

A letter to Sam Shamon

By

Dr. Mohsen El-Guindy

Sam Shamon, I have been reading your attacks against Islam for a long while. You dodge and swerve; you equivocate and shift about, you seek everywhere vain proofs to refute the truth and you disdain indignantly to acknowledge Allah's signs. Your deceit and vain talk about Islam will avail you nothing when you stand before Allah looking at the blazing Fire in horror.

If Allah were to call you and your like to account for what you have earned, then surely He would have hastened your punishment. But you have your appointed time, beyond which you will find no escape. All your evasion is to no avail. The truth is clear, and Allah on the Day of Judgment will charge you with the guilt of knowing the truth after it came to you but you preferred to wade in the mire of dogmas and falsehood you Christians invented in your religion.

My words to you are not meant to make you understand because Allah has set veils over your heart and in your ears deafness lest you should understand the Koran, and the Sunnah of Muhammad, the seal of the Prophets. My words are meant to tell you the truth about Islam lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, 'no one came to make intelligible to me the facts and to help me abandon imagination.' Prophet Muhammad has been sent to all as a spectacle and a warning, and here we are, his followers, explaining the religion again and again, but also to emphasize the terrible consequences awaiting the deniers of the truth.

Allah says in the Koran:

People of the Book (Jews and Christians), now there has come to you Our Messenger, making things clear to you, upon an interval between the Messengers lest you should say, 'There has not come to us any bearer of good tidings, neither any Warner. Indeed, there has come to

you a bearer of good tidings and a Warner; God is powerful over everything (Al-Maidah, 19).

The Koran is a universal Message. Muhammad was sent to all beings. He was not sent only to the Arabs, but also to the Jews and the Christians. The Koranic verses addressing the Jews and the Christians are numerous and many. Moses came to the Children of Israel, and Jesus came to the lost sheep of the Children of Israel. Muhammad however came to all people entire. Muhammad came as a mercy because he showed people astray the path of rectitude, the path to Paradise. Muhammad came also as a warner to the unbelievers if they do not follow the right path he brought. The unbelievers and polytheists have now no excuse to claim that they didn't know the truth about the true nature of their Creator, Allah.

The Koran as the last divine revelation to mankind came to re-establish the oneness of Allah on earth (pure monotheism). Believing in Allah's oneness (Islam) is the only religion that Allah will accept from His servants on the Day of Judgment. Islam is the religion of all Prophets who came before Muhammad, beginning with Adam, through Noah, Moses, Jesus until Muhammad. All Prophets were Muslims; their Messages to their people were exactly similar to that of Muhammad: "there is no god to be worshipped but Allah the Creator of all beings, and no partners are to be associated with Him in worship".

One may wonder why Muhammad came to the world after Jesus. Muhammad came after Jesus because the Jews and the Christians breached their covenants with Allah. The Jews corrupted the Torah, and the Christians corrupted their Gospel.

Allah entered into a covenant with the Children Of Israel and He set among them twelve head men of Jacob's descendants to set good watch over the fulfillment of the divine agreement in which Allah had declared thus: 'I will be with you, uphold you and overshadow you with My gracious wing if you faithfully engage in the act of worship; give alms; acknowledge all My Apostles, honor and assist them; and lend to Allah a beautiful loan (spending in the cause of Allah). Allah in His infinite grace looks upon this as a loan, for which He gives a recompense manifold.

The Koran says:

Allah took compact with the children of Israel; and We raised up from among them twelve chieftains. And Allah said, 'I am with you. Surely, if you perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and believe in My Messengers and succor them, and lend to Allah a good loan, I will acquit you of your evil deeds, and I will admit you to gardens underneath which rivers flow. So whosoever of you thereafter disbelieves, surely he has gone astray from the right way (Al-Maidah, 12).

But the Children of Israel breached their covenant with Allah which brought them within the measure of His wrath. He poured maledictions upon them and rendered them hard-hearted; they changed the words of the sacred Scriptures to alter the meanings of Allah's words and willfully neglected a part of what was imparted to them.

Allah says in the Koran:

So for their breaking their covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard, they perverting words from their meanings; and they have forgotten a portion of that they were reminded of; and thou wilt never cease to light upon some act of treachery on their part, except a few of them...(Al-Maidah, 13).

Allah commanded the Jews not to fear the people but fear Him only. Nor should they change the truth of His Revelations for the vanity of the fleeting world. And to remember that he, who does not judge matters according to the rules of the Torah, will have denied Allah and such-like persons are indeed infidels.

As we read in the Koran;

Surely We sent down the Torah, wherein is guidance and light, by its standard have been judged the Jews, and the rabbis and the priests, for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and they were witnesses thereto. So fear not men, but fear you me (O Jews); and sell not my verses for a little price. Whoso judges not according to what Allah has sent down – they are the unbelievers (Al-Maidah, 44).

Also we read in the Koran:

He has sent down upon thee the book with the truth, confirming what was before it, and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel aforetime, as guidance to the people, and He sent down the Criterion (of judgment between right and wrong – this Koran). As for those who disbelieve in Allah's signs, for them awaits a terrible chastisement; Allah is All Mighty, Vengeful (Al-Imran 3, 4).

The Koran teaches that Allah's Message comes to any nation or people as a matter of sacred trust. It should be broadcast and made clear to all within reach, but privileged priesthood erected a barrier and tampered with the truth, taking what suits it and ignoring the rest. The rabbis and the priests trampled down Allah's truth and enthroned false standards of worship. They took credit for virtues they do not possess and seeming successes that came in spite of their despicable deceptions. They caused mischief and misery to others and sold Allah's gift for a miserable profit, but how miserable they will learn when Nemesis comes.

As we read in the Koran:

And when Allah took compact with those who had been given the Book; 'you shall make it clear unto the people, and not conceal it.' But they rejected it behind their backs and sold it for a small price – how evil was that their selling! (Al-Imran, 187).

As for those who call themselves Christians Allah did also take a covenant: never to deviate from the path of rectitude and to adhere faithfully to their authentic Scriptures which betoken Allah's Oneness, Sameness, Uniqueness, Omnipotence and Ultimate Authority. But they willfully neglected a part of what was imparted to them. In consequence, Allah stirred up enmity and hatred among them till the Day of Resurrection. There and then shall Allah inform them of what they used to do.

The Koran says:

And with those who say: 'We are Christians' We took compact; and they have forgotten a portion of that they were reminded of. So We Have stirred up among them enmity and hatred, till the Day of

Resurrection; and Allah will assuredly tell them of the things they wrought (Al-Maidah, 14).

In addition to the fact that Jesus emphasized Allah's oneness to his followers, and not one in three or three in one as the Christian now claim, The Christian covenant may be taken to be the charge which Jesus gave to his disciples, and which the disciples accepted, to welcome Ahmad (one of the names of Muhammad) (Koran, 61:6). Glimpses of this are to be found in the Gospel of St. John even as it exists now (John xv. 26, xvi. 7). It is those who call themselves Christians who reject this. True Christians have accepted it.

At the end of his life, Moses admonished his people: "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you. They are your life." (Deuteronomy 32: 46-47).

Moses predicted the tampering of the Torah after his death (Deuteronomy 31: 25-29).

The Book of Jeremiah which came 826 years after the Torah did confirm this corruption. Allah said, "How can you say, 'We are wise, and the Law of the Lord is with us? But behold, the false pen of the scribes has made it into a lie.'" (From the RSV Bible, Jeremiah 8: 8).

Consequently, Muhammad the Prophet of Islam had to come in order to establish the truth between the jarring sects. He came with the Koran, a perspicuous Book that Allah has protected from corruption, a shining light to distinguish the true from the false. A Book that leads people to the path of safety and peace, and guides them out of darkness and superstition of later times into illumination and enlightenment. Muhammad came to the Jews and the Christians to make clear to them much of what they have changed, altered and concealed of their Scriptures (Allah's oneness, advent of Muhammad, prohibition of usury...etc) and to repeal much of what is now irrelevant.

As we read in the Koran:

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

Confirming His oneness, Allah ordered Muhammad to say to the Christians: 'Infidels indeed are those who declare that Allah is the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary. Who then can restrain Allah in any way if His will were to destroy the Messiah, the son of Mary, his mother and all those who are on the earth together?

Allah clearly says in His Koran:

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 original Torah must have been in old Hebrew, but there is no Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament which can be dated with certainty earlier than 916 A.C.

Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language with the Jews during or after the captivity, and by the time we come to the period of Jesus, most cultivated Hebrews used the Greek language, and others used Aramaic (including syrac and chaldee), Latin or local dialects. There were also Arabic versions.

It is evident therefore that there is no standard text of the Old Testament in its Hebrew form. The versions differ from each other frequently in minor particulars and sometimes in important particulars. The Pentateuch itself is only a small portion of the Old Testament. It is a narrative form and includes the laws and regulations associated with the name of Moses, but probably compiled and edited from older sources by Ezra (Arabic, Uzair) in the 5th century B.C. as Renan remarked in the preface of his "History of

the People of Israel, " the definite constitution of Israel may be dated only from the time of Ezra.

The Jews in Muhammad's time and since went a great deal by the Talmud, or a body of oral exposition, reduced to writing in different schools of doctors and learned men. The Talmudists took the divergent texts of the Old Testament and in interpreting them by a mass of traditional commentaries and legendary lore, evolved a standard body of teaching. Just before the preaching of Islam they evolved the Massorah, which may be regarded as the body authoritative Jewish Hadith (sayings and deeds of Moses).

It was probably at the very beginning of this period (from the fall of Jerusalem to the end of the 5th century), towards the close of the first century A.D., that the final settlement of an authoritative text took place. How come that all the copies containing other readings disappeared? Copies differing from it (i.e., the standard text) would die out or be deliberately destroyed!

The oldest Hebrew manuscript in existence, of which the date is known, was written in 916 A.D. – i.e., separated by more than a thousand years from the latest of the works included in the Canon."

These conclusions utterly destroy the divine character of the Old Testament.

As I mentioned before, Muhammad came to the world because of the corruption of the New Testament. I here recall the words of the American political leader and orator, Robert G. Ingersoll:

"Somebody ought to tell the truth about the Bible. The preachers dare not, because they would be driven from their pulpits. Professors in colleges dare not, because they would lose their salaries. Politicians dare not. They would be defeated. Editors dare not. They would lose subscribers. Merchants dare not, because they must lose customers. Men of fashion dare not, fearing that they would lose caste. Even clerks dare not, because they might be discharged. And so I thought I would do it myself..."

Former Catholic priest and biblical scholar, John Dominic Crossan said:

"God sacrificed his own son in place of humans who needed to be punished for their own sins might make some Christians love Jesus, but is an obscene picture of God. It is almost heavenly child abuse, and may infect out imagination at more earthly levels as well. I do not want to express my faith through a theology that pictures God demanding blood sacrifices in order to be reconciled to us." (page 145-146). The fact that we have four Gospels lies at the very heart of our problem. Because we read particular parables or sayings or stories in several different versions, we can't miss the disagreement between them." (Page 3-4, from 'Who is Jesus' by John Dominic Crossan) [35 years of searching for the historical Jesus and former Catholic priests].

The subject of Biblical criticism is so vast that it would be beyond the scope of this article. Any attempt in that direction would require a separate volume. So I will be concerned here mainly with the conclusions which the Christian research scholars have arrived at. The authorities selected for testing the authenticity of the Bible are professional representatives of Christianity and theologians and ministers considered in the West as the pillars of orthodox Churches.

One may ask: Can we honestly regard the New Testament a genuine record of the life and teachings of Jesus? Unfortunately the reply of the greatest Christian scholars, who devoted their lives investigating the textual and historical problems of the Bible during the last two centuries as well as those of the third millennium, is in the negative.

Sir Richard Gregory in his book entitled, "Religion in Science and civilization" - P.86 wrote:

"With the advance in the technique of textual criticism in the course of the last generation, with a more searching analysis of the matter of the text, and with the use of the comparative method in evaluating the tradition embodied in the narrative, it has become even more patently evident that orthodox opinion in regard to the authenticity of the Bible cannot be maintained."

The New Testament was impeached so thoroughly by modern criticism that it would be difficult to find today a single Christian scholar of note who could endorse belief in its divine character. In despair they have to detach Christianity from mere narrative and seek

to appreciate it as a spiritual reality, which appeals to the imagination, the emotions, and the soul.

The celebrated theologian of Germany, Dr. Adolph Harnack, who was professor of Church History in the university of Berlin and a member of the Royal Prussian Academy, thus sums up his conclusions regarding the New Testament in his well known work: 'What is Christianity?' : "These (three) Gospels are not historical works any more than the fourth, they were not written with the simple object of giving the facts as they were; they were books composed of the work of the evangelization."

Dr. Mohammad Fazl ur-Rahman in his book entitled "Islam and Christianity in the Modern World", mentioned the views of the eminent Christian scholars about the authenticity of the Bible. He referred to the conclusion of their research included in the Encyclopedia Biblica. They, as ministers and authorized representatives of the Church, are the last persons to be accused of falsehood or prejudice against Christianity. The names of some of these eminent Christian scholars are:

The Rev. Schmiedel, D.D., of Zurich. The Rev. W. C. Van Manen, D.D., Professor of Old Christian Literature and New Testament Exegesis, Leyden. The Rev. E.A. Abbot, D.D. hulsean Lecturer, Cambridge, Select Preacher, Oxford. The Rev. A.B. Bruce, D.D., Professor of Apologetics and New Testament Exegesis, Free Churches College, Glasgow. The Rev. Archibald R.S. Kennedy, D.D., Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages, Edinburgh. The Rev. C. F. Burney, M. A., Lecturer in Hebrew and fellow of St. John's College, Oxford. The Rev. George Adam Smith, M.A., D.D. L.L. D., Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis, Free Church College, Glasgow. The Very Rev. J.A. Robinson, D.D., Dean of Westminster. The Rev. Owen Charles Whitehouse, M.A., Principal and Professor of Biblical Exegesis and Theology in the Countess of Huntingdon's College, Chestnut, Herts. The Rev. Charles, M.A. D.D., Professor of Biblical Greek, Trinity College, Dublin. The Rev. S.R. Driver, D.D., Regius, Professor of Hebrew, Canon of Christ Church, Oxford. The Rev. T.K. Cheyne, M.A., D.D., Oriel Professor of the interpretation of the Holy scripture, Oxford, Canon of Rochester. The Rev. T. Witton Davies, B.A., Ph.D., Professor of Old Testament Literature, North Wales, Baptist College, Bangor. The Rev. W.H. Bennet, D.D., Professor of

Biblical Languages and Literature, Hackney College, London, and Professor of Old Testament Exegesis, New College, London. The Rev. A.B. Davidson, D.D., Professor of Hebrew and New Testament Exegesis, United Free church, New College, Edinburgh.

The following is a brief summary of their conclusions:

The four Gospels compiled by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and appeared thirty or forty years after the death of Jesus, can no longer be maintained. The four Gospels were compiled from earlier materials which have perished. Even if we accept more conservative opinions which place the earliest Gospel about 65 A.D., that would not, of course, make any material difference, nor affect the conclusions of criticism as to their contents. Some of their statements of facts are quite erroneous, and the data are often in direct contradiction to one another. The evangelists made it clear that they wrote with a "lack of concern for historical precision". The imperfection of gospel accounts is everywhere manifest. The text must not be taken as trustworthy guide to his (Jesus) original meaning. It merely shows us what the evangelists or their predecessors believed him to mean. The situations in which the words of Jesus are said to have been spoken cannot be implicitly accepted. Both St. Matthew and St. Mark seem to have read into the utterances of Jesus details borrowed from subsequent facts or controversies.

According to Professor Van Manen, none of the Epistles attributed to St. Paul were written by him. Others, however, regard the four generally accepted Epistles as genuine. The Book of Revelation, can no longer be regarded as a literary unit, but is an admixture of Jewish and Christian ideas and speculations. Presbyter John, rather than the Apostle, was its author.

"There are only nine passages in the Gospels", said Rev. Dr. Schmiedel, which "might be called the foundation – pillars of a truly scientific life of Jesus. It is not possible to know exactly when or where Jesus was born, when he died and how he ministered."

The Rev. Dr. A.B. Bruce regards the Gospel account of Jesus as unreliable in many details. For instance, the Temptation is a symbolic representation of a spiritual experience; the story of the crucifixion is not pure truth, but truth mixed with doubtful legend; the night trial,

the mocking, the incident of Barabbas, the two thieves, and the preternatural concomitants of the death are picturesque accessories of doubtful authenticity.

According to Dr. Schmiedel, the Gospel accounts, on which the actuality of the resurrection depends for its establishment, "exhibit contradictions of the most glaring kind. The silence of St. Paul regarding the details of the story of resurrection proves its untrustworthiness."

Rev. Dr. A.B. Bruce, D.D. in his article on "Jesus" in the Encyclopedia Biblica, showed how the divinity of Jesus started. He pointed out that while in the Gospel of St. Luke Jesus is called "the Lord" about a dozen times, the early Gospels of St. Mathew and St. Mark refer to him simply as "Jesus" a fact which seems to indicate the gradual evolution of the belief in his divinity.

John Davenport mentioned that the celebrated text of three witnesses (John I. V. 7) which is the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity, has been proved by the works of Newton, Gibbon and others to have been an interpolation; and Clamet himself acknowledges that this verse is not found in any ancient copy of the Bible. Jesus taught the belief in one God, but Paul, with the Apostle John, who was a Platonist, despoiled Christ's religion of all its unity and simplicity, by introducing the incomprehensive Trinity of Plato or Triad of the East and also by deifying two of God's attributes, namely, His Holy Spirit or the Agion Pneuma of Plato and His Divine intelligence, called by Plato logos (Word) and applied under this form to Jesus (John I).

"The Bible" says Sir Richard Gregory, "fails to justify faith in its inerrancy on account of its inconsistency with itself, its variance from current concepts of what should constitute Christian belief, and from current codes of morality, its failure in its adaptability as regards statements of fact and the discoveries of science relating to the record of happenings in the cosmic process, and finally in its inability to withstand the investigation of textual criticism, when directed to the claims of authorship upon which the authenticity of its various parts has been based... Even in the early Church from the days of Origen onwards, there was uneasiness as to the character of the text and content of the Bible..."

Sir Richard Gregory continues, "Origen and others of the fathers after him interpreted the inconsistencies and other weaknesses of the Biblical text as allegory and metaphor. As a consequence of these conditions and interpretations of the text there grew up a body of apologetic and exegetic literature based in part on tradition not embedded in the text, and dealing with both doctrine and ritual, which came to be in their sphere as authoritative as the original. It was out of these that there grew the dissensions, which in their turn have given rise to division, leading to the separate existence of the Greek and eastern churches, the uprising of numerous heretical sects of the Middle ages, the Reformation and the creation of the various Protestant churches, and finally within the Protestant faith the separate forms of belief which have brought about, among others, the separation of non-conformity from the ritual and doctrine of the Church of England."

There was a time when no Christian could even think of questioning the validity of his faith, but when modern criticism proved that human modification has touched the doctrine of the Christian faith, this principle was changed.

Sir Richard Gregory supports the newly adopted course in these words: "Just as in scientific investigations, hypothesis is subject to modification in the light of increased knowledge, so in matters of theological doctrine, orthodoxy is not static, but must vary in connotation with increase of understanding and a clearer view of the cosmic process. Further, such understanding may bring about change in forms of belief, without affecting faith in the central doctrine of Christianity...It may seem that to hold such a view of the relation of the evolution of theological dogma to the development of scientific thought is to make the validity of religious belief dependent upon the finite intelligence of man and to be incompatible with the tenets of a religion which takes its stands upon divine revelation. Yet it is possible to regard both the growth of scientific knowledge and the development of dogma, each in its own respective field, as two sides, two aspects of the same process – the search for truth, in which the Divine Purpose is revealed gradually to man *pari passu* with the preparation of his heart and intellect to receive it with understanding."

The very Rev. Dr. Mansell, formerly Dean of St. Paul's and a much greater theological authority than Sir Gregory, observes: "Many who would shrink with horror from the idea of rejecting Christ altogether, will yet speak and act as if they were at liberty to set up for themselves an eclectic Christianity, separating the essential from the superfluous portion of Christ's teaching, deciding for themselves how much is permanent and necessary for all men, and how much is temporary, and designed only for a particular age and people. Yet if Christ is indeed God manifest in flesh, it is surely not less impious to attempt to improve His teachings than to regret it altogether. Nay, in one respect it is more so, for it is to acknowledge a doctrine as the revelation from God, and at the same time, to proclaim that it is inferior to the wisdom of man."

Michael H. Hart in his book 'The 100: A ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History' - New York: Hart Publishing Company. Inc., 1978, p. 33 - chose Muhammad to lead the world's most influential persons because he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular level. According to Hart, the honor for founding Christianity is to be shared between Jesus and St. Paul. The latter he believes to be the real founder of Christianity. Out of the total of 27 Books of the New Testament, more than half is authored by Paul. As opposed to Paul, Jesus has not written a single word of the twenty-seven books. No learned Christian will ever dispute with the fact that the real founder of Christianity is St. Paul. Therefore Michael Hart to be fair, had to place Jesus, in slot number three.

It seems that most of the Christians of today are not sure of their religion. Jesus said, "If you love me keep my commandments." He said further, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5:19). However, if the Christians were asked, "Do you keep the laws and commandments?" They usually answer, "No, because the law is nailed to the cross, we are now living under grace!"

In the third Millennium, we find bishop John Shelby Spong with courage and imagination unimpaired by conventional wisdom has chosen to fight for establishing a new Christianity for a new world.

Bishop Spong was the Episcopal Bishop of Newark, NJ, for more than twenty years and is one of the leading spokespersons in the world for progressive Christianity. He is the author of 15 books including the best selling 'Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism', 'Living in sin', 'liberating the gospels', and 'Why Christianity Must change or Die'.

Under the title 'A New Christianity for a New World' I received several e-mails from Bishop Spong regarding his views about how modern Christianity should be. His views were answers to questions forwarded by his readers regarding this important issue.

About his views regarding the Old Testament he wrote: "The Old testament is a library that contains 39 unique and different books. These books were written over a period of perhaps a thousand years. They represent a wide variety of types of literature. Some are descriptions of tribal history. Some are filled with liturgical and ethical injunctions; some are interpreters of history; some are wisdom literature; some are poetry; some are the writings of Prophets; some are protest literature. There is no doubt that parts of this body of sacred literature are eternal and therefore relevant to us today. Other parts are so clearly time bound as to be totally irrelevant to our world today. The issue is how one separates the wheat from the chaff.

About a question addressing how has the Jesus Seminar changed his view of Jesus and his relationship with Jesus? Bishop Spong replied:

"...I have enormous respect for the Jesus Seminar and its members. They are people who have dedicated years of their lives and a significant amount of their energy to a clearly defined task. The stated purpose of the Seminar and its inception was to re-establish the quest for the historical Jesus, by searching the words attributed to Jesus in the Gospels for clues to their authenticity. This first task was completed and its results were published in a book called the five Gospels edited by Seminar founder Robert Funk. Using a color coordinating vocal system of beads, the scholars determined whether or not the particular saying attributed to Jesus was clearly from the Jesus of history (red), was close to but not a direct quote from the Jesus of history (pink), was probably a saying the Christian community later attributed to Jesus (gray), or was a saying that though attributed to the Jesus, the Jesus of history could never have

spoken (black). The Seminar's conclusion, that less than 20% of the Gospel sayings of Jesus are authentic with more than 80% not being so, received wide publicity and no little amount of hostility...I have found the Jesus Seminar, and the scholars identified with it, valuable allies in my own ministry of translating the Christian story into the world of the 21st century."

Answering the question, "What do you mean when you speak about idolatry among Christians?" Bishop Spong replied:

"Idolatry means ascribing to anything less than God the qualities that pertain to God alone. Infallibility, inerrancy and eternal truth are but a few of these God qualities that have been applied to people, books and churches. In the history of Christianity various bodies of Christians have claimed infallibility for the ex-cathedra utterances of their spiritual leader, inerrancy for the words of scripture that human wrote, and absolute truth for human formulations of doctrines and dogmas. Recognizing the weakness of such idolatrous claims for particular people, human creations and human formularies, they developed an even stranger claim that the Holy spirit somehow directed the leader in his (not her) infallible utterances, since god will not let the Divine Church live in falsehood, or that the holy spirit guided the authors of the scriptures so that the words were inerrant, or that the Holy Spirit assisted the Church in its doctrinal formulations so the Creeds might reflect God's ultimate truth. Each of these claims borders on the ridiculous. The evil that has been done by papal claims, biblical claims and doctrinal claims can be documented too easily. One has only to look at the Crusades, religious wars, the inquisition or at the way the bible has been used in the defense of such outdated evils as the divine right of kings, the condemnation of science, slavery, segregation, and second class status for women, homophobia, and religious persecution. People also justify aggression by claiming an ultimate justice for their own badly compromised national vested interest. There is an ultimate truth of God, I do believe. No person, no nation, and no institution, however, can claim to possess it without becoming idolatrous. Idolatry is, therefore, a fact, in Christian history."

"If God doesn't intervene, what is the meaning of intercessory prayer?" Another question was addressed to Bishop Spong. He replied:

"...The time has come for human beings to grow up, to claim the grandeur of our humanity and to abandon our Santa Claus view of God. When we do that we will begin to raise very different questions about the nature of faith in the 21st century. The intervening God who answers our intercessory prayers is a comfortable fiction that is no longer worthy of our worship."

Bishop Spong also wrote:

"...A more accurate statistic, however, is that behind these shifts Christianity itself is a declining reality in the 21st century in every developed nation of the world. Increasingly, modern, educated people abandon the church because its Message no longer makes sense to them. Those who remain become more and more narrowly focused on a smaller and smaller piece of reality. They claim certainty and thus attract those in search of security. That is their primary appeal. Some of them have also developed positive public relation campaigns to promote growth where churches engage reality and confront the thought processes of the modern world; they can no longer talk in terms of the traditional religious language of miracles, divine intervention, answered prayers and Jesus as the sacrifice that paid for their sins. They become more certain about what they do not believe than they are about what they do believe. Negative Messages are never appealing. That is why the main line churches are dying."

The Gospel of Jesus spoken by the Koran is not the New Testament. It is not the four gospels now received as canonical gospels and in some others, of which traces survive (e.g., the Gospel of St. Barnabas, the Gospel of Childhood). Muslims think that what is in the true tradition of Abraham and all that is truthful and real in the older revelations are already incorporated in the Koran and in the teaching of Muhammad, the last of the Prophets. Muslims also believe that the current Old Testament after being altered in many places is not the one Allah gave to Moses. All missing links in the Bible of the Jews and the Gospel of the Christians are found in the Koran.

Because Allah is Most Merciful, He replaced the abused Bibles with a far superior Book, the Koran - a Book that stood the test of time in order to give mankind a chance to reform, correct and amend - a last chance to mankind to follow Allah's right path, hence protecting themselves against a terrible chastisement awaiting the disbelievers.

This is why Allah promised in the Koran that He will personally guard it from corruption.

"We (Allah) have, without a doubt, sent down the Remembrance (the Koran); and We will surely guard it (from corruption) (Al-Hijr, 9).

Today we have only one Arabic Koran – a Book which had also been translated into mostly all the languages of the world.

The Koran came to purify the Torah of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus from the violations which were added to their texts, thus perverting the original words of Allah and as a consequence led people astray.

Allah in the Koran invited the Jews and the Christians to Islam.

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

Muslims do not claim to have a religion peculiar to themselves. Islam is not a sect or an ethnic religion. In its view all religion is one. It was the religion preached by all the earlier prophets. It was the truth taught by all inspired books. In essence it amounts to a consciousness of the Will and Plan of Allah and a joyful submission to that Will and Plan. If anyone wants a religion other than that, he is false to his own nature, as he is false to Allah's Will and Plan. Such a one cannot expect guidance, for he has deliberately renounced guidance.

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers (Al-Imran, 85).

The Christian hate mongers occupy themselves by slandering the Prophet of Islam, belying the Koran and claiming that Muslims worship a god other than theirs. Some of them go to the extent of claiming that Muslims worship a moon god or even a monkey God.

Others claim that Muslims are terrorists and want to dominate the world!

Muslims worship Allah, the only God of the universe. The One who created the heavens and the earth. The One who sent all Prophets beginning with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, until Jesus, till Muhammad. Muslims worship the One God who descended upon Abraham the scrolls, and upon David the Psalms, and upon Moses the Torah, and upon Jesus the Gospel, and upon Muhammad the Koran. Do the Christians worship another god than Allah? If they do, then they are in a real problem.

The attacks the Christian hate mongers launch against Islam must not turn them from the real purpose Islam came to warn them against.

Muhammad had to come because all divine Books before the Koran disappeared or corrupted. The present adulterated Books contain only partial truths mixed with erroneous tales and views of their human authors. The knowledge in these Books was infested with falsehood, and falsehood yields nothing but false hopes, and falsehood vested with ignorance and illiteracy afford conjecture.

In consequence, Allah says in the Koran:

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

And there is a sect of them twist their tongues with the Book, that you may suppose it part of the Book, yet it is not part of the Book; and they say, 'It is from Allah,' yet it is not from Allah, and they speak falsehood against Allah, and that wittingly (Al-Imrân, 7).

Out of His mercy, and because Allah means no injustice to any of His servants, He sent Muhammad, the seal of the Prophets with the Koran – the last Testament to the world.

It is He who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may uplift it above every religion, though the unbelievers be averse (Al-Najm, 91).

After nearly six hundred years from Jesus, Allah sent Muhammad for the last time, to make clear to the Christians the facts and to help them abandon imagination so that they cannot later on claim innocence and say, 'No one came to us in the capacity of a spectacle and a warning.

People of the Book, now there has come to you our Messenger, making things clear to you, upon an interval between the Messengers lest you should say, 'There has not come to us any bearer of good tidings, neither any Warner.' Indeed there has come to you a bearer of good tidings and a Warner; Allah is powerful over everything (Al-Maidah, 19).

The Advent of Muhammad was mentioned in the Torah of Moses: Deut. 18: 18-20; 33: 1-2; Genesis 25: 13; 21: 21; Isaiah 42: 1-13; 21: 13-17; 42: 10-11; 28: 11; 28: 10; Habakkuk 3: 3.

The advent of Muhammad was also mentioned in the Gospel of Jesus: John xiv. 16, xv. 26 and xvi 7.

Yet, the Jews and the Christians concealed the prophecies contained in their Scriptures about the Holy Prophet. Because of enmity and jealousy they would not recognize him and would insist on mixing up truth with falsehood rather than accept the truth in its unalloyed purity.

As we read in the Koran:

Those to whom We gave the Book (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad) as they recognize their sons, but some of them conceal the truth while they know it (the qualities of Muhammad which were written in the Torah and the Gospel) (Al-Baqarah, 146).

People of the Book! Why do you confound the truth with vanity, and conceal the truth while you know? (Al-Imran, 71).

Those who keep from the knowledge of others the clear revelations which Allah presented in His Books, have earned the curse of Allah, the angels and the believers whose curse takes effect against whom it is uttered.

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

Now we have the Koran, a Book containing divine wisdom and guidance to true salvation. A Book that brought good tidings to the believers in Allah's Oneness, and a severe warning to the polytheists, idolaters and disbelievers. The Koran is one unified Book that is not subject to change by curtailments or additions. A Book that is well guarded by Allah until the Day of Resurrection, an unchangeable Book that stood the test of time. The Koran is a decisive Message and no pleasantries, a Book that we must read thoroughly in order to know the ultimate truth.

Allah says in the Koran:

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

Say: 'We believe in Allah, and that which has been sent down on us (the Koran), and the Tribes, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and the Prophets of their Lord; we make no division between any of them, and to him we surrender (in Islam).'

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

Now we are asked to listen to the proclamation of Muhammad's universal mission. We contemplate no longer after this, partial truths. It is not now a question of saving Israel from the bondage of Egypt, nor teaching Midian the ethics of business, nor reclaiming the people of Lute from sexual sin or Thamûd from the sin of oppression in power, or Ād from arrogance or ancestor-worship. Now are set forth plainly the issues of life and death, the final Message of Allah, the One universal God to all mankind.

The Message states clearly the one and true religion of Allah which He sent to all Prophets until Muhammad, the seal of the Prophets – Allah is One and He is to be worshipped alone without associating with Him any partners, i.e. Islam. This is the only religion that Allah will accept from His servants on the Day of Resurrection – pure

monotheism.

As the Koran states:

Say: 'O mankind, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, of Him to whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He. He gives life and makes to die. Believe then in Allah, and His Messenger, the Prophet of the common folk, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him; haply so you will be guided (Al-A'râf, 158).

The Muslim position is clear. The Muslim does not claim to have a religion peculiar to him. Islam is not a sect or an ethnic religion. In its view all religion is one, for the truth is one. It was the religion preached by all earlier Prophets. It was the truth taught by all inspired Books. In essence it amounts to a consciousness of the will and plan of Allah and a joyful submission to that will and plan. If anyone wants a religion other than that, he is false to his own nature, and he is false to Allah's will and plan. Such a one cannot expect guidance, for he has deliberately renounced guidance.

The mission of Muhammad is therefore clear - to re-establish the oneness of Allah on earth.

The Koran says:

Say: 'I am commanded only to worship Allah and not to join partners with Him. To Him I call, and to Him is my return.' (Ar-Ra'd, 13).

Say: 'I have been commanded to serve Allah making my religion His sincerely; and I have been commanded to be the first of those that surrender.'

Say: 'Truly I fear, if I should rebel against my Lord, the chastisement of a dreadful Day.'

Say: 'Allah I serve, making my religion Him sincerely.' (Al-Zumar 11-14).

The Prophet of Islam was ordered to follow the religion of Abraham which was pure monotheism – Islam:

Say: 'As for me, my Lord has guided me to a straight path, a right religion, the creed of Abraham, a man of pure faith; he was no

idolater.’

Say: ‘My prayer, my ritual sacrifice, my living, my dying – all belongs to Allah, the Lord of all Being.

No associate has He. Even so I have been commanded, and I am the first of those that surrender (Al-An’am 161-163).

Islam came to invite the Christians - who corrupted their Scriptures and invented peculiar dogmas that took them far away from the right path – to worship the One God Allah and not to incorporate with him other deities.

The Koran Says:

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

Had the people of the Book believed, it was better for them; some of them are believers, but the most of them are ungodly (Al-Imran, 110).

The Christians claim that Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross in order to erase their sins. They live without sins because their sins were forgiven! They can even go to a priest and confess their sins, and the priest grants them forgiveness! The priest here serves as a mediator between the sinner and the Creator!

The Christians believe that Adam’s sin was inherited by his offspring, so all people are sinners, and Jesus had to sacrifice himself to free the sinners from guilt.

The Christians believe that Eve was the one who tempted Adam to eat from the forbidden tree, this is why she was cursed in their Books!

The Christians believe that God is one in a Trinity, the father, the son and the Holy Ghost, all three are one god. They took Jesus as god apart from the Creator. Jesus is their sole lord whom they worship in a Trinity.

Islam came to reject the odd and peculiar dogmas the Christians invented in their religion.

Speaking of vicarious atonement, the Books of all Prophets including Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, stated that man is responsible for his sins and no other innocent man would carry his sins on the Day of Judgment.

The divine verdict regarding man's responsibility for his own sins was old enough to be mentioned in the scrolls of Abraham and the Book of Moses.

The Koran states:

Or has he not been told of what is in the scrolls of Moses and Abraham, he who paid his debt in full?
That no soul laden bears the load of another, and that a man shall have to his account only as he has labored, and that his laboring shall surely be seen, then he shall be recompensed for it with the fullest recompense, and that the final end is unto thy Lord (Al-Najm 36-42).

The Koran strongly emphasized man's responsibility for his own sins, he cannot transfer his sins to someone else, nor can anyone vicariously atone for his sins.

As we read in the Koran:

Say: 'Shall I seek a Lord other than Allah, who is the Lord of all things?'

Every soul earns only to its own account; no soul laden bears the load of another. Then to your Lord shall you return, and He will tell you of that whereon you were at variance (Al-An'am, 146).

As for the Christian doctrine that Adam sinned and his offspring inherited his sin thus needing Jesus to atone their sins, the Koran rejected this doctrine completely. The Koran also rejected the claim that Eve was cursed because she was the one who tempted Adam to eat from the forbidden tree. The Koran however states that Satan was the one who tempted Adam and not Eve. The Koran clearly states that prompted by the sense of guilt, Adam felt shame, but because guilt did not reside in the intention, Allah in mercy inspired Adam with a

prayer for invoking His forgiveness, and in turn did Allah give up resentment against him and pardon his offence. It is he who always accepts true repentance.

The Koran says:

And We said, 'Adam, dwell thou, and thy wife, in the Garden, and eat thereof easefully where you desire; but draw not nigh this tree, lest you be evildoers.'

Then Satan caused them to slip there from and brought them out of that they were in; and We said, 'Get all you down, each of you an enemy of each; and in the earth a sojourn shall be yours, and enjoyment for a time.'

Then Adam received certain words from His Lord (Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If you forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers 7: 23), and His Lord pardoned him; verily He is the One who forgives, the Most Merciful (Al-Baqarah 35-37).

As for Jesus crucifixion, the Christians themselves differed about his identity.

The Jews uphold the theory of the killing of Christ whom they never recognized. The Christians insist on crucifixion, burial and resurrection on the third day. The four Bibles relate the incident differently. The face of Yehuda who led the soldiers to arrest Christ was transfigured into that of Christ who had already been rescued by the angels through the window to the third heaven. By consequence it was Yehuda who suffered crucifixion.

The Basilidians believed in the substitution, on the other hand the Docetae believed that Christ never has a physical body but a phantom body and therefore his crucifixion was only apparent but not real.

The Marcionite Gospel denied that Jesus was born and that he was only phantom who appeared in human form. The Gospel of St. Barnabas supported the theory of substitution on the cross.

The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that Jesus life was taken on the cross, that he died and was buried, that on the third day he rose in the body with his wounds

intact, and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples, and afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. This is necessary for the theological doctrine of blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins!

The Koranic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews but they thought they did. And those who disputed his fate were themselves in a state of uncertainty as to the truth of the incident; their belief was based on empty knowledge and their opposition was formed on grounds admittedly insufficient, for indeed they just did not slay him but the guilt nevertheless resided in the intention. But Allah had taken him up to His August presence.

The Koranic statement that Jesus was not crucified but Allah lifted him up to Him came in the course of the Koranic verses narrating the iniquities of the Jews:

So, for their breaking the compact, and disbelieving in the signs of Allah, and slaying their Prophets without right, and for their saying, 'our hearts are uncircumcised' – nay, but Allah sealed them for their unbelief, so they believe not, except a few.

And for their unbelief, and their uttering against Mary a mighty calumny, and for their saying, 'We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah' – yet they did not slay him, neither crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them.

Those who are at variance concerning him surely are in doubt regarding him; they have no knowledge of him, except the following of surmise; and they slew him not of a certainty – no indeed; Allah raised him up to Him; Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise (Al-Nisa' 155-158).

Jesus was not God, but only a human. If he were god he wouldn't have prayed for Allah in great agony to take away the cup of death on the cross from him (Mark, 14: 36; Matt. 26: 29; Luke, 22: 42; and out of Allah's mercy his prayer was heard (Heb. 5: 7).

As for considering Jesus as god or the son of God, the Koran clearly states that infidels indeed are those who declare that Allah is the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary. The prophet was ordered to say to the Christians, 'Who then can restrain Allah in any way, if He willed

to destroy the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, his mother, and all those domiciled on earth!

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).

As the Koran states, worshipping Jesus as god or apart from God amounts to glaring blasphemy:

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).

The above mentioned Koranic verse is even confirmed by several Christian Scriptures. We see in Matt. Iv. 10, where Christ rebukes Satan for desiring the worship of others than Allah's. We see in John xx. 17, where Christ says to Mary Magdalene, 'Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my father and your father; and to my God and your God.' Also in Luke xxiii, 19, we find that Christ rebukes a certain ruler for calling him good master: 'Why callest thou me good? None is good, save One, that is, God.' In Mark xii. 25 Jesus says: 'the first of all the commandments is, hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.'

The concept of Trinity is also clearly condemned in the Koran:

They are unbelievers who say, 'Allah 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).

Allah is One, His Message is one; yet how people's perversity transforms truth into falsehood, religion into superstition! The Messiah, the son of Mary, was no more than an Apostle; many messengers like him have passed away before him. His mother was a

pious woman vested with saintliness of life and character; she and her son had to consume food to sustain their lives and therefore be destined to die.

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 Christians worshipped Jesus apart from Allah, although Jesus can neither do them harm nor can he afford them help. Allah is the only one who controls their fate.

Say: 'Do you serve apart from Allah, that which cannot hurt or profit you? Allah the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing (Al-Maidah, 76).

On the Day of Resurrection Jesus will not be there to carry the sins of others because Allah is the only one who can justly punish His servants for disobedience, no one can say to him nay, for He is high above all.

On that mighty Day, Jesus will be busy defending himself before Allah by trying hard to answer Allah's question: 'Did you O Jesus, the son of Mary, ask the people to take you and your mother as two gods besides Me and pay you the same tribute that is dutiful only to Me?' Jesus will disclaim any knowledge of the sorts of things that are attributed to him by those who take his name. Jesus will acknowledge that he was mortal, and that his knowledge was limited like that of a mortal.

Allah says in the Koan:

And when Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary, did you say unto men: 'Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah?'" He will say: "Glory is to you! It was not for me to say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, you would surely, have known it. You know what is within my soul, and I know not is within Your soul; truly You, only You, are the All-Knower of all that is unseen. Never did I say to them aught except what you did command me to say: 'Worship 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 punish them, they are your slaves, and if You forgive them, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Allah will say: 'this is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth; theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise) – they shall abide therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him. That is the great success (Paradise) (Al-Maidah 116-119).

The above verses are a great admonition and warning to the Christians of the whole world. And he who disregards Allah's revelations will find Allah is swift in calling to accounts.

And whoso disbelieves in Allah's signs, Allah is swift at the reckoning (Al-Imran, 19).

Pure monotheism without associating partners with Allah in worship is the only system of faith which Allah will accept from his servants on the day of Resurrection. But also besides worshipping Allah alone, it is obligatory to believe in Muhammad the seal of the Prophets, and the Koran, and the last Day, and all the Messengers and angels of Allah, and all authentic divine Books that came before Muhammad. To all these we must give home in our hearts. We must not deny them lest our belief becomes incomplete and unacceptable by Allah on the Day of Resurrection.

The Koran says:

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

The Jews restrict God to themselves only. They separate God from His Messengers. They do not believe in Jesus and his Gospel, and in Muhammad and his Koran. They even speak harshly in their Books against some of their Prophets like Jacob, David and Solimon! Their belief is partial, and mixed up with racial pride which does not allow for the recognition of any Messengers beyond their own.

The Christians do not believe in Muhammad and the Koran, the Last Testament to the world. They believe in God but their belief is so

hedged around with peculiar doctrines and dogmas of exclusive salvation, Trinity, vicarious atonement, original sin, crucifixion, that it practically approaches to a denial of Allah's universal love for all mankind and all creation. All two ways of belief amounts in Islam to blasphemy, for they really deny Allah's universal love and care for all.

Allah says in the Koran:

Those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and desire to make division between Allah and His Messengers and say, ' We believe in part, and disbelieve in part, ' desiring to take between this and that a way - those in truth are the unbelievers; and We have prepared for the unbelievers a humbling chastisement.

And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers, and make no division between any of them, those - We shall surely give them their wages; Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate (Al-Nisa' 150-152).

Allah invited all mankind to embrace Islam - His only religion. Allah's solicitude for us is for our own good, not because He gets any advantage from it. For He is independent of all things, and everything declares His glory and praise.

O men, the Messenger has now come to you with the truth from your Lord; so believe; better is it for you. And if you disbelieve, to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise (Al-Nisa', 170).

Those who dispute about the signs of Allah which are clear to all who care to see are merely in far error. They turn a deaf ear to Allah's revelation and refuse to listen but to their own conception which is an imagination resulting from their deviated senses. They will come to know the fatal consequence of their denial of Allah's unity and authority, when in time they bear the yoke and be dragged in chains, plunged into boilers and from thence into Hell where they suffer torment. There and then they will be asked, 'Where are those whom you incorporated with Allah in worship?' They will say, 'They have vanished away.' They further lie and say, 'We did not worship anything before.' Thus Allah leads astray the disbelievers. Allah will throw them in Hell to abide therein forever because they rejected Allah's signs, and incorporated with Him in worship other deities (Jesus, prophet priest, pope, saint, idol, animal, nature, etc...).

Allah says in the Koran:

Hast thou not regarded those who dispute concerning the signs of Allah, how they are turned about?

Those who cries lies to the Book and that wherewith We sent Our Messengers – soon they will know!

When the fetters and chains are on their necks, and they dragged into the boiling water, then into the Fire they are poured; then it is said to them, ‘Where are those you associated apart from Allah?’ They shall say, ‘They have gone astray from us; nay, but it was nothing at all that we called upon aforetime.’

Even so Allah leads astray the unbelievers.

That is because you rejoiced in the earth without right, and were exultant. Enter the gates of Hell to dwell therein forever.’ How evil the lodging of those that are proud (Ghafir 69-76).

Such is the requital of the enemies of Allah – the Fire, a fit requital for that they used to deny Allah’s signs.

That is the recompense of Allah’s enemies – the Fire, wherein they shall have the Abode of Eternity as recompense, for that they denied His signs (Fussilat, 28).

The one true reality is that Allah is One. Blessed are those who treasured this truth in their souls while still living their life of probation.

This is a Message to be delivered to mankind that they may be warned by it, and that they may know that He is one God, and that all possessed of mind may remember (Ibrahim, 52)."

Those who dispute with opposing arguments about the signs and verses of Allah in this worldly life will not be able to do that when on the Day of Judgment they stand before Allah in shame and disgrace.

As we read in the Koran:

Allah will say: “Dispute not in front of Me, I had already in advance sent you the threat (the Koran). The sentence that comes from Me cannot be changed, and I am not unjust to the slaves. On the Day

when We will say to Hell: “Are you filled?” It will say” Are there any more? (Qaf, 28-30).

Well, Sam Shamon, I have told you the truth, and you will be responsible before Allah for every bit of word I said on the Day of Resurrection. Debating with opposing arguments will benefit you nothing but to compile more sins over your head. As for us Muslims, we have been ordered to promulgate the Message, and it is up to the people to believe or not to believe, for guidance comes only from Allah.

Again, and again, it must be clear in the minds of all people that Allah has sent down the Koran confirming the Scriptures which were revealed before and serving as the Book of reference which does answer any query on matters disputed among the Jews and the Christians, for it is the umpire of all preceding Scriptures, and the decision that is based upon its percepts shall have to be accepted as final.

In other words the Koran safeguards the former Books for it has preserved within it the teachings of all preceding Books. It watches over these Books in the sense that it will not let their true teachings to be lost. It supports and upholds these Books in the sense that it corroborates the Word of Allah which has remained intact in them. It stands as a witness because it bears testimony to the Word of Allah contained in these Books and helps to sort it out from the interpretations and commentaries of the people which were mixed with it: what is confirmed by the Koran is the Word of Allah and what is against it is that of the people.

Allah says in the Koran:

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

It is amazing to see people rejecting the signs of Allah out of foolishness and ignorance! But no wonder, for Allah has created many of the jinn and mankind for Hell. They have so deadened their faculties of reason that they do not work. They are, as it were, made for Hell. They don't understand the truth. They are like cattle, nay, they are further astray.

Allah says in the Koran:

We have created for Hell many jinn and men; they have hearts; but understand not with them, they have ears; but they hear not with them. They are like cattle; nay, rather they are further astray. Those they are the heedless (Al-A'raf, 179).

Sam Shamon, your hypocrisy has reached to the extreme. Allah has cursed the hypocrites and deprived them of His grace and mercy. They shall suffer the torment that is laid upon the damned.

Allah promises the hypocrites, both men and women, and the disbelievers fire of Hell for their abode. It will suffice them. Allah curses them, and theirs is lasting torment (Al-Tawba, 68).

Those who set themselves against Allah and His Prophet shall suffer the Fire of Hell, and this indeed humiliation to the extreme!

Know they not that whoso opposes Allah and His Messenger, his verily is fire of Hell, to abide therein? That is the extreme abasement (Al-Tawba, 63).

The greater losers in life are those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought they are doing good deeds. They are those who deny Allah's signs. On the Day of Resurrection Allah shall assign no weight for them. Their abode will be Hell by reason of their disobedience and infidelity.

Say: 'Shall We tell you who will be the greatest losers in their works? Those whose striving goes astray in the present life, while they think that they are working good deeds. Those are they that disbelieve in the signs of their Lord and the encounter with Him; their works have failed, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall not assign to them any weight. That is their recompense – Hell – for that they were unbelievers and took my signs and Messengers in mockery (Al-Kahf 103-106).

Sam Shamon, Allah has endowed you with the faculties of hearing and seeing but of no profit to you are these faculties when you went on mocking and rejecting the signs of Allah. On the Day of

Resurrection you will be encircled by that you used to reject and mock at.

The Koran says:

And the evil deeds that they have done shall appear to them, and they shall be encompassed by that they mocked at (Al-Jathiah, 33).

The Fire of Hell will envelop you on all sides, and no help will then be possible. Is it not best for you now to believe and understand? But you are rebellious and depraved as to incur Allah's wrath!

If the unbelievers but knew when they will not be able to ward off the Fire from their faces nor from their backs, and they will not be helped. Nay, but it (the Fire) shall come upon them suddenly, dumbfounding them, and they shall not be able to repel it, nor will they get respite (Al-Anbiya' 39, 40).

Sam Shamon, in all your conditions whether roaming, traveling, sleeping, dreaming, debating, or disputing as usual with opposing arguments, remember my words, because they are the truth personified. They are the words of Allah. If you believe in them it is for your own gain, if not, it is for your own loss.

You have been offered the truth from your Lord. If you reject it, you must bear all the terrible consequences which are prefigured in the Fire of hell. Its flames and roof will completely enclose you like a tent. Ordinarily there is water to quench the heat of thirst. Here the only drink will be like molten brass, thick, heavy, burning, sizzling. Before it reaches the mouth of the unfortunates, drops of it will scald their faces as it poured out.

Say: 'The truth is from your Lord; so let whosoever will believe, and let whosoever will disbelieve.' Surely We have prepared for the evildoers a fire, whose pavilion encompasses them; if they call for succor, they will be succored with water like molten copper, that shall scald their faces – how evil a potion, and how evil a resting place (Al-Kahf, 29).

Well, Sam Shamon. Well, Mr. Know how. Well, Mr. Know everything. The one who thinks he is an Islamic scholar and debates

with Muslims out of ignorance and prejudice. I will give you one homework to do, just one. Instead of attacking Islam and Muslims, thus compiling more sins over your head and brings the wrath of Allah upon you as you have already done, can you restore the monotheistic religion of Jesus from ugly Trinity and unlawful polytheism to pure monotheism? Can you purify the religion of Jesus (Islam) from the dogmas you Christians invented in your religion? I will give you a reference to help you finish your homework. Read the Koran, it came for people astray like you. The solution is there poor fellow.

Dr. Mohsen El-Guindy