Spirit and the Spirit.

Allah has spoken to Muhammad through the archangel Gabriel. Gabriel was sent to Muhammad with the Koran:

Say: 'The Holy spirit (Gabriel) sent it (the Koran) down from thy Lord in truth, and to confirm those who believe, and to be guidance and glad tidings to Muslims (An-Nahl, 102).

Say: 'Whosoever is an enemy to Gabriel – he it was that brought it (the Koran) down upon thy heart by the leave of Allah, confirming what was before it (Torah, Gospel), and for a guidance and good tidings to the believers. Whosoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and His Messengers, and Gabriel, and Michael – surely Allah is an enemy to the unbelievers.' And We have sent down unto thee signs, clear signs, and none disbelieves in them except the ungodly (Al-Baqarahh 97-99).

Gabriel was sent to Jesus with the Gospel:

And We gave Moses the Book, and after him We sent succeeding Messengers; and We gave Jesus son of Mary the clear signs (profound miracles), and confirmed him with the Holy Spirit; and whensoever there came to you a Messenger with that your souls had not desire for, did you become arrogant, and some cry lies to, and some slay? (Al-Baqarah, 87).

And those Messengers, some We have preferred above others; some there are to whom Allah spoke (Moses), and some He raised in rank. And We gave Jesus son of Mary the clear signs, and confirmed him with the Holy Spirit... (Al-Baqarah, 253).

When Allah said, 'Jesus son of Mary, remember My blessing upon thee and upon thy mother, when I confirmed thee with the Holy Spirit, to speak to men in the cradle, and of age; and when I taught thee the Book, the wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel...(Al-Ma'idah, 110).

Gabriel was sent to Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. Mary was unique, in that she gave birth to a son by a special miracle, without the intervention of the customary physical means. This of course does not mean that she was more than human. She had as much need to pray to Allah as anyone else. The Christian dogma, in all sects except the Unitarian, holds that Jesus was Allah or the son of Allah. The worship of Mary became the practice in the Roman Catholic Church, which calls Mary the "Mother of God". This seems to have been endorsed by the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.C., in the century before the Prophet of Islam was born to sweep away the corruption of the Church of Christ (29).

Mary withdrew from her family to an eastern chamber in the Jewish Temple to perform her religious observances:

And mention in the Book Mary when she withdrew from her people to an eastern place (Maryam, 16).

She veiled herself from her people since solitude best serves deep devotion. And there Allah sent to her his spirit Gabriel who distinguished his identity and appeared to her as a beautiful young man:

And she took a veil apart from them; then We sent unto her Our spirit that presented himself to her a man without fault (Maryam, 17).

When she saw a beautiful young man in her chamber she exclaimed: "I seek refuge from you to Allah, come not near me if you truly fear Allah:

She said, "I have refuge in the All-Merciful from thee! If thou fearest Allah." (Maryam, 18).

Gabriel said, "Nay, I am only a Messenger from your Lord to announce to you the gift of a holy son:

He said, "I am but a messenger come from thy Lord, to give thee a boy most pure (Maryam, 19).

Mary said, "How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, and I am not unchaste?"

She said, "How shall I have a son whom no mortal has touched, neither have I been unchaste?" (Maryam, 20).

Gabriel replied, "So it will be. Your lord said, 'That is easy for Me, and We wish to appoint him as a Sign unto men and a Mercy from Us; it is a matter decreed.'"

He said, "Even so thy Lord has said: 'Easy is that for Me; and that We may appoint him a Sign unto men and a Mercy from Us; it is a thing decreed (Maryam, 21).

It is said that Gabriel had merely breathed in the sleeve of Mary's shirt, and thus she conceived:

So she conceived him, and withdrew with him to a distant place (Maryam, 22).

The question at the council of Nicea was how to understand the relationship between God and Christ, who had become man. The two major questions were about God's inner nature and how he could be manifested in the flesh. Thodotus of Bezantium insisted that Christ was merely a man who had been given the Holy Spirit at baptism. Arius feared the glory of God would be diminished if the son was regarded equal with the Father. In the end, the argument came down to two words – homoousia and hoomoiouosios, that is, "like substance" or "equality of attributes."

Athnasiaus held firm to homoousia – "like substance" – because hoomoiouosios – "equality of attributes" – meant there would be aspects in which Christ would not be

like the Father. His view eventually prevailed, but divisions in the Church have remained for centuries. The Arian controversy brought forth the affirmation that while there is one essence and one unity in the Godhead, there are in that unity three external modes of existence, which are now called hypostases (21).

What the Nicene Council really did was to sustain the non rational concept of Trinitarian theology that it was not irrational but was beyond reason (20). The fact is, the theological distinction between words was arbitrary. The Emperor sided with the orthodox view but society as a whole, which was heathen, sided with the anti-Nicenes. The whole issue was unintelligible to the laity and to most of the bishops. The majority of the bishops accepted the orthodox view even though they did not understand what was being said (17).

The issue at stake was the attempt by the Arians to separate Christ from God and to relegate Him to the status of mediator and a partial revelation of what God is (26). The Nicene Creed was intended to test the orthodoxy of the bishops, not the faith of those being baptized (20). The result of the Nicene council was that dogmatics became anti-rational and was separated from clear thinking, defensible concepts. The propensity for mystery created a doctrine that was a true mystery. The educated lay members viewed the orthodox formula as an unexplainable mystery and not as an expression of their faith. The whole Logos doctrine had become unintelligible to the laity. The accepted view was that Christianity is the revelation of something incapable of being understood. The duty of the people was to merely believe. The result was that worship became directed from Christ to the bones of Martyrs, image worship, adulation of angels and martyrs, crosses and amulets, and the magical worship of the Mass (23).

The Unitarian denomination of Christianity has kept alive the teachings of Arius in saying that God (Allah) is one; they do not believe in the Trinity. As a result, main stream Christians abhor them, and the National Council of churches has refused their admittance. In Unitarianism, the hope is kept alive that Christians will someday return to the true preaching of Jesus: "**...Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shall thou serve.**" (Luke 4: 8). (29).

Historical records of that era record that there had been no less than twelve emperors of Rome within a very short space of time. Each emperor ruled for an average of three years, and all died an unnatural death.

Constantine preferred and adopted the Trinitarian teachings because they were in line with the pagan religions of Rome whose gods had sons and daughters. The benefit of doing so was that Christians became during this historically troubled time, his supporters instead of adversaries. The pagan citizens of Rome rose very little objection and accepted the new religion in their society due to the similarity of their own. One must remember that although Paul had abandoned the essence of the Nazarene belief, in favor of his own innovation of the sonship of Jesus which became the foundation of Trinity later on, he left the moral and ethical values of the Nazarenes intact. After Constantine's conversion to Christianity, these values were free to influence the pagan Roman society. Through Constantine's stratagem, the citizens of Rome were now more inclined to be law abiding. This not only eased his

role as emperor but strengthened his position, and so, unlike his predecessors he ruled over the Roman Empire for many years.

Several scholars are of the opinion that Constantine's conversion was of political nature. It is significant that even after his conversion to Christianity, he retained the figure of Apollo upon his seal with the inscription: 'to the invincible Sun, my companion.' As regards the character of the first Christian Emperor, Davenport call him "the second Nero" and remarks that he "drowned his wife in boiling water; put to death his own son Crispus; murdered the two husbands of his sisters, Constantia and Anastia; murdered his nephew, the son of his sister Constantia, a boy only twelve years of age, together with some others not so nearly related, among whom was Spouter, a pagan priest, who refused to give him absolution for the murder of his father in law." (28).

Ever since the conversion of Constantine and the establishment of Christianity as the state-religion of the Byzantine Empire, two factors have played a most conspicuous part in the history of the Christian Church, viz., superstition and persecution.

It is an undeniable fact that the rise of Christianity synchronized with the extinction of the last flames of Greco-Roman intellectual culture and the subsequent commencement of that dark and semi-barbaric era of European history in which both intellectual enlightenment and moral earnestness were wanting. How wretched Europe's condition became and remained until recent times can be read in Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Professor's Lecky's *History of Europeans Morals and Rise and Influence of Rationlism in Europe*, Draper's *Conflict between Religion and Science*, and a number of other standard books (1).

That Christianity was directly and mainly responsible for that mental and moral degeneration of Europe is born out by the fierce and prolonged war which she waged against the forces of enlightenment and progress.

The Roman Catholic fathers vied with each other in denouncing secular learning as satanic. St. Augustine in his Retraction stigmatized Plato and Platonists as impious men. Pope Gregory, in a letter to Desiderus, bishop of Nienne, reprehended him because he was teaching grammar and described even elementary secular culture as "horrible and execrable." The parliament of Paris (1642) prohibited under pain of punishment any improved chemical research. The Papal Bulletin issued in the enlightened nineteenth century (1864) laid down the law: "If any one says that the Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself with progress, liberalism and modern civilization, let him be anathema." (Quoted by Dean W.R. Inge in *the Church in the World*, P. 52).

"The period of Catholic ascendancy," says Professor Lecky, "is on the whole the most deplorable in the history of mankind."

But then, the reformed Church was as great as criminal as the Catholic. The protestant authorities at Wittenburg strictly forbade the teaching of the new revelations of the telescope, and the professors had to take oath that they would teach only the old system.

It is evident that a creed which thrives on ignorance and superstition can maintain its prestige, nay its very existence, only by employing the weapon of persecution. Naturally, therefore, the Christian Church resorted to it as soon as Constantine extended to it the patronage of his state and reorganized it at the council of Nice (325 (A.C.)).

"It was at the Council of Nice," says Davenport, "that Constantine invested the priesthood with that power whence flowed the most disastrous consequences."

This is expressed in the massacres and devastations of nine mad crusades of Christians against unoffending Turks, during nearly two hundred years, in which many millions of human beings perished; the massacres of the Anabaptists, from the Rhine to the extremity of the North; the massacres ordered by Henry VIII and his daughter Mary; the massacres of St. Bartholomew in France; and forty years more of other massacres between the time of Francis I and the entry of Henry IV into Paris; the massacres of the inquisition, which are more execrable still as being judicially committed, to say nothing of the immune rabble schisms and twenty years of popes against popes, bishops against bishops, the poisonings, the assassinations, the cruel rapines, and insolent pretensions of more than a dozen popes, who far exceeded Nero or a Caligula in every species of crime, vice and wickedness; and lastly, to conclude this frightful list, the massacre of twelve millions of the inhabitants of the new world, executed crucifix in hand (28).

"No wild beasts," remarked Emperor Julian, "are as hostile to man as Christian sects in general are to one another."

A diplomatic secretary of Pope Pius VII declared that "it was of the essence of the Catholic religion to be intolerant (30).

As for Protestantism: "Persecution is the deadly original sin of the reformed church, that which cools every honest man's zeal for their cause, in proportion as his reading becomes more expansive(31).

"The Christian Church," said Rev. Charles Voysey in a sermon preached at the theistic Church, London, October 22nd, 1905, "has been crueller and shed more human blood than any other Church or institution in the world."

Unfortunately for Christianity, however, her policy of persecution could not prove successful for long. The Church could not keep her pagan heritage of primitive superstitions immune once the pioneers of scientific learning had made up their minds to fight a decisive war, and this occurred when the light of science emanated from the European and Asiatic universities of Islam had succeeded in finally disturbing the gloom of Christendom. Christianity had to suffer a crushing defeat (1).

It is clear from the foregoing interpretations that the traditional Christianity – the Christianity of the Bible, of St. Paul and other apostles, of the early fathers of the Churches cannot prove its *bona fides* and cannot, therefore, survive the scientific historical criticism. The Christian leaders are conscious of it, but their inherited emotional attachment to the Church makes it impossible for them to see straight and solve the enigma by direct method. They hoodwink and deceive not only the Christian

masses but also the world at large. They catch hold of one subterfuge and when that fails, they manufacture another (1).

Chapter 5

The true religion of Jesus

Historical facts reveal that Jesus did not call his divine Message Christianity. He and his followers worshipped Allah in the temple which other Israelites used. The Message of Jesus was to call the Children of Israel back to the monotheistic religion of Abraham and Moses from which they had gone astray.

Nazareth is the town in which Prophet Jesus started preaching. The true followers of Jesus were not called 'Christians' but Nazarenes. The Nazarenes are a sect of Judaism who followed Prophet Jesus of Nazarene. Jesus has never called his followers 'Christians', they were known as only Nazarenes.

After the disappearance of Jesus, Paul declared that belief in Jesus sufficed for salvation. The Jewish scholars at that time called the followers of Jesus the misguided sect of Nazarene or Galileans. In 43 C.E., when Paul and Barnabas went to Antioch to preach, they were ridiculed and were called Christians by the masses. The ones who were called Christians felt that if they are being given a name in reference to Jesus, there is nothing wrong in accepting it. Christian is the name given by Paul to his followers. A present day analogy may be the case of Muslims being called Mohammedans, a matter that is totally rejected by Muslims.

Jesus taught exactly what Moses taught 2000 years before him:

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God (Allah), the Lord is one. Love the Lord your god with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind and with all your strength." (Deuteronomy 6: 4-5).

Worshipping the One and only God can also be seen in Deuteronomy 6: 13 **"Fear the Lord your God, serve Him only and take your oaths in His name."**; Deuteronomy 5: 7 **"You shall have no other God besides me"**; Isaiah 43: 11 **"Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord and besides Me, there is no savior."**; Hosea 13: 4 **"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no savior except Me."**; Psalms 95: 6-7 **"O come, let us bow down and worship, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker. For we the people of His pasture and the sheep of His voice and He is our God."**

Jesus rebuked Satan for desiring the worship of others than Allah: **"Away from me, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only."** (Matthew 4: 10).

Jesus said to Mary Magdalene: **"Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father (John xx. 17).**

In Mark xii. 25 Jesus says: **"The first of all the Commandments is, Hear O Israel: the Lord, our God is One Lord."**

Jesus did not say he is the son of Allah, or the savior sent to redeem mankind of its sins. He did not say anything to what people are instructed to repeat to be 'born again' in Christ: "You should individually receive me, accept me as the son of God, your personal Lord and savior who will die on the cross for your sins and will rise from the dead. Let the holy spirit fill you..."

Jesus taught the same eternal truth all Prophets of Allah taught to their people: Allah is one, worship Him alone. He never claimed any qualities of divinity, nor did he claim that he deserved to be worshipped. He did not say that he was the son of Allah or part of a trinity, but rather that he was only a servant of Allah sent to the Jews to bring them back to the true religion, worshipping one God and following His instruction.

The Message of Allah to humanity, which is to worship Him alone, and to live according to His system of faith, was revealed to Adam, who passed it on to his children. All the subsequent revelations to Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and finally Muhammad are in conformity with that Message. Thus, Islam views any contradictions among revealed religions as man-made elements introduced into these religions. The position of Jesus in the three major creeds-Judaism, Christianity, and Islam- is not an exception.

The Prophets of Allah are all related. The Prophet of Islam said, **"I am the most worthy of Issa bin Marium (Jesus the son of Mary) in this life and in the Hereafter."** His companions asked, "Why is that O Messenger of Allah?" He replied, **"The Prophets are parental (bloodline) brethren (from father's side). Their mothers may be different (races, peoples, bloodlines) yet their Deen (religion) is always one (Islam)."** (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

Therefore all the Prophets and Messengers are a fraternity of brethren through the lineage of their fathers. Even Jesus who was born without a father his mother was a descendant from the lineage of Isaac and Jacob.

This shows that he who disputes the validity of one of the true prophets and Messengers has in fact reviled and disputed all of them. Disbelieving in one Prophet or Messenger is disbelief in all the Prophets and Messengers. Islam views this as an act of blasphemy.

Allah says:

The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each believes in Allah, His Angels, His books, and His Messengers. (They say), 'We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers' (Al-Baqarah, 285).

The only accepted religion with Allah is Islam. Islam is the religion of all prophets. Allah says:

"Truly the religion with Allah is Islam." (Al-Imram, 19).

All the Prophets and Messengers were sent to call people to worship only Allah and to disavow all other deities. All the Prophets and messengers called their respective people to Islam.

Noah called his people to Islam Allah says in the Koran:

(Noah said) but if you turn away (from accepting Islamic monotheism) then no reward have I asked you, my reward is only from Allah, and I have been commanded to be of the Muslims. (Yunus, 72).

Abraham and Jacob called to Islam: Allah says:

"And who turns away from the religion of Abraham (Islamic monotheism) except him who befools himself? Truly, We chose him in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous.

When His Lord said to him, 'Submit (be a Muslim)! He said, 'I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of all that exists.'

And this (submission to Allah in Islam) was enjoined by Abraham upon his sons and by Jacob saying, 'O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion.

**Die not then except in the Faith of Islam (as Muslims)'.
Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob? When he said to his sons,**

**'What will you worship after me (my death)?'
They said, 'We shall worship your God (Allah) and the God of your fathers,**

Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac. The One God, and to him we submit (in Islam).'" (Al-Baqarah, 130-133).

Moses came with nothing other but Islam. Allah says:

"And Moses said, 'O my people! If you have believed in Allah, then put your trust in Him if you are Muslims.'" (Yunus, 84).

"Joseph supplicated: "My Lord! You have indeed bestowed on me of the sovereignty, and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams – the (Only) Creator of the heavens and the earth! You (O Allah) are my Wali (protector, helper, supporter, and guardian) in this world and in the Hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim (submitting to you alone) and join me with the righteous." (Yusuf, 101).

In their footsteps Jesus came to call his people to Islam. Allah says:

"Then when Issa (Jesus) came to know of their unbelief, he said: 'who will be my helpers in Allah's cause?' The disciples said: 'We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims.'" (Al-Imran, 52).

Then came the last Warner Muhammad, the seal of the prophets, to call all of humanity to Islam. Allah says in the Koran:

"This day I have perfected your religion for you (all humanity), completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (Al-Maidah, 3).

In that sense, Jesus was a Muslim and called his people to submit to Allah in Islam (32).

The Christians went too far in the veneration of their Prophet Jesus. They corrupted his teachings by attributing to him things that he never stated for himself. They elevated him to the status of Allah or the son of Allah! This paganistic status nullified whatever monotheistic faith Jesus taught them.

Is Jesus God? Is he a second person in the Holy Trinity? The Bible itself belies this claim.

When speaking of the Day of Judgment, Jesus clearly gave evidence of a limitation on his knowledge when he said, "**But of the day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the father.**" (Mark 13: 32 and Matt 24: 36).

That Jesus, of his own admission, did not know when the Day of Judgment would be, is clear proof that Jesus is not All-knowing, and that Jesus is therefore not God.

While Jesus performed many miracles, he himself admitted that the power he had was not his own, but derived from God. He said, "**Verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the father do...**" (John 5: 19). Again he said, "**I can of my own self do nothing: As I hear I judge, and my judgment is just because I seek not my own will but the will of the father who has sent me.**" (John 5: 30).

That Jesus of his own admission could do nothing on his own is clear proof that he is not All-Powerful, and that he is not God.

God is the ultimate judge and refuge for all, and He does not call upon nor pray to any others. But Jesus acknowledged that there was one whom he worshipped and to whom he prayed when he said, "**I ascend unto my Father, and to my God and to your God.**" (John 20: 17). He is also reported to have cried out while on the cross, "**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**" (Matt 27: 46).

If Jesus were God, would that not be pure nonsense? When Jesus prayed to his Lord, was he praying to himself? When in the garden of Gethsemane he prayed, "**O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: Nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt.**" (Matt 26: 36-39) was Jesus praying for himself?

That Jesus, of his own admission, and by his own actions, acknowledged, worshipped and prayed to another being as God, is clear proof that Jesus himself is not God.

While thousands saw Jesus and heard his voice, Jesus himself said that this could not be done with God when he said, "**No man hath seen God at any time.**" (John 1: 18) "**Ye have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His shape.**" (John 5: 37). He also said in John 4: 24, "**God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.**"

That Jesus would say that no one had seen and heard God at any time, while his followers both saw and heard him, is clear proof that Jesus was not God.

Jesus acknowledged someone greater than himself whose will was distinct from his own. In John 14: 28 Jesus said, **"My father is greater than I."** When someone referred to him as a "good master" in Luke 18: 19, Jesus responded, **"Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God..."** Jesus also drew clear distinctions between himself and God when he said, **"I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself but He sent me."** (John 8: 42). Furthermore, Jesus gave clear evidence of his subordination to God, rather than his equality with God, when he said in Luke 22: 42, **"Not my will but thine be done,"** and in John 5: 30, **"I seek not my own will but the will of the father who has sent me."**

That Jesus would admit that he did not come into the world on his own initiative but was directed to do so, that he would acknowledge another being as greater than himself, and that he would negate his own will in deference to affirming the will of another, give clear proof that Jesus is not the Supreme One and therefore Jesus is not God (33).

The eminent Islamic scholar, Ibn al-Qayyim al-Joseiah has a famous poem refuting the divinity of Jesus:

To the worshippers of the Messiah (Isa) we put forth a question
We seek an answer from those who have comprehension
If a god was to be put to death by a people, can he be truly godly?
Stranger than a god being interned in a grave, is being confined in a womb
Remaining for nine months in darkness; nourished from his mother's blood
Finally the birth canal exiting a small weak child with open mouth seeking a breast to suckle
But sucking necessitates urination and defecation
Is this the god that you claim? (24).

Jesus was a man who was chosen by Allah as a caller to guidance and righteousness. His mother Mary never claimed that she was a mother of God, or that her son was God. She was a pious and a virtuous woman.

Jesus was like any other human being. It is common knowledge that whoever is born cannot be deified. Jesus Christ was a human being who used to drink and eat just like anybody else. He was susceptible to hunger, thirst, grief and merriment.

Allah says in the Koran:

"The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger; Messengers before him passed away; his mother was a just woman; they both ate food. Behold, how We make clear the signs to them; then behold, how they perverted are! (Al-Maidah, 75).

The miraculous creation of Jesus from no father is no stranger than that of Adam, a being who was both fatherless and motherless. The miraculous creation of Adam and Jesus is evidence of Allah's Omnipotence.

Allah says in the Koran:

"Verily, the likeness of Îsa (Jesus) before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him (Adam) from dust, then (He) said to him: 'Be' – and he was." (Al-Imran, 59).

Surely the creation of a complete physical man from dust is greater than the creation of Jesus. If Adam is not thought of as being divine, then why has the same claim been made for Jesus?

Chapter 6

Jesus in the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet

Muslims believe in the Absolute Oneness of Allah, who is a Supreme Being free of human limitations, needs and wants. He has no partners in His Divinity. He is the Creator of everything and is completely separate of His creation, and all worship is to be directed to him alone. This was the Message brought by all Prophets of Allah, including Jesus.

Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of Jesus by saying:

"Whoever believes there is no God but Allah, alone without partner, that Muhammad is His Messenger, that Jesus is a servant and Messenger of Allah, his word breathed into Mary and a spirit emanating from Him, and that Paradise and Hell are true, shall be received by Allah into Heaven. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 4, Hadith No. 64).

According to the early religious scholars from among the companions of the Prophet and their students, there is a rule to distinguish between the two nouns in the genitive construction: 1) when one of the two nouns is Allah and the other is a person or a thing, e.g. Allah's house; Allah's Messenger; Allah's slave; Allah's spirit; the rule for the above words is that the second noun, e.g. house, Messenger, slave or spirit is created by Allah and is honorable in His Sight. Similarly, Allah's spirit may be understood as the spirit of Allah, in fact it is a soul created by Allah, i.e. Jesus. And it was His Word: 'Be!' – And he was i.e. Jesus was created like Adam.

2) When one of the two nouns is Allah and the second is neither a person nor a thing, then it is not a created thing but is a quality of Allah e.g. Allah's knowledge; Allah's life; Allah's statement, Allah's self.

No other religion in the world dignifies Jesus as Islam does. The Koran confirms his virgin birth, and Mary is considered to have been one of the purest women in all creation. The Koran describes Jesus' birth as follows:

"Behold!" the angel said, Allah has chosen you, and purified you, and chosen you above the women of all nations. Mary, Allah gives you good news of a word from Him, whose name shall be the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, honored in this world and in the Hereafter, and one of those brought near to Allah. He shall speak to the people from his cradle and in maturity, and he shall be of the righteous. She said: 'My Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me?' He said: 'Even so; Allah creates what He will. When He decrees a thing, He says to it, 'Be!' and it is.'" (Al-Imran 42-47).

"Behold! The angels said, 'Oh Mary! Allah gives you glad tidings of a Word from Him. His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the Hereafter, and in (the company) those nearest to Allah. He shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. He shall be (in the company) of the righteous...and Allah will teach him the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel'" (Al-Imran 45-48).

The Koran teaches that Jesus was born immaculately, and through the same power which had brought Adam into being without a father or a mother.

"Truly, the likeness of Jesus with Allah is as the likeness of Adam. He created him of dust, and then said to him, 'Be!' and he was." (Al-Imran, 59).

During Jesus Prophetic mission, he performed many miracles.

"I have come to you with a sign from your Lord" I make for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breath into it and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave. And I heal the blind, and the lepers, and I raise the dead by Allah's leave. (Al-Imran, 49).

The Koran tells us that Jesus came to teach the same basic Message which was taught by all previous Prophets who came before him: shun every false god and worship only the one true God, Allah.

"When Jesus came with Clear Signs, he said: 'Now I have come to you with Wisdom, and in order to make clear to you some of the (points) on which you dispute. Therefore, fear Allah and obey me. Allah, He is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him – this is a straight path.' But sects from among themselves fell into disagreement. So woe to the wrongdoers, from the penalty of a grievous Day!" (Az-Zukhruf 63-65).

Jesus came to confirm that which was before him of the Torah.

"To attest the Law which was before me, and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden you; I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, so fear Allah and obey me." (Al-Imran, 50).

Jesus and Muhammad, as well as all other Prophets were sent to confirm the belief in one Lord, Allah. As indicated in the Koran, Jesus said to his people:

"Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (alone). This is the straight path." (Al-Imran, 51).

Jesus never claimed any qualities of divinity, nor did he claim that he deserved to be worshipped. He did not say that he was the son of Allah (God) or part of the trinity, but rather that he was only the servant of Allah sent to the Jews to bring them back to the Law, the true religion of Moses, which instructed people to worship only the one God and follow His instructions. Allah says in the Koran:

"He (Jesus) said: 'I am indeed a servant of Allah. He has given me revelation and made me a Prophet; He had made me blessed wheresoever I be; and He has enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live. He has made me kind to my mother, and not overbearing or miserable. So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)!' Such was Jesus the son of Mary. It is a statement of truth, about which they (vainly) dispute. It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allah that He should beget a son.

Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it, 'Be' and it is." (Maryam 30-35).

The Koran states that Jesus was only taken as an object of worship as a result of lies which people invented against him. Allah narrates of Jesus in the Koran:

**"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 associates 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, 72).**

In this connection, the Prophet of Islam said, **"Whoever dies while still invoking anything other than Allah as a rival to Allah, will enter Hell."** (Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 6, Hadith No. 24).

Allah says about the doctrine of 'trinity':

**They are unbelievers who say, 'Allah is the third of three.' No Allah is there but one Allah.
If they refrain not from what they say, there shall afflict those of them that disbelieve a painful chastisement.
Will they not turn to Allah and pray His forgiveness?
Allah is all-Forgiving, all-Compassionate.
The Messiah son of Mary was only a Messenger; Messengers before him passed away; his mother was a just woman; they both ate food. Behold, how We make clear the signs to them; then behold, how they perverted are!** (Al-Maidah, 73-75).

In the Koran Allah warned the people of the Book (Christians) not to carry their religious beliefs to excess and beyond the truth, nor should they relate to Allah but the truth. Jesus the son of Mary, the Apostle of Allah, is simply His Word to Mary and a Spirit that proceeded from Him and was conveyed to Mary by the Spirit Gabriel. Therefore the Christians had better believe in Allah and acknowledge His Apostles and stop saying 'Allah in Trinity'; this is only to their benefit. Allah is only and absolutely One, glory be to Him and extolled are His glorious attributes; far be he beyond comprehension; His Omnipotence precludes begetting a son, when all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth belong to Him, and Allah is all-Sufficient as a disposer of affairs. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, shall not turn indignant for being a servant of Allah nor shall the angels nearest to Allah, and he whosoever disdains to serve Allah must realize that all people shall be thronged to his august presence in the Day of Judgment.

People of the Book (Christians), 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 it is 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 in the earth, Allah suffices for a guardian (Al-Maidah, 171).

The Messiah will not disdain to be a servant of Allah, neither the angels who are near stationed to Him.

Whosoever disdains to serve Him, and waxes proud, he will assuredly muster them to Him, all of them (An-Nisa, 172).

It is not in reason or in the nature of things that Jesus as Allah's Messenger should preach against Allah and claims that he is Allah or the son of Allah. Jesus came to preach and convey the true Message of Allah. Jesus was a Prophet, and the Holy Spirit with which he was strengthened was the angel Gabriel who brought the Gospel to him.

The Koran teaches:

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).

As mentioned earlier, the Koran clearly states that infidels indeed are those who declare that Allah is the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary. Allah commanded Muhammad to say to them, 'Who then can restrain Allah in any way, if He willed to destroy the Messiah, the son of Mary, his mother and all that is on the earth! To Allah alone, belong all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth and all that lies in between, He creates and brings into being whom and whatever He will; He is indeed Omnipotent.

Allah says in His last Revelation:

They are unbelievers who say, '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).

The Koran also stated that, wrapped in their imagination, the Jews and the Christians say, 'We are the sons of Allah and His beloved.' Allah commanded Muhammad to say to them, 'Why then He punish you and afflict you with pain and suffering in requital for your evil deeds! Indeed but you are creatures who constitute a part of those He brought into being and caused to exist. He forgives whom He will and to Allah and to Him alone belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth and all that lies between them, and to Him is the end and the purpose for which all are destined.

Say the Jews and the Christians, 'We are the sons of Allah, and His beloved ones.'

Say: 'why then does He chastise you for your sins?'

No; you are mortals of His creating; He forgives whom He will, and chastises whom He will.'

For to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and of the earth, and all that is between them; to Him is the homecoming (Al-Maidah, 18).

This refrain in the last verse negates the idea of sonship and the idea of an exclusive 'Beloved'. In both cases it means that Allah is independent of physical relationships or exclusive partiality (29).

The Jews, Christians and pagans said that Allah has begotten a son. According to the Koran, this kind of belief is a grievous sin in the sight of Allah.

That is Jesus, son of Mary, in word of truth, concerning which they are doubting. It is not for Allah to take a son unto Him. Glory be to Him! When He decrees a thing, He but says to it "Be", and it is. (Maryam 34, 35).

And they say, 'The all-Merciful has taken unto himself a son.' You have indeed advanced something hideous. The heavens are well nigh rent of it and the earth split asunder, and the mountains well nigh fall down crashing for that they have attributed to the all-Merciful to take a son. None is there in the heavens and earth but he comes to the all-Merciful as a servant (Maryam 88-93).

Allah ordered His prophet Muhammad to say to those who believe in the son ship of Jesus that He is infinitely Independent and Absolute. Allah further commanded His Prophet to ask them if they have proof to evidence their false allegation! Do they relate to Allah what they do not know or are able to prove! The Prophet was commanded to say to them, 'Those who invent a lie against Allah shall never prosper.' A little enjoyment in this world then to Allah will be their return, and then shall He make them taste the severest penalty for their blasphemies.

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 Muhammad said, "Allah said, **'The son of Adam tells lies against Me though He has no right to do so, and he abuses Me though he has no right to do so. As for his telling lies against Me, he claims that I cannot re-create him as I created him before; and as for his abusing Me, it is his statement that I have a son. No! Glorified is me! I am far from taking a wife or a son.** (Sahih Al-bukhari, Vol. 6, Hadith No. 9).

Allah commanded Muhammad to say to the Jews and Christians that if they had believed in Muhammad and warded off evil (sins, ascribing partners to Allah) and had become pious, Allah would indeed have expiated from them their sins and admitted them to gardens of pleasure in paradise. And if only they had acted according to the Torah, the Gospel, and what has now been sent down to them from their Lord (the Koran), they would surely have gotten provision from above them and from underneath their feet. There are from among them people who are on the right path

(Abdullah ibn Salam, the pontiff and leader of the Jews who embraced Islam at the time of the Prophet) but many of them do evil deeds. Allah also warned the Prophet that the Koran as the last divine revelation to mankind will increase in most of the Jews and the Christians their obstinate rebellion and disbelief. So he must not be sorrowful over the people who disbelieve.

But had the people of the Book believe and been god-fearing, we would have acquitted them of their evil deeds, and admitted them to Gardens of bliss. Had they performed the Torah and the Gospel, and what was sent down to them from their Lord (the Koran), 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.

Say: "People of the Book, you do not stand on anything, until you perform the Torah and the Gospel, and what was sent down to you from your Lord." And what has been sent down to thee from thy Lord (the Koran) will surely increase many of them in insolence and unbelief; so grieve not for the people of the unbelievers (Al-Maidah 65, 66, 68).

At the time of Muhammad there were sincere Christians that appreciated Muslim virtues, as did the Abyssinians to Whom Muslim refugees went during the persecution in Makkah. Allah informed Muhammad that he will find the Jews the strongest in enmity to the Muslims and also those who incorporate with Allah other deities. And he will find that the nearest among them in love to the Muslims those who declare that they are Christians. This is because among them there are priests and monks who fear Allah, and they are not arrogant. And when they listen to the Koran they are excited to tears at the truth which they recognize and they say: 'O Allah, our Creator, we have recognized the truth, our Lord we believe; write us down among the witnesses. And why we do not recognize Allah with all our hearts and give credence to the truth which we have received, when we do hope that Allah would admit us to the company of the righteous. In response to their recognition of the truth, Allah shall grace them with a distinguished reward. They shall be admitted to gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein they will live forever - whereas those who rejected Allah's faith and belied His Signs shall be companions of Hell-fire.

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 no proud, and when they hear what was 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 in the truth that has come to us, (Islamic Monotheism).

And we wish that our Lord will admit us along with the righteous people (Prophet Muhammad and his companions).

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 a scene of the Day of Reckoning is put before us showing the responsibility and the limitations of all the Prophets of Allah sent to preach His Message to men, with special reference to the Message of Jesus. On that Day Allah will gather all the Prophets and ask them about the response they got from the people to whom they were sent, and they will say: 'Glory be to You, but you are the Omniscient of all that is unknown and of all that is invisible, to mankind, and of all their private thoughts and feelings.'

Allah gives us a glimpse of what will be spoken by Jesus on the Day of Judgment in defense of himself and proclaiming his innocence from the unjustified claims of those who ascribed to him abominable lies.

In a solemn scene before the Court of Judgment, Allah shall address Jesus before his people, thus: 'Do you remember O Jesus My divine favor on your mother; how I supported you with the Holy Spirit so that you spoke to people while you were an infant in the cradle and then in manhood. And I taught you the Book and wisdom. The Torah and the Gospel, and enabled you to make out of clay the figure of a living bird by My leave, and made you restore the sight of the congenitally blind and heal the leper by My leave, and with my delegated authority raise the dead by My leave. And do you remember how I held back the Children of Israel from you when they resolved to kill you as you came to them with divine and clear revelations, but the infidels among them said, 'This is nothing but evident magic!' And do you remember how I inspired the disciples to have faith in Me and acknowledging your Apostleship and how they responded favorably and conformed their will to My Will and bowed to Me as Muslims.

"And behold!" Allah will say in the Court of Judgment: "Did you Jesus, the son of Mary, ask the people to take you and your mother as two gods besides Allah and pay you the same tribute that is dutiful only to Me!"

Jesus will say, "Glory be to you, and extolled are Your glorious attributes; never could I say what I had no right to say, if I have uttered it, You would have known it, You can read my thoughts whereas I cannot possibly read Your thoughts; You are the Omniscient of all that is unknown. I never said to them but what You had commanded me to say: 'to worship Allah my Lord and your Lord', and I was a witness over them as long as I lived among them, and when you ordained that I depart life, you were the Watcher over them, You are the Witness of all things in all respects. If you punish them, they are Your servants, and if You forgive them, You are the Exalted in power, the Wise."

There and then says Allah, "This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth; theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow – they shall abide therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him. That is the great success (29).

The Koran says in this respect:

The Day when Allah shall gather the Messengers and say, 'What answer were you given?' They shall say, 'We have no knowledge; Thou art the Knower of the things unseen.'

When Allah said, 'Jesus son of maryam (Mary), remember My blessing upon thee and upon thy mother, when I confirmed thee with the holy spirit, to speak to men in the cradle, and of age; and when I taught thee the Book, the wisdom, the

Torah, the Gospel; and when thou creatist out of clay, by My leave, as the likeness of a bird, and thou breathest into it, and it is a bird, by My leave; and thou healest the blind and the leper by My leave, and thou bringest the dead forth by My leave; and when I restrained from thee the Children of Israel when thou camest unto them with the clear signs, and the unbelievers among them said, 'This is nothing but socery manifest.'

And when I inspired the disciples: 'Believe in Me and My Messenger (Jesus)'; they said, 'We believe; witness thou our submission.'"

And when Allah said, "O Jesus son of Maryam, did you say unto men, 'Take me and my mother as gods apart from Allah?'"

He (Jesus) said, 'Glory is to You! It is not mine to say what I have no right to. If I indeed said it You would surely have known it. You know what is in my inner self though I do not know what is in yours; truly, You, only You, are the All-knower of the unseen. I only said to them what you did command me to say:

"Serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them, while I remained among them; but when you took me up, You were the watcher over them; and You are a witness to all things. If you chastisest them, they are your servants; and if You forgive them, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.'

Allah said, 'This is the day the truthful shall be profited by their truthfulness. For them await gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever and ever, Allah being well-pleased with them and they well-pleased with Him; that is the mighty triumph.' (Al-Maidah 109-111, 116-119).

It should be pointed out that the words "by My leave" are repeated with each miracle to emphasize the fact that they arose, not out of the power or will of Jesus, but by the leave and will and power of Allah, who is supreme over Jesus as He is over all other mortals (29).

Allah clarified in the Koran that Jesus was not crucified; rather, it was made to seem that way to the Jews, and that Allah raised him to the Heavens. It was the plan of Jesus' enemies to crucify him, but Allah saved him and raised him up to Him. The likeness of Jesus was put over another man. Jesus' enemies took this man and crucified him, thinking that he was Jesus.

Allah says:

"And when Allah said: 'O Jesus! I will take you and lift you up to Me, and purify you of those who disbelieve, and will make those who followed you above those who disbelieved until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me shall you all return, and I shall judge between you in that which you dispute'" (Al-Imran 54 ,55).

"And for their saying (in boast): 'We killed Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah'; but they killed him not nor crucified him. Only a likeness of that was shown to them. And those who differ therein are full of doubt with no certain knowledge, but only follow mere conjecture, for a surety they killed him not. But Allah lifted him up to Him, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. And there is none of the people of the Book, but will believe in him before his death, and on the Day of Judgment, he will be a witness against them.'" (An-Nissa 157-159).

These verses tell us that Jesus was lifted up to the heaven and was not crucified. His opponents from Jews misled the king of that time, as they wanted to slay Jesus and crucify him. The Koran does not explain, though, who was the person crucified instead of Jesus.

One of the fundamental beliefs of Christianity is that Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. The Bible on the other hand refutes this belief. Based on the verses of the Bible, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee were with Jesus before the chief priests came to take him for crucifixion. Jesus at this point talked to Peter and the two sons of Zebedee as in Matthew 26: 38, "**Then saith he unto them, 'my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me'**". Then Jesus went a little further way from them and prayed to Allah as in Mathew 26: 39. **And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed saying, 'O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.'**

It is clear from the above verse in Matthew 26: 39 that Jesus had no intension of dying. After Jesus made the above mentioned prayer he was answered by Allah according to the Hebrews 5: 7. "**Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.**" This clearly shows that when Jesus was praying strongly to Allah, Allah granted him what he requested and saved him from crucifixion.

According to the Christian doctrine, Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. A question here arises: why anyone has to die for our sins when Allah is the All-Merciful and could easily grant forgiveness if we ask for it?

According to the Bible the way of redemption could be obtained without the need for sacrifice. The Bible says:

Ezekiel 18: 20 "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

Ezekiel 18: 21 "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die."

It is clear then that no one shall bear the sins of others, so Jesus cannot bear the sins of others either. If one is righteous then it shall be upon him, and if one commits a sin then it shall be upon him, and not on Jesus. Therefore, the way to repentance and forgiveness is by turning from all sins, doing what is right, and keeping the commandments.

The same system of repentance was also given by Solomon. He says in the book of Ecclesiastes 12: 13 "**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear Allah, and keep His commandments for these are the whole duty of man.**"

In 2 chronicles 7: 14 **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."**

Finally the bible says in Samuel 15: 22 **"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord a great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."**

This clearly states that obeying Allah is better than sacrifice. What Allah likes is for us to obey Him. It is not of Him at all to come later and change His mind, and change his ways (34).

Also, Islam stresses the notion that Allah is able to and forgives all sins, if a person truly repents and then refrains from repeating it. Allah does not need any blood sacrifice for that, let alone descend in the form of man himself and die for every man's sins. Rather, Allah's mercy extends to all creatures, believers, and disbelievers alike. The door to forgiveness is open to anyone who seeks it.

As such, Islam denies that Jesus came to this earth with the purpose of sacrificing himself for the sin of Adam, Eve, and the rest of humanity, freeing them from their sins. Islam strictly rejects the notion that any person bears the sin of another. Allah says:

"No bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another." (Az-Zumar, 7).

As seen from the above mentioned Koranic verses, Allah confirmed that Jesus was not crucified, though, it was made to seem that way to the Jews. Allah says:

"...They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, but (another) was made to resemble him to them..." (An-Nisa, 157).

"Allah lifted him up to His presence. Allah is Almighty, All-wise." (An-Nisa, 158).

As mentioned above, the Koranic verses confirmed the lifting up of Jesus to Allah, but still, this ascendance was not mentioned in detail. There is however several narrations in the Islamic literature describing the events that happened just before Jesus ascendance to Allah. The following is some of these narrations:

Ibn Abu Hatim has narrated from Ibn Abbas saying: "When Allah wanted to lift Jesus up to heaven, Jesus came to his companions in the house. There were twelve people, with some from among his disciples. He had just a bath, and his head was still dribbling with water. He said to them: 'There are those among you who will disbelieve in me twelve times after he had believed in me!' Then he said: 'Who will from among you take my likeness and be killed in my place, so will become in my rank?' a young youth came forward. But Jesus said to him: 'Sit down!' Then he repeated the same question, and the same youth stood up and came forward, and said, 'I.' Jesus said, 'you are the one.' And then the likeness of Jesus was put on him, and Jesus was lifted up to the heaven from the window of his house.

"The Jews came looking for Jesus. They took the youth and killed him then crucified him. Later they became three groups. One group known as Jacobites believed that it was Allah himself among them who stayed with them as long as he wanted to, then went back to the heaven. Another group known as Nestorians, believed that it was the son of Allah who was with them and stayed among them as long as he wanted, then his father lifted him up. But the group of true believers said that he was the slave of Allah and His Messenger who stayed among them as long as he wanted, and then his Lord Allah took him up to Him. The two disbeliever groups (Jacobites and Nestorians) collided together against the believer group and killed them, and so real teachings of Islam taught by Jesus became obscure till Allah sent the Prophet Muhammad - peace be upon him."

Hasan Basri and Bin Ishaq said: "The king who ordered the killing of Jesus, was David bin Naura. He commanded Jesus to be killed and hanged. They surrounded Jesus who was in a house inside Bait-ulMaqdis. It was a Saturday night. When they were about to enter the house, his likeness was put on one of those who were present there with him. And Jesus was lifted out from the window of that house to the heaven. When the police entered the house they found the youth on whom the likeness of Jesus was put, so they took him and crucified him. Even they put a crown of thorns on his head to mock him. Those Christians who were not present there at that time, believed what Jews claimed, that they killed Jesus."

Ibn Jarir has narrated from Wahb bin Munnabih, saying: "Jesus came along with seventeen of his disciples to the house. Then the police came and surrounded the house. However, when they entered the house, Allah put the likeness of Jesus on all those who were there. They were confused, and said: 'You have bewitched us. Either Jesus comes to us, or we will kill of you.' Jesus said to his companions, 'Who can buy today a place in Jannah (Paradise)?' A man said: 'I' and went out, claiming; 'I am Jesus.' They took him and crucified him, and so they were deluded in their belief that they have killed Jesus, and so are the Christians. But Jesus was lifted up to Allah on that day."

Ibn Asakir said: "Mary lived after Jesus for five years, and then died at the age of fifty-three years."

Hasan Basri said: "Jesus was thirty-four years old when he was lifted to the heaven." Sa'id bin Musayyib said: "He was thirty-three years old when he was raised up to the heaven (35).

Chapter 7

The second coming of Jesus as revealed by the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet

As Christians do, Muslims also believe in the second coming of Jesus to earth, although the reason for his return differs from what the Christians propose. Jesus will return to earth at the end of time to prove his mortality and refute the false beliefs people held about him. He will live a normal life, marry, and also die as any other human. As the Koran teaches, Jesus will return to earth because he was not killed but raised to the presence of Allah:

And on account of their saying (the Jews), “We killed the Messiah, Îsa son of Maryam, Messenger of Allah.” They did not kill him and they did not crucify him but it was made to seem so to them. Those who argue about him are in doubt about it. They have no real knowledge about it, just conjecture. But they certainly did not kill him. Allah raised him up to Himself. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise (An-Nisa 157).

When Allah said, “Îsa, I will take you back and raise you up to Me and purify you of those who are disbelievers. And I will place the people who follow you above those who are disbelievers until the Day of Rising. Then you will all return to Me, and I will judge between you regarding the things about which you differ.” (Al Imran 55).

The last Koranic verse refers to a group strictly adhering to Jesus and who will be kept above the disbelievers until the Day of Judgment. Are these adherents the disciples who lived in the time of Jesus or are they Christians of today? During his lifetime the followers of Jesus were few. After the termination of his mission on earth the essence of the religion degenerated rapidly. Furthermore, the disciples faced serious pressure throughout their lives. During the succeeding two centuries, having no political power, those Christians having faith in Jesus were also oppressed. It is therefore not possible to say that early Christians or their successors during these periods were physically superior to the disbelievers in the world. We might logically think that this verse does not refer to them. When we look at the Christians of today we notice that the essence of Christianity became different from what Jesus originally brought to his people. Christians of today embraced the perverted belief that suggests that Jesus is the son of Allah and similarly held the doctrine of the trinity (the Father, Son and the Spirit). Consequently, it is flawed to consider the Christians of today as the adherents of Jesus. In many verses of the Koran Allah states that those having faith in the trinity are certainly disbelievers:

Those who say that the Messiah, son of Maryam, is the third of three are disbelievers. There is no Allah but One Allah (Al-Maida 73).

Muslims think that the people who will follow Jesus upon his return are the Muslims who are the only true followers of the authentic teachings of Jesus (there is no Allah but One Allah). It is said however, that these people are the Christians of today whether or not they hold idolatrous beliefs, and that this is confirmed by the dominant position that nominal Christians hold on the earth today. However, both positions will

be unified by the arrival of Jesus since he will not accept that Christians and Jews live with any other religion than Islam, and so he will unite all believers as Muslims (28).

Because Prophet Muhammad is the last of the prophets, and Jesus ministry on earth didn't last but only three years, Jesus during his second coming will support and help the work that is being achieved through the Koran and the authentic Hadith (sayings and deeds of the Prophet).

The people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians, will all believe in Jesus before his death.

"There is none of the people of the scripture but will believe in him (as only a Messenger of Allah) before his death, and on the Day of Resurrection he will be a witness against them." (Al-Nisa, 159).

The interpretation of the expression "before his death" makes everyone from the people of the book definitely believe in Jesus before he or she faces their own death. In Jesus' time however, Jews who are defined as the people of the Book not only did not have faith in Jesus but also attempted to kill him. It would be unreasonable therefore to say that Jews and Christians who lived and died after the time of Jesus had faith in him.

It is evident therefore that the Koranic verse refers to the future because there is mention of the death of Jesus. Yet, Jesus did not die but was raised up to the presence of Allah. Jesus then, will come to earth again; will live for a specified time and then die. All the people of the Book will have faith in him before he dies.

The Koran also says:

When the angels said, "Maryam (Mary), your Lord gives you good news of a Word from Him. His name is the Messiah, Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam of high esteem in this world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near. He will speak to people in the cradle, and also when fully grown, and will be one of the righteous," she said, "My Lord! How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me?"

He said, "It will be so. Allah creates whatever He wills. When He decides on something He just says to it, 'Be' and it is. He will teach him the Book and Wisdom, and the Torah and the Injil (Gospel)..." (Al Imran 45-48).

It is clear from this verse that the third Book which will be taught to Jesus will be the Koran. This could be possible only if Jesus comes to earth at the end of time. Jesus lived 600 years before the revelation of the Koran and it is unlikely that he knew the Koran before it was revealed. Jesus in his second coming will learn the Koran.

Prophet Muhammad has also given the glad tidings of the return of Jesus:

"By Him in whose hands my soul is, Jesus the son of Mary will descend shortly amongst you as a just ruler, and will break the cross and kill the pig and abolish the jizyah. Wealth will flow in such abundance that nobody will accept any charitable gifts."

"The coming of Jesus is eminent; he will come as a just ruler, destroy the cross, and nullify the poll tax. There would be so much money that no one will accept charity."

Religious truth is essentially one, and all the prophets are part of a single brotherhood. Therefore prophets support and help each other:

And when Allah took covenant of the Prophets, "Now that I have given you the Book and the Wisdom, then there will come to you a Messenger (Muhammad) confirming what is with you, you will believe in him and will help him." Allah said, "Will you be bound by this and take my Covenant as binding on you?" They said, "We will be so bound." Allah said, "Then bear witness and I am with you of the witnesses." (Al Imran 81).

Jesus during his second coming will support and help the work that is being achieved through the Koran and authentic Hadith.

Breaking the cross signifies the end of the doctrines that Christians introduced concerning Jesus after his departure from this world. The cross, with or without the statue of Jesus is often worshipped. Jesus upon his return will end this worship and restore his teaching of the wholehearted worship of the one true Allah (Islam). Also, the doctrine that the salvation comes through the death of Jesus on the cross will be negated, as well as the very claim that the Jews crucified or killed him.

Killing the pig means that the eating of pork will be abolished. It is interesting to note that Isaiah 66:17 suggested that those who eat pork will come to an end and will not share in the Kingdom of Allah.

Since prohibition of eating pork is the most important and constant element in the dietary laws of the Old Testament, restoration of this prohibition will deal a death blow to Paul's claim that the Law was nailed to the cross. This claim was in complete violation of the teachings of Jesus and the understanding of that teaching by his eyewitness disciples. Evidence from the Acts and Paul's own letters show that many leading disciples such as Peter continued to follow the Law of Moses, as they knew it, long after the departure of Jesus who himself was faithful to that Law, although he interpreted it very liberally. Some sayings in the Gospels also state clearly that he taught his followers to respect the law (Matt 23:2, Luke 11:42).

The fact that Jesus will abolish the Jizyah (a tax that non-Muslims living in a Muslim state pay) does not mean that Jesus will take liberties with the Islamic Law. This abolishing is connected with abundance in wealth to the extent that taxes will not be needed.

In the Christian tradition Jesus is presented as the "judge of the living and the dead", but in Islam the final judge is Allah himself. In fact, Jesus, like other messengers will himself be judged and questioned:

"So shall We call to account all those to whom We sent (Our Messengers) and We shall also question the Messengers." (Al Araf 6).

The Koran even gives the interrogation of Jesus that will take place before Allah as the final judge:

And when Allah will say, “O Jesus son of Mary! Did you say to the people, take me and my mother for two Gods besides Allah”, he will say, ‘Glory be to you, it did not befit me that I should say what I had no right to say; if I had said it, you would indeed have known it; you know what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in your mind, surely you are the All knowing of the unseen. I did not say to them anything other than what you commanded me to say, and that is worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord, and I was a witness over them so long as I was among them, but when you ended my term on earth, you were the watcher over them, you are witness of all things. If you should chastise them they are your servants and if you forgive them, indeed you are the mighty, the All- Wise.’ Allah will say: “This is the day when the truthful shall profit by their truthfulness;

For them await gardens beneath which rivers flow to dwell there forever, Allah is well pleased with them and they well pleased with Him; this is the mighty achievement. To Allah belongs the Dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them; and He has power over all things (Al Maida 116-120).

Prophet Muhammad said that Jesus will return just before the end of the world. He will descend at the Dome of the Rock and join the guided Muslim Leader (Al Mahdi), in the dawn prayer. After the prayer Prophet Jesus will go out and slay the false messiah. He will then destroy the myth of the cross and follow the teaching of the Koran, which is the same doctrine given to each and everyone of the Prophets of Allah, but in its purest, final form. When Jesus dies he will be buried in Medina next to Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

There is no contradiction between Jesus descending at the end of time and the fact that the Prophet Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets. This is so because Jesus will not initiate a new religion but rather obey and follow the Holy Koran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and lead Muslims to victory over the disbelievers. Jesus will judge among people with justice and equity according to the Koran – the one and only Book of Allah that remained intact without alteration. Jesus will only accept Islam from the people.

The descent of Jesus from heaven is not a new mission. The purpose of his second coming to earth is to enforce Islam and its Islamic laws and rules Muhammad called for. This is clear in the Prophet's words:

"...He (Jesus) will call people to Islam and Allah will abolish all religions but Islam."

The Prophet also said:

"How will you be when the son of Mary descends amongst you, and he will judge people by the Law of the Koran and not by the Law of the Gospel." (Fath Al-Bari) (Sahih al-bukhari, vol.4, Hadith No. 658).

In another Hadith the Prophet said:

Îsâ (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary) will descend as a leader of the Muslims and he will break the cross, and kill the pigs and he will abolish the Jîzyah (tax), and all mankind will be required to embrace Islam with no other alternative (Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol.3, Hadith, 425).

Jesus will even pray behind a Muslim. In another Hadith the Prophet said:

“A party of my ummah (nation) will never stop fighting for the truth victoriously until the Day of Rising. Then Isa (Jesus) the son of maryam will descend and their Amir (Muslim’s leader) will say, “Come and lead us in prayer,” but he (Isa) will say, “No! some of you are amirs (leaders) over others, as Allah is showing honor to this ummah.”

In another similar Hadith the Prophet also said"

"Jesus the son of Mary will descend upon them and their leader will say (to him), 'Come and lead us in prayer.' He will say, 'No, Allah has honored this nation by putting some as leaders over others.'" (Sahih Muslim).

The Prophet also said:

“There is no prophet between me and Him (Jesus). He will descend to the earth. When you see him, recognize him: of medium height, reddish fair, wearing two light yellow garments, looking as if drops were falling down from his head though it will not be wet. He will fight the people for the cause of Islam. He will break the cross, kill the pig, and abolish the jizyah. Allah will cause to perish all religions except Islam. He will destroy the dajjal (anti-Christ) and will live on the earth for forty years and then he will die. The Muslims will pray over him.”

"A group of people from my nation will continue to fight in defense of the truth and remain triumphant until the Day of Judgment."

Based on that last statement of the Prophet, Jesus will return to earth at a time when Muslims will be in dire need of a leader.

The return of Jesus to earth is not seen by Muslims as a basis for his superiority over the Prophet of Islam. In order to escape the hostile authorities Jesus hid himself and then disappeared. The tradition of his crucifixion arose as one explanation of what happened to him. Another explanation was that he ascended whence he will come back to complete his messianic work.

In case of Prophet Muhammad, no belief in his return developed because his life and death were public events. Also, he accomplished the mission that he was ordained by Allah to accomplish, as in fact declared in the Koran:

”...Today I have perfected for you your Religion and completed My Grace on you, I have chosen Islam for you as your Religion...” (Al Maida 3).

Prophet Muhammad's return is not needed because he did not really leave the world. Through the well preserved words of the Koran and Muhammad's tradition, he has in fact assumed a permanent authentic presence in the world. This is also why he is the last prophet. According to Muslims this cannot be said of earlier prophets because their words or books were not meant for all people and for all times and they were not preserved as firmly as the Koran and the tradition of the prophet of Islam. The Koran and the tradition of Muhammad had become an ever-present reality.

Muslims view the return of Jesus as taking place in the service of Islam. Jesus as a follower of Prophet Muhammad will bring Christians and Jews under the fold of Islam by overcoming factors that have so far prevented this.

In case of Christians, these factors are: the doctrine of redemption through the cross, Trinitarian conceptions of Allah, and Pauline rejection of the law.

In case of the Jews these factors are: beliefs that make them see their nation, their ancient land, and their ancient Davidic Kingdom much more important religiously than they actually are.

Jesus upon his return will drive home to Christians the Islamic Message that he was no more divine than Moses and other prophets, that his blood had nothing to do with man's salvation and that the law is not nailed to the cross.

To the Jews, Jesus will drive home the Islamic Message that although in the history of revelation and salvation some nations may be more important than others and Allah may even at times favor some above the others, neither the Jewish nation nor any other nation is permanently and unconditionally given a favored or chosen status.

Allah says in the Koran:

O you who believe! Whoever from you renegades from his Religion, then Allah will bring a people He loves, and they shall love Him, and they shall be humble towards the believers and stern towards the unbelievers, and will exert their utmost in the cause of Allah, not fearing the reproach of anyone who reproaches them. This is Allah's bounty, He gives it to whom He pleases, and Allah is Infinite, All-Knowing (Al Maida 54).

Say: "O you who are Jews, if you assert that you are the friends of Allah, apart from all other people, then wish for death, if you are truthful- And they will never wish for it, because of what their hands have forwarded before, and Allah knows well of the evildoers." (Al Jumuah 6, 7).

The finality of the prophet hood of Muhammad means that no one will be endowed with prophet hood after him. Jesus is among those upon whom prophet hood was endowed before Muhammad. Moreover Jesus will reappear as a follower of Muhammad and he will offer prayers with his face towards the prayer niche of Muslims, the Ka'ba in Makkah.

The Islamic scholars consider that Jesus will be acting as a just ruler by applying the law of Islam, i.e. by the judgments included in the Book of Allah, the Koran, and in

the Sunnah (tradition) of the last Messenger of Allah, Muhammad may Allah bless him and grant him peace (36).

Allah declares in the Koran that Jesus is a sign of the Day of Judgment:

He is a Sign of the Hour, Have no doubt about it. But follow me. This is a straight path (Zukhruf 61).

This verse is a clear indication that Jesus will come back to earth at the end of times. Because Jesus lived six centuries before the revelation of the Koran, we cannot consider his first coming as a sign of the Day of Judgment, but only his second coming.

It is reported in Sahih Muslim (a book collecting the true sayings of the Prophet) that Huzayfa bin al-Ghifari said, "The Messenger of Allah came to us all of a sudden as we were busy in a discussion." He said, **'What are you discussing?'** We said, 'We are discussing the Last Hour. Thereupon he said, **'It will not come until you see ten signs', and in this connection he made mention of the smoke, the Dajjal (anti-Christ), the beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of Jesus the son of Mary, Yajuj and Majuj, and landslides in three places, one in the east, one in the west and one in Arabia at the end of which fire will burn forth from the Yemen, and drive people to the place of their assembly.'**

The Prophet of Islam talked to his followers about the Signs of the Last Hour:

"The pious men will depart one after another, the useless ones will remain like the husk of barley or dates towards whom Allah will pay no heed."

"By Him, in whose Hand my life is, the world will not come to an end till a person will pass by a grave, and revert to it, desiring that he would be in the place of the occupant of that grave, not because of religious reasons but because of calamities of this world."

"There will be three hard years before the Dajjal (Anti-Christ) appears. During then, people will be stricken by a great famine. In the first year, Allah will command the sky to withhold a third of its rain, and the earth to withhold a third of its produce. In the second year, Allah will command the sky to withhold two thirds of its rain, and the earth to withhold two thirds of its produce. In the third year Allah will command the sky to withhold all of its rain, and it will not rain a single drop of rain. He will command the earth to withhold all of its produce, and no plant will grow. All hoofed animals will perish, except that which Allah wills." The Prophet was asked, 'What sustains people during that time?' He said, "Tahlil, takbir and tahmid" i.e. there is no God but Allah, Allah is Greater and praise be to Allah. This will sustain them just as food does." (Sahih Al-Jami as saghir, No. 7875).

"The Last Hour will not come before the Euphrates uncovers the mountain of gold, for which people will fight. Ninety-nine out of one hundred will die but every man amongst them will say, 'Perhaps I may be the lucky one (and thus possess this gold.)'"

"The flourishing of Jerusalem will happen by the hands of Muslims by the will of Allah, after it will be retrieved from the Jews."

The holy Land will be the seat of the Caliphate because the Messenger said to one of his companions:

"O Ibn Hawalah! If you live to see the seat of the Caliphate of the Holy Land, then earthquakes, disasters and great calamities are eminent. Then, the Hour will be closer to people than this hand of mine to your head."

And he says:

"Then, Muslims will migrate to Ash-Sham (territories including Syria, Palestine and Jordan) to join the Jihad (struggle for the sake of Allah) against the enemies of Allah from among the Jews and the Christians. People of Medina will desert it, not because they dislike it, but for the purpose of joining the Jihad for the sake of Allah. Then, it will be totally uninhabited, wild animals and beasts will roam through it, and it will stay deserted until the Hour begins."

"They (Muslims) will leave Medina while in its prime. Only wild beasts and birds will roam it. The last who will be crammed in the doomsday is two shepherds of the tribe of Muzainah. They will enter Medina driving goats but will find it full of wild beasts and turn away. When they will arrive to the hill of Thaniyyah Wadda'a they will fall down on their faces (because the Hour will have started then)."

"From your Caliphs there will be one in the later days who will distribute wealth without counting."

"A time will come when a man will give alms out of his gold and will not find anyone to take it. One man will be seen being followed by forty women out of the scarcity of men and the multitude number of women."

Prophet Muhammad also talked to his companions about anti-Christ and the second coming of Jesus:

"There is no prophet but has warned his people of that one-eyed liar the anti-Christ. Behold, he is one-eyed and your Lord is not one-eyed. On his forehead are the letters: K.F.R. (Kafir meaning infidel)."

"Between the creation of Adam and the Resurrection Day there is no tribulation more dangerous than the mischief of the anti-Christ."

"There will be no land which will not be covered by the anti-Christ but Makkah and Medina, and there will be no passage out of the passages leading to them which will not be guarded by the angels, arranged in rows. The anti-Christ will appear in a barren place adjacent to Medina and it will be shaken three times. Allah will expel from it every disbeliever and hypocrite."

“Let me tell you something about the anti-Christ which no prophet has told his people about. He is one-eyed and will bring with him something like paradise and Hell but what he calls Paradise will be Hell.”

“The anti-Christ will appear and with him shall be water and fire. That which the people consider water will be fire that burns, and that which the people consider fire, will be cool and sweet water. That who from among you happens to face him, should jump into that which he sees as fire for that will be sweet and nice water.”

“The people will run away from the anti-Christ seeking shelter in the mountains.”

“The antichrist will be followed by seventy thousand Jews of Isfahan (Iran) who will be dressed in robes of Satan.”

“The antichrist will be a young man with twisted hair, and swollen eye. I compare him to Abdul Uzza ibn Qatan. That who of you, will survive to see him, should recite over him the opening verses of Surat Al-Kahf. He will appear on the way between Syria and Iraq and will spread mischief right and left. O! Servants of Allah! Adhere to the path of truth. He will stay on the earth for forty days. One day like a year and one day like a month and one day like a week and the rest of the days will be like your days. He will walk upon the earth like the cloud driven by the wind. He will come to the people and invite them to the wrong religion and they will believe in him and respond to him. He will then give command to the sky and there will be rainfall upon the earth and he will then command the earth to grow verdant vegetation. Then in the evening the pasturing animals of the people will come to them with their humps very high and their udders full of milk and their flanks stretched. He will then come to other people and invite them to his false religion. But they will reject him and he will go away from them, and the drought will befall them and nothing will be left within the form of wealth. He would then walk through the waste land and say to it: Bring forth your treasures, and the treasures will come cut and collect themselves before him like the swarm of bees. He will then call a person brimming with youth and strike him with the sword and cut him into two pieces and make these pieces lie at a distance which is generally between the archer and his target. He will then call that young man, and he will come laughing, with his face gleaming out of joy and it will at this very time that Allah will send Jesus, son of Mary, and he will descend at the white minaret in the eastern side of Damascus, wearing two garments lightly dyed with saffron and placing his hands on the wings of two angels. When he will lower his head, there will fall drops of perspiration like pearls from his head, and when he will raise it up, drops like pearls will scatter from it. Every non-believer who will smell his odor will die and his breath will reach as far as he will be able to see. He will then search for the anti-christ until he will catch hold of him at the gate of Ludd, and will kill him. Then the people whom Allah have protected will come to Jesus, son of Mary, and he will wipe their faces, and will inform them of their ranks in Paradise and it will be under such conditions that Allah will reveal to Jesus these words, “I have brought forth from amongst My servants such people against whom none will be able to fight; you take these people safely to the mountain

Tur.” And then Allah will send Yagog and Magog and they will swarm down from every slope. The first of them will pass the lake of the sea Tabariah and drink out of it. And when the last of them will pass he will say, “There was once water there.” The prophet of Allah Jesus and his companions will then be besieged at Tur and they will be so much hard pressed that the head of the ox will be dearer to them than one hundred dinars and Jesus along with his companions will make supplications to Allah Who will send to the people of Yagog and Magog insects which will attack their neck and in the morning they will perish like a single person. Allah’s apostle, Jesus and his companions will then come down to the earth and they will not find in the earth as much space as a single span which is not filled with their corps and their stink. Allah’s apostle, Jesus and his companions will then again beseech Allah, who would send birds whose necks, will be like those of camels and they will carry them and throw them where Allah will desire. Then Allah will send rain which will spare no house of clay or tent. It will wash away the earth until it will appear like a mirror. Then the earth will be told to bring forth its fruit and restore its blessings and as a result of it there will grow such a big pomegranate that a group of persons will be able to eat that hardly and seek shelter under its skin. The cow will give so much milk, that a whole party will be able to drink it. The camel will give such a large quantity of milk that the whole tribe will be able to drink out of that and the sheep will give so much milk that the whole family will be able to drink out of that, and at that time Allah will send a pleasant wind which will soothe people even under their armpits, and will take the life of every Muslim and only the wicked people will survive. They will commit adultery like asses and upon them the Hour will be held.”

“The anti-Christ will appear in my nation and he will stay in the world for forty (the narrator of this saying, Abdullah ibn Amr couldn’t say whether the prophet meant forty days, forty months or forty years). Allah will then send Jesus the son of Mary who will resemble Urwa bin Mas’ud (one of the prophet’s companions). Jesus will pursue the anti-Christ and slaughter him. Then the people will survive for seven years during which there will be no rancor between two persons. Then Allah will send a cold breeze from the side of Syria. None will remain upon the earth having the smallest particle of good or faith in Him but he will die, even if one of you enters the innermost part of the mountain, the wind will reach him and causes his death. Only the wicked people will survive and they will be as careless as birds with the characteristics of wild beasts. They will not appreciate the good nor condemn evil. Then Satan will come to them in human garb and will say: Will not you obey me? They will say: What do you order us? He will order them to worship the idols. The idolaters will have abundance of sustenance and lead comfortable lives. Then the trumpet will be blown, everyone who hears it will raise his head and turns it towards the sound. The first one to hear it will be the person who will be busy in setting right the tank meant for providing water to the camels. He will be thunder bolted and so will be all others. Allah will send a rain like dews that will cause the dead bodies to germinate. Then the second trumpet will be blown and the people will stand up and begin to look around. Then it will be said: O’ people! Go to your Lord. After that they will be called to account. Then it will be said: Separate from them the share of the Fire. It will be asked: How much? It will be said: Nine hundred and ninety nine out of a thousand. That will be the day which will make the children old because of its

terror and that will be the day about which it has been said (in the Koran): On the day when the shank will be uncovered.”

“The anti-Christ will appear and a person from amongst the believers will go to meet him but the armed watch men of the anti-Christ will say to him: Where do you intend to go? He will say: I intend to go to this one who has appeared. They will say to him: Don’t you believe in our Lord? He will say: There is nothing hidden about our Lord.

Some of them will say: Let us kill him. The others will say: Has not your master forbidden you to kill anyone without his consent? So they will take him to the anti-Christ. When the believer will see him, he will say: O’ people he is the anti-Christ about whom Allah’s messenger has informed us. The anti-Christ will order his men to arrest him and break his head. He will be struck on his back and on his stomach. The anti-Christ will ask him: Don’t you believe in me? He will say: You are the anti-Christ. The anti-Christ will then order him to be torn into pieces with a saw from the parting of his hair up to his legs. The anti-Christ will walk between the two pieces. He will then say to him: Stand and he will stand erect. He will then say to him: Don’t you believe in me? The person will say: Now I believe more that you are the anti-Christ. Then the person will say: 'O people! The antichrist will not behave with anyone amongst people in such a manner after me.' The anti-Christ will try to catch hold of him so that he should kill him. The space between his neck and collar bone will be turned into copper and he will find no means to kill him. So he will catch hold of him by his hand and feet and throw him into the air. The people will think as if he has been thrown into the fire of Hell whereas he will be thrown in Paradise. He will be the most eminent amongst the persons in regard to martyrdom in the estimation of the Lord of the worlds.”

The Mahdi (guided one) will appear, and be the Imam of the Muslims. A major war will take place between the Muslims (including Jews and Christians who truly believe in Jesus after his return) led by the Imam Mahdi, and the Jews plus other non-Muslims led by anti-Christ.

Jesus will fight the false Christ, who will call people to the belief that he is Allah. Jesus will kill the antichrist at the gate of Ludd (Lod in present-day Israel is a site of an airport and a major Israel military base), and all people will accept the true religion of Allah, Islam. The world will see a type of peace and serenity unfelt in history, all worshipping the same Lord Allah, subservient to Him alone, and at piece with one another.

The Prophet said about the signs of the Hour:

"When the trust is betrayed, wait for the Hour of judgment." The questioner asked: 'O Messenger of Allah, how is the trust betrayed?' He said: **'When authority is entrusted to those unworthy of it, then wait for the Hour.'**

Chapter 8

Chosen People?

The term “chosen people” signifies those people chosen by Allah to receive and bear the burden of the divine Message. It does not imply any superiority or any racial privileges over other nations. Only that the “chosen people” were given a unique task to fulfill. Obviously, this will put them on a higher degree of responsibility, and therefore accountability. The term does not imply any notion of nationality, race or ethnic entity, but includes all people who accept Islam, of whatever origin they may be.

The Jews had been the chosen people of Allah until the advent of their last great Prophet Jesus the Messiah, who gave them their last chance for reform and repentance. Having rejected their last Prophet they consequently lost this burden-privilege. The Koran thus mentions;

And We gave the Children of Israel the Torah and the authority, and the Prophet hood, and We bestowed on them good things, and We favored them above the worlds in that time-

And We gave them the Commandments most clearly, yet they differed after knowledge had come to them, out of insolence between themselves; surely your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection on that in which they differed (Al Jathiyah 17,17).

The burden was therefore moved to their brethren the Arabs, descendants of Ishmael son of Abraham. Thus the Koran states:

”Then We made you their successors on earth after them, that We may see how you would act.” (Yunus, 14). - That is to say, whether you act justly or not.

Allah also raised up the nation of Islam above other nations:

“You are the best nation to have been raised up for mankind. You enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong, and you believe in Allah. If the people of earlier Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them, among them are some who are believers but most of them have deviated from the Right Path.” (Al Imran 110).

The task of carrying the Message of Allah’s Oneness and uniqueness to other nations was withdrawn from the Children of Israel as they came to believe the divine Message to be theirs only, and not for other nations. One consequence was that they denied any possibility of prophet hood bestowed on anyone not belonging to the Children of Israel, irrespective of idolatry and corruption infecting them. They have corrupted the divine writ bestowed on Moses, and were unable to derive benefits from it, nor to live up to its standard. The Koran says in this connection:

”The likeness of those who were charged with the Torah then they did not observe it, is as the likeness of an ass bearing books. Evil is the likeness of the

people who disbelieve in Allah's Revelations, and Allah does not guide the evildoers." (Al Jumu'ah, 5).

Having rejected Jesus as the Messiah, they later rejected Muhammad the Prophet of Islam, despite clear predictions of his advent in their scriptures (Deuteronomy 18/15-18).

The Koran clearly spells out the prophesy of Jesus about the advent of Muhammad:

And when Jesus, son of Mary said: "O Children of Israel, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you, confirming that which was revealed before me in the Torah, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger who will come after me, whose name shall be "Ahmad" But when he came to them with clear Signs, they said: "This is mere magic." (As Saff, 6).

The name Ahmad is the second name of Prophet Muhammad. The name Ahmad means; the one who praises Allah more than others. It was narrated by Jubair bin Mut'im that Allah's Messenger said, **"I have five names: I am Muhammad and Ahmad; I am Al-Mahî (effacer) through whom Allah will erase infidelity; I am Al-Hâshir (gatherer) who will be the first to be resurrected, the people being resurrected thereafter; and I am Al-Âqîb (i.e. there will be no Prophet after me)"** (Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol.4, Hadith No. 732).

Some of the learned men among the Jews and Christians moved to Medina in north Arabia based on their conviction that the advent of the last of the prophets was near and that he was to settle in this area. Bahira the Christian monk and Salman the Christian Persian at the time were some of the people who moved to this area.

Bahira told Salman:

"He will be sent with the religion of Abraham and will come forth in Arabia where he will emigrate from his home to a place between two lava tracts, a country of palms. His signs are manifest: he will eat of a gift but not if it is given as charity, and between his shoulders is the seal of prophesy."

Salman met the Prophet and saw the seal of prophesy between his shoulders. Salman believed in the Prophet and became one of his great and honorable companions.

The Son of Man came six centuries after Jesus to reverse the failure of Jesus' mission into success.

Muslims were the only people who acknowledged the truth of Jesus' prophetic mission, and so the power to prevail had been given to them.

Because the authentic Torah and Gospel were standard laws to be followed but they were not, the mission of the Son of Man was to be universal bearing the final Divine Revelation to all mankind:

Allah is the One who sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth, and He will cause it to prevail over all religions though the polytheists be averse (As Saf 9).

Those who believe in him, and support and help him, and follow the Light that has been sent down with him, they are the prosperous (Al Araf 157).

And so We have appointed you as a just and distinguished nation, to be witness over all people, and the Messenger is a witness over you.. (Al Baqara 143).

Bearing witness to the truth is the sole justification for the presence of the Muslim community, devoid of any notion of chauvinism, hegemony, or intolerance.

Nevertheless, the People of the Book held on to the belief that divine revelation and prophecy is their prerogative alone to the exclusion of all other peoples. Something that the Koran refutes categorically:

So that the people of earlier scripture may know that they have no power over anything of Allah's Bounty, and the Bounty is to Allah Alone, and that He bestows upon whoever He pleases, and Allah is of bounty abounding. (Al Hadid, 29).

Meaning the People of the Book has no exclusive claim to the bestowal of divine revelation. The discourse is addressed in the first instance to the Jews who cling to the belief that the office of prophet hood is their exclusive preserve as Children of Israel and hence reject the revelation granted to Jesus and Muhammad. It is also addressed to the Christians who, as followers of the Bible, implicitly accept this unwarranted claim, thus rejecting the Last Prophet and the Koran Revelation (37).

They desire to extinguish Allah's Light with their mouths, but Allah has decreed to perfect His Light, even though the unbelievers may detest it. Allah is the One who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth and He will cause it to prevail over all religions even though the polytheists may detest it (As Saff, 6-9).

The nature of Islam consists in its being the only real and truly theocratic Kingdom on earth. Allah need no longer send Messengers or Prophets to convey His Messages to mankind as He used to do to Israel and other Hebrew peoples; for His will is fully revealed in the Holy Koran and imprinted in the minds of His faithful worshippers.

According to the description of the prophet Daniel, the citizens of the Kingdom of Allah are "the people of the Saints", an epithet worthy only of Muhammad, the Prince of the Prophets and of his noble army of the Emigrants and Helpers, who uprooted idolatry from a great part of Asia and Africa and destroyed the Roman Beast.

All the Muslims who believe in Allah, in His angels, Books, and Prophets; in the Day of the Resurrection and Judgment; that fate is from Allah; and perform their pious practices according to their ability and with good will, are holy saints and blessed citizens of the Kingdom of Allah. The bond of faith which binds a Muslim to his eternal King is so strong, and the nearness between the Sovereign and His worshipper

is so close, that nothing, however powerful or seductive, can spare him from Allah. The Koran declares that Allah is nearer to one than the life-vain.

Never was there a favorite courtier who, in his sentiments of affection, devotion, obedience, and respect of his beneficent monarch, could ever equal those which a Muslim entertains towards his Lord. Allah is the owner of the heavens, earth and universe; He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is the King and Lord of every Muslim in particular, for it is a Muslim alone who thanks and praises the Almighty King for all that happens and befall him, be it prosperity or adversity. Nearly one billion and two-hundred million Muslims are endowed with the same feelings of faith and trust in Allah.

Islam doesn't believe that there is a person called the Holy Ghost who fills the hearts of those who are baptized in the name of three gods, each the third of the three, or the three of the third, and thus sanctifies the believers in their absurdities.

The Muslims are sanctified, not by baptism or ablution, but their spirits are purified and sanctified by the light of faith and by the fire of zeal and courage to defend and fight for Islam.

John the Baptist or rather Christ himself, according to the Gospel of Barnabas, said:

“I baptize you with water unto repentance, but he who comes after me, he is stronger than I; he will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Spirit.”

It was this fire and this spirit with which Prophet Muhammad baptized the semi-barbarian nomads, the heathen gentiles, and converted them into an army of heroic saints, who transformed the old waning synagogue and the decaying church into a permanent and strong kingdom of Allah in the promised lands and elsewhere (37).

By the time the Prophet died at the age of 63, the greater part of Arabia had accepted Islam. Within a century of his death, Islam had spread as far west as Spain and as far east as China. It was clear that the Message was not limited to Arabs; it was for the whole of humanity.

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