

Daniel Pipes exposed

By

Dr. Mohsen El-Guindy

Dr. Daniel Pipes is supposed to be a writer, a historian and political commentator. He is the founder of the Middle East Forum and its Campus Watch Project. His writing focuses on the American foreign policy, the Middle East, Islam and Islamism. He promotes the use of militarism to serve US and Israeli interests in the Middle East. His organization backed the war in Iraq, and has previously called for military action against Syria. His job is to smear the entire Muslim community in the United States for his own political and religious agenda. Pipes is notorious for his hostility to Muslims and his defense of Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people.

Daniel Pipes, the world's most prominent anti-Muslim hate-monger is not an easy person. He swerves to avoid criticism. He desists from previous biased views so not to be accused of bigotry and ignorance. He goes back on his word and claims innocent. He professes respect for Muslims but is frequently contemptuous of them.

His illogical and biased writings made me realize that his credentials are of no value. He should have used them in distinguishing between right and wrong, truth and vanity, scum and what profits men. But instead, he waded into the mire of hatred and immersed in senseless writings characterized by hatred to Islam and Muslims. As it seems, the man is just another extreme Likudnic silencing legitimate criticism by tarring it with the brush of anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism.

Because Daniel Pipes do not believe in Islam, and hates its adherents, in addition to his glaring Zionism, he gave himself the right to attack Islam and Muslims. The man earns his money by attacking the Koran, the last Testament to the world, and by smearing Muslims, the sincere devotees of Allah. The money he earns from his despicable writings is unlawful and certainly would hurt him in ways he perceives not.

Though Daniel Pipes have apparently all the faculties of reason and perception, he has so deadened them that those faculties do not work. They are as it were, made for Hell.

Allah says in the Koran:

We have created for Hell many jinn and men; they have hearts, but understand not with them; they have eyes, but perceive 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).

Allah has vested Daniel Pipes with the power of comprehending, yet he blinded his eyes and followed his own vain desires which eventually brought him low to the position of beasts and worse.

The Koran says:

And had We willed, We would have raised him up thereby; but he inclined towards the earth and followed his lust. So the likeness of him is as the likeness of a dog; if thou attack it, it lolls its tongue out, or if thou leavest it, it lolls its tongue out. That is the similitude of those who reject Our signs. So relate the story haply they will reflect (Al-A'raf, 176).

His efforts directed to bash Islam and Muslims are as ashes, whereon the wind blows strong upon a tempestuous day. The scum he writes vanishes as jetsam, but the truth which we Muslims promulgate, profits men, and abides in the earth.

Daniel Pipes claims that he is expert on Islam, Muslims and the Arab Israeli conflict, but I see quite the opposite. He is separated from the actual life of Muslims. His hostile writings show clearly that he is not an objective source on the issues concerned.

I am not so worried when I see the wicked flourishes, because the very appearance of flourishing is a part of the punishment. Allah punishes wicked people by granting them respite and providing them worldly benefits in abundance, which encourages them in sin and transgression. Allah leaves them for a good while in their insolence wandering blindly, and then seizes them utterly unprepared while engrossed in revolt against Him. His punishment is decisive, conclusive, strict and unfailing; it strikes at the root.

As we read in the Koran:

And those who cry lies to Our signs We will draw them on little by little whence they know not; and I respite them – assuredly My guile is sure (Al-A'raf, 182, 183).

I have been watching Daniel Pipes for years, I read his senseless writings for decades and realized that the man is but implementing a vicious Zionist agenda against Islam and Muslims, and against the Arabs and the Palestinians. It is my nature to pay no attention to those who devise plots to defeat the truth. They are to be ignored and passed by, and not to be engaged in fights and fruitless controversies. But because Daniel Pipes lies and the falsehood he promulgates regarding Islam has reached the four corners of the world, I decided to expose his racism, ignorance and bigotry. Yes, time has come to put this hate monger in his right place. Time has come to make him understand that he has caused us a great pain, and that there is limit to the amount of pain we can bear.

Another reason that made me willing to confront him. Allah has devotees who seek every opportunity to defend His religion. They are His knights on earth. They fight in His cause and promulgate His Message of pure monotheism to the world. For such, Allah has written faith in their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. They are the party of Allah that will achieve felicity. I hope Allah accepts my struggle in His cause, and helps me explain His religion to all his servants.

In this article I will clarify the false allegations which Daniel Pipes impudently launched against Muslims and Islam, and the Arabs of Palestine. And most importantly, I will always remind him of the severe consequences awaiting the enemies of Allah in the present life and Hereafter.

Also, because I realized from Pipes writings that his knowledge about Islam is meager and rather scanty, I decided to include in my article a body of Islamic information that might educate a blockish like Daniel Pipes.

But before I start commenting on Daniel Pipes false allegations about Muslims and Islam, I must explain first the reasons behind Pipes vicious hostility towards Muslims and everything Islamic. The political and

religious background of Daniel Pipes is in fact the reason behind his aggressive attitude.

Daniel Pipes belongs to the neo-conservatives (neocons). The neo-conservatives are the reasons behind the chaos the Muslim world is suffering from. The neo-conservatives are mostly former leftists/liberals who converted to conservatism during the 70s and became influential when Ronald Reagan became President. Some of them are Democrats but most of them are Republicans. Their major concern is foreign policy. They strongly favor US military interventions overseas and becoming the world's policeman. Their core agenda is to reassert US global dominance through an aggressive foreign and military policy. They promoted the Iraq wars and are constantly the instigators for more confrontation with Iran and the Sudan and other Muslim states. They were among the chief instigators of the Kosovo War.

Neo-conservatives are a group of influential writers, commentators and government officials. There are few neo-conservatives who could be defined as original thinkers, they are mainly journalists, media pundits from New York intellectual circles, and the people who inhabit Georgetown and the beltway and seek administration places or advisory functions with contractors to government.

In contrast to the old conservatives, the neo-conservatives had often come from a liberal Jewish background. Instead of being anti-Semitic, they were rabidly pro-Israel. Many of today's most famous neocons are from Eastern European Jewish immigrant families (like Richard Pipes, Daniel Pipes' father) who were frequently on the edge of poverty. The Great depression radicalized many immigrants, and introduced them to the new and revolutionary ideas of socialism and communism.

Neocon ideas were given some weight during Reagan's presidency. In particular, Jean Kirkpatrick was made ambassador to the UN, and often had the president's ear on foreign policy. During the presidency of Bill Clinton, the neocons worked to develop a full plan for foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. Foremost in this plan was the idea that the US, as the world's sole super power, should work to remold the world in its image. This meant spreading free markets and elections. Think tanks were founded, and grand manifestos were written.

When George Bush the son became president, he brought many well-known neocons (Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz,

Richard pearl, among others), with him into foreign policy roles. The original plan had been to provoke confrontation with China, in an effort to either push China into reforming, or else to lessen China's influence in the rest of the world, thus increasing the power of the US. However, after the 9/11 attacks on the US, the neocons switched priorities to the Muslim world. They focused on Iraq and pushed Bush to occupy Iraq under the false pretext that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction! The Cheney-Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz axis aimed at using the US power to dominate and reshape the Middle East and, to put into effect the immortal words of Charles Perle, to send a message to America's enemies that "you're next".

After the attack of September 11, Bernard Lewis in his book 'What went wrong?' using subtle arguments, placed the blame on Islam and Islamic traditions for the failure of Middle Eastern societies to develop and modernize like the West. Lewis' book has since been followed by articles and publications, mostly by neo-conservative journalists and pundits, who reinforce Lewis' thesis and even blame Islam for the rise of terrorism as well as the rising tension between the West and the Muslim world.

The blame game is led today by neo-conservative pundits who often present Islam as the new villain to be confronted by American military power. They have consistently presented Muslims as incapable of democratic rule, and who espouse values that are antithetical to world peace and religious tolerance.

To ensure that their views are not challenged by academic community, neo-conservatives are working hard to undermine academic freedom by intimidating scholars that present a balanced view of the Middle East. Martin Kramer's Ivory Towers and Sand: The failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America, and diatribe against Middle East studies in US universities, and Daniel Pipes' Campus Watch - an organization devoted to smearing professors critical of U.S foreign policy and Israeli's treatment of Palestinians - are three such examples. This campaign is one that aims to intimidate free thinking on Middle East politics and silence voices that challenge their perspective. In addition to the web site, Middle East Forum (MEF) of Daniel Pipes, we must not forget the other on line centers devoted to attack Islam like answering Islam (Sam Shamoun), Political Islam (Bill Warner), jihad Watch (Robert Spencer and Pamela Geller) and many others.

These websites are a network of groups and individuals funded by elements within the pro-Israel lobby who are pushing Islam phobia on behalf of Israel. These online websites have been leaders in the indictment of Islam, and each of whom is, not coincidentally, a vocal advocate of Israel and its policies. They are the alligators in the swamp they have created, and are now frantically engaged in distancing themselves from their words and deeds. But the truth always appears to overshadow the falsehood they promulgate.

Among Daniel Pipes MEF's programs is Campus Watch, which tracks university professors who are perceived to be anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, pro-Palestinian, or pro-Islamist. Seen by many as an affront to academic freedom and an attempt to silence criticism of U.S. policies toward Israel and the Arab world, the program encourages students at colleges and universities to report any teachers who exhibit such behaviors in the classroom. One critic of Campus Watch, Joel Benin, a former professor of Middle East studies at Stanford University, said of the program: "Campus Watch ... compiles dossiers on professors and universities that do not meet its standard of uncritical support for the policies of George Bush and Ariel Sharon. ... The efforts to stifle public debate about U.S. Middle East policy and criticism of Israel are being promoted by a network of neo-conservative true believers with strong links to the Israeli hard right. They are enthusiastic supporters of the Bush administration's hands off approach to Ariel Sharon's suppression of the Palestinian uprising. And they are aggressive proponents of a preemptive U.S. strike against Iraq.

On US intervention in the Middle East, Pipes' success at promoting both himself and his views was underscored in 2003, when President Bush nominated Pipes to serve on the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). The nomination came just weeks after Democrats on the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee raised strong objections to Pipes' nomination. Senator Edward Kennedy commented: 'His record and experience do not reflect a commitment to bridging differences and preventing conflict. Surely the administration can find someone better to serve on the Board of the United States Institute of Peace.'

When congressional figures and media pundits expressed outrage over Bush's nomination of Pipes to the USIP, Pipes' friends in the neo-conservative community quickly came to his defense. Washington Post columnist Charles Krauthammer wrote that the "attack on Pipes" was

nothing but "another symptom of the absurd political correctness surrounding Islamic radicalism." Following strong opposition from Democratic senators, President Bush bypassed the Senate and gave Pipes a recess appointment.

When Pipes' term at USIP ended in 2005, Bush declined to re-nominate him. Pipes' advices to the USIP if fully implemented would have led the United States to war with most of the Arab world! His advices turned American democracy into dictatorship; a prosperous Republic becomes a moralistic and militarist dictatorship – a process which defines George W. Bush policy-making.

Pipes' personal website, DanielPipes.org, often attacks Islamic figures and organizations. It posts his publications, which frequently appear in the pages of rightist outlets like the New York Sun and FrontPageMagazine.com, which is a project of David Horowitz's Freedom Center. DanielPipes.org also hosts Pipes' weblog, where he discusses issues such as the potential for war between Israel and Syria and the potentially unhappy consequences for Israel of Arab demographic growth.

In addition to the neo-conservatives, Daniel Pipes also belongs to the Christian Right - Zionist coalition. In order to talk about this complex relationship we must talk first about the Christian Right and its role in shaping the foreign policy of the Middle East.

The Christian Right is a mass movement that has grown by actively involving millions of supporters. The bulk of Christian rightists are evangelical Protestants and their political ideology is rooted in a specific interpretation of Christianity.

The desire of Evangelicals today is to bring faith and politics together. They claim that there is an essential continuity in American history between the puritans of the New England colonies, who saw themselves as agents of Christ, and politicians today who say they are doing the Lord's work.

The Evangelicals also claim that America has always been defined as a Christian nation, even by its founding fathers. But this in fact is a denial of reality because the one and only mention of God in the Declaration of independence is of "Nature's God," who is not defined in any way as a

Biblical or Christian God. Nor there any mention of God in the constitution or the Federalist papers, the working documents of the Founders.

The Christian Right believes that we are close to the end of time, and before long we will be caught up in a chain of apocalyptic events. First, there will be an event called the Rapture in which the righteous will be swept up from earth to heaven. Those set behind will then suffer a seven-year period of horror under the anti-Christ, who will only be vanquished with the second coming of Christ and the battle of Armageddon. After the slaughter, a victorious Christ establishes his thousand-year kingdom based in Jerusalem.

The leaders of the religious Right believe that Christians are mandated by god to take control of political institutions and to subordinate civil law to biblical law.

By the end of the 1980, stealth tactics were used with great effect. In 1989 Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority merged into the Christian coalition. Its president was another televangelist, Pat Robertson, but its organizational genius was Ralph Reed, a young man aptly described as having the face of a choirboy, but the political instincts of Machiavelli.

Under Reed's guidance Evangelicals were encouraged to infiltrate school boards and local government, then to take over Republican committees at the precinct and district level. The aim was to ensure that Christian conservatives, not moderates, are elected as delegates to state and national Republican conventions.

By 1992, they took over the Republican Party, and 40% of there was among them a total belief that the United States was indeed involved in a war for its soul in which the Christians must be called on to save a fallen nation.

What was equally striking was the extent to which the bread – and - butter issues of politics – the economy, health care, and so on – were relegated to sidelines. Instead the focus was on school choice and school prayer, and above all, on issues such as abortion, homosexuality, and sexual permissiveness in its many forms.

The year 2000 was a watershed year in the rise of the Republican Right. By 2000, the movement had an electoral machine that was unprecedented in number and sophistication. It was in the election of the year 2000 that religion was injected into Bush campaign more than ever before. The Democrats were nowhere near matching George W. Bush's appeal to religious voters, especially to evangelicals who now could rejoice that they had a born-again leader who shared both their faith and their politics. As a result of the Christian coalition's support to Bush, he won the presidential elections in year 2000.

No one realized the importance of pleasing the Religious Right more than Karl Rove, the president's top political strategist, and no one exploited religion more effectively for political gain. Rove began packing the government with evangelicals and social conservatives. The priority was getting them into agencies and departments such as DFA, Health and Human Services, Justice and Education that deal with priority issues for the Religious Right (1).

As significant as the appointments was a new practice at the White House of consultation with the Religious Right on all initiatives affecting its agenda. Weekly conference calls were held with evangelical leaders, and a religious outreach team was set up in the West Wing to inform Christian conservative leaders of forthcoming presidential events, on occasion to seek their help in drafting legislation.

The elections of 2004 marked the peak of the Religious Right's power. The Republicans were now in control of the White House, both houses of Congress, a majority of state governorships and state assemblies.

After 9/11 the traditional foreign policy of the United States that takes into account multilateralism and playing cooperatively by international rules, was replaced by an aggressive unilateralism that to a remarkably degree placed America in the role of judge, jury and executioner in global affairs.

American Evangelicals had been the biggest cheerleaders for Bush's administration and have played an important role in shaping US policy.

George W. Bush has talked of being divinely guided, and he has suggested that American troops in Iraq are on a providential mission! The values the troops are said to be fighting for are depicted as universal ones: in Bush's words, "Not America's gift to the world but Almighty God's gift to every man and woman."

On another occasion Bush has stated that "We have a calling from beyond the stars," sending an apparently unambiguous message that America is a nation chosen to do god's will.

The president who once memorably said, "I don't do nuance," laced many of his speeches with biblical imagery. There are frequent references to "evil-doers"; talk of pursuing the "evil ones in their caves," and warning that other nations are "either with us or against us" in a battle of good against evil.

Bush constructed therefore a Manichean struggle, where Sons of Light confront Sons of darkness, and all must enlist on one side or the other, without possibility of neutrality, hesitation or middle ground.

Alliance between the Christian Right the neo-conservatives and the right-wing Zionism

Both neocons and Christian rightists had close ties with the Reagan administration, and this was the period when the neocon-Christian Right alliance was really hammered out. They both helped the Reagan administration promote anticommunist militarism in the 3rd world. This support involved a combination of lobbying, fundraising, propaganda work, and direct involvement through the Reagan administration.

The Christian Right leaders supported a strong US global presence, and like neocons, they were strongly committed to the State of Israel.

George W. Bush's election to the White House in 2000 marked another shift. Both neocons and Christian rightists had been mostly excluded from the administration of George Bush Senior and that of Bill Clinton, but George W. Bush welcomed them. Neocons were appointed to several key second-tier posts in the Defence Department and other agencies.

After September 11, neocons presented an idealized picture of the US as united, determined and virtuous, with a strength rooted in her glorious free enterprise system. They dismissed any criticism of the war on terrorism as unpatriotic.

The Christian right response was more complex. They declared that the 9-11 attacks happened because the US had turned away from God. They cited abortion, homosexuality, and secularism as examples of American sinfulness, but also consumerism and greed. Most of the Christian Right groups rejected Islam as a false religion, demonized “radical Islam” (2).

In the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the neo-conservatives have used the anniversary to talk about the Arab Spring and the democratization of the Middle East: Egypt and other countries are likely to fall into the hands of “Islamists”, but there is cause for hope if we were in charge! Islam fascism will likely prevail in Egypt and across the Arab World, but yet remains a hope for the liberals and democrats to prevail, but if they don’t, which is likely, they would have if we the vanguard party of the global democratic revolution had been listened to!

This new wave of conspiracy-minded hate-mongers promulgated by the neoconservatives, in addition to their past interference in other countries’ affairs as they did with Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the blind support to Israel on the expense of the Palestinians, show clearly that it is neo-conservatism, not Islam, that is the heir and successor to 20th century totalitarianism.

Christian rightists joined forces with Zionists and now call themselves ‘Christian Zionists’. They both ardently support Israel. They believe that a strong Jewish state is part of God’s plan for the End Times – the final struggle against Satan. However, as part of this apocalyptic vision, most Christian rightists believe that all Jews and other unbelievers will be killed unless they convert to Christianity, the “true” faith.

They believe that the cataclysmic events heralding the second coming will all happen in the territory of Biblical Israel, the territory that stretches

from the Nile to the Euphrates. This land, they claim, was covenanted by God to the Jews and must be reclaimed by Israel before the second coming can happen and before Jesus can build his kingdom in Jerusalem. Many Christian Zionists even believe that the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, one of Islam's holiest sites, must be destroyed as a pre-condition for Christ's return.

Now if you hold these views the political implications are clear: trading land for peace, the longstanding premise of any peace deal between the Palestinians and Israel is a heresy.

Because of the strength of their numbers, and their passionate commitment to Israel, the Christian Zionists have become an extraordinarily powerful force on Israel's behalf—in many ways even more powerful than AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs lobby.

Over the past 22 years, the Christian Zionists have created literally dozens of pro-Israel organizations, notably the Stand for Israel Movement and CIPAC, the Christian Israel Public Action Committee.

They raise each year around two hundred millions of dollars to sponsor Jewish immigration to Israel, and to expand Israeli settlements on the West bank and the Golan heights. These too are pre-conditions in the eyes of pre-millennialists for the End-Days to unfold and for Judgment Day to happen.

Evangelicals also organize pro- Israel solidarity rallies and distribute videos that encourage the faithful to pray for Israel's victory over its enemies. The deceased Jerry Falwell said, "The Bible Belt is Israel's only safety belt right now." There is no safety belt for Palestinians.

Many Christian Zionists feel that Palestinians should simply be brushed aside by destiny, and be transferred to Jordan or some other Arab country.

The huge donations (200 million dollars/year) the Religious Right donates Israel each year for building settlements on the Palestinian land, results in occupying the Palestinian land by force, demolishing their houses, expelling Palestinian families to barren lands and keep

them there without shelter, and then those who oppose such evil treatment are killed without mercy under the pretext of being terrorists threatening the security of Israel.

For their part, successive Israeli governments have welcomed an alliance with Evangelical Christians, and do all they can to cultivate it. A special section in the Israeli embassy in Washington was set up to cement ties with Evangelicals.

Major Jewish organizations in the U.S. also welcomed an alliance of convenience with such a fervently pro-Israel community. But many American Jews feel their interests are not well served by the religious Right assault on the wall of separation between church and state. The last thing they want is for America to be formally defined as a Christian nation.

In November 2005, Abe Foxman, Director of the ADL and Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, criticized the religious Right for its bigotry. Remarkably, they were quickly silenced by other Jewish leaders, and by threats from Evangelicals that they might withdraw their support for Israel.

American Jews also wonder whether Christian Zionists are anything more than fair weather friends. After all, in the Apocalyptic “End Days”, as prophesied by the Evangelicals that two thirds of the Jews will die in the Battle of Armageddon, and the remaining third will have to choose to convert to Christianity.

The choice “die or convert” is obviously not the most appealing one for Jews, even if they believe, as they do, that evangelical scenarios are nonsense.

Based on the above, the political and religious background of Daniel Pipes is now clear to the reader. He is a Republican neo-conservative Zionist working very close with the Christian Right and Zionist organizations. His organization is heavily sponsored by Zionists and Christian Rightists.

A non-exhaustive Right Web investigation of MEF's Form 990 tax records from 2000-2009 shows that the organization's coffers have been replete with funds from foundations identified by CAP as the top funders of the Islamophobia network. During this period, Daniel Pipes' MEF received at least \$325,000 from the Russell Berrie Foundation, \$240,000 from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, \$200,000 from the Newton and Rochelle Becker Charitable Trust, and over \$2 million from both the Donors Capital Fund and the William Rosenwald Family Fund. All told, Right Web identified at least \$8,801,450 raised by MEF in this period, primarily coming from pro-Israel organizations and other right-wing outfits.

It is my view that the coalition between Christian Rightists and Zionists is highly hypocritical. The Jews do not believe in Jesus or his mother. They do not believe in Christianity or in Jesus' Gospel. What they do care about is the large donations given by the Christian Right to Israel each year to build Jewish settlements on the Palestinian land.

Now I proceed to comment on Daniel Pipes false allegations about Islam and Muslims.

- Pipes reject the statement that Islam is the only religion which Allah will accept from His servants on the Day of Judgment.

This issue is important, I am afraid I have to comment on his statement in detail.

The statement that Islam is the only religion that will be accepted by Allah (God) on the Day of Judgment is correct. Islam is not a new religion because "submission to the will of Allah", i.e. Islam, has always been the only acceptable religion in the sight of Allah. Islamic monotheism is one religion for all and Allah is the Lord who deserves to be worshipped alone.

Islam is the religion eminently professed by all the previous Prophets, the one and the only system of faith and worship established by Allah, the Creator.

Allah says in the Koran:

And We sent never a Messenger before thee except that We revealed to him, saying, 'There is no god but I; so serve Me.' (in Islam) (Al-Anbiya', 25).

Since the beginning of creation, mankind forms one nation, one closest brotherhood as being men and women united in the highest service of Allah, the One and only God.

As we read in the Koran:

'Surely this community of yours is one community, and I am your Lord; so serve Me.' (Al-Anbiya', 92).

Islam then is the true "natural religion", and it is the same eternal message revealed through the ages to all of Allah's Prophets and Messengers. All of Allah's prophets, which include Abraham, Noah, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, brought the same Message of Pure Monotheism. For this reason, the Prophet Muhammad was not the founder of a new religion, as many people mistakenly think, but he was the final Prophet of Islam. By revealing His final Message to Muhammad, which is an eternal and universal message for all of mankind, Allah finally fulfilled the covenant that He made with Abraham, who was one of the earliest and greatest prophets. Suffice it to say that the way of Islam is the same as the way of the prophet Abraham, because both the Bible and the Koran portray Abraham as a towering example of someone who submitted himself completely to Allah and worshipped Him without intermediaries. Once this is realized, it should be clear that Islam has the most continuous and universal Message of any religion, because all Prophets and Messengers were Muslims because they all submitted to Allah's will, and preached Islam, i.e. submission to the will of Almighty God.

The Koran openly proclaims that Islam is not the creed of Mohammad alone, but also all prophets before him.

The Messenger believes in what was sent down to him from his Lord, and the believers; each one believes in Allah and His angels, and in His books and His Messengers; we make no distinction between any one of

His Messengers; and they say: 'We hear and obey. Our lord, grant us Thy forgiveness; unto Thee is the homecoming!' (Albaqarah, 285).

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.

As the Koran says:

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 cornerstone of Islam is pure monotheism (Tauhid). Tauhid means there is no god but Allah – and the believers must turn to Him in prayer away from worshipping any other.

All the other teachings of Islam are founded upon pure monotheism. Accordingly, Islam proclaims Monotheism (Allah is one and is to be worshipped alone) to be the path to salvation.

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 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).

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.

The Koran says:

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 Christians 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 Muhammad's names) (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).

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.

Muhammad also came to the world because of the corruption of the New Testament. 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.

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.

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 our 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].

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."

In this connection I also 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..."

The present adulterated Books contain therefore 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).

Allah also says in the Koran:

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, 78).

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.

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).

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 oneness of Allah has been strongly emphasized in the Koran:

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 (Jesus as son of God, saint, pope, idol, animal, grave, tree, nature, pope, priest...etc) 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).

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).

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, and that is Islam. 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 Solomon! 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. 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, but because 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 cry 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).

Conclusion:

There is really only one true religion, the Message of Allah, submission to the will of Allah: this is called Islam. It was the religion preached by Moses and Jesus; it was the religion of Abraham, Noah, and all the prophets, by whatever name, it may be called. If people corrupt that pure light, and call their religion by different names, we may allow the names for convenience. But truth must prevail over all. Islam is therefore the only religion that Allah will accept from His servants on the Day of Judgment.

- In one of his writings Daniel Pipes mentioned that the Koran is not a product of Muhammad or even of Arabia, but a collection of early Judo-Christian liturgical materials stitched together to meet the need of a later age. When Pipes was criticized by CAIR for such despicable and ignorant statement, he, as usual, backed off and claimed that he was not speaking in his own voice but he borrowed this phrase from a book entitled “The Quest for the Historical Muhammad”.

A writer borrowing bad quotes about Islam is in fact agreeing with such quotes. This is exactly as Pope Benedict did when quoted: “what Muhammad brought was evil and inhuman”. He angered the Muslim world and gained their disrespect.

If there is some historical events in the Koran similar to those found in the Old or new Testaments, this doesn't mean that the Koran is a collection of early Judeo-Christian materials, but rather emphasizing that the religion of Allah throughout all ages is one, and that the Koran is the culmination of all previous divine Books.

Because Allah is Most Merciful, He replaced the abused Bibles with a far superior Book, the Koran. It was His plan 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 that stood the test of time – 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 consequently led people astray.

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).

The Koran is the Word of Allah and an undeniable proof for Muhammad's prophet-hood.

The Koran, which Muhammad brought, has challenged all mankind with all their literary geniuses and scientists, from the first day of its revelation to the Last Day, to produce a like of it or even a single chapter of it.

If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down onto Our servant (Muhammad), then produce a chapter of the like thereof, and call your witnesses, supporters, who are apart from Allah, if you are truthful. (al-Baqara, 2.23).

It is an established fact that Prophet Muhammad was unlettered. But the Koran, which he brought, has challenged all mankind with all their literary geniuses and scientists, from the first day of its revelation to the Last Day to produce a like of it or even a single chapter of it:

The Koran openly declares:

You (O Muhammad) was not a reader of any Scripture before it, nor did you write (such a Scripture) with your right hand, for then those who follow falsehood might (have a right) to doubt it. (al-Ankabut, 29.48)

Mankind has since been unable to produce a like of only one of its chapters, including, of course, its shortest ones. Those who have ventured to do that have all laid themselves open to ridicule. This is a clear proof for the Divine authorship of the Quran.

The Koran was revealed in 23 years, yet there are not any contradictory points in it. It is inconceivable that any book written by a mortal being in 23 years, a book of divine truths, metaphysics, religious beliefs and worship, prayer, law and morality, a book fully describing the other life, a book of psychology, sociology, epistemology, and history, and a book containing scientific facts and the principles of a happy life, does not have any contradictory points. This shows clearly that the Koran is a divine Book:

Will they not then ponder on the Koran? If it had been from other than God they would have found therein much contradiction and incongruity. (al-Nisa', 4.82)

The Koran is beyond compare from the viewpoint of its styles and eloquence. All the sentences, words and even letters used in the Koran form such a miraculous harmony that, with respect to rhythm, music, and even geometric proportions and mathematical measures, and with respect to how many times each is used in the whole of the Kuran, each is in the exact place and interwoven and interrelated with others. The literary masterpiece of no one, including the sayings of the Prophet himself, upon him be peace and blessings, cannot compete with the Quran.

The eloquent Arabs used to hold poetry competitions and the poems of the winners were written in gold and hang on the wall of the Ka'ba. The Prophet Muhammad was unlettered and no one had heard him say even a couple of poetry. However, the Koran challenged the known experts in these fields and forced them to surrender. When those who persisted in unbelief heard the Koran, they were captivated by it. Nevertheless, in order to prevent the spread of Islam, they labeled it as something magical and advised people not to listen to it. But when those, like Hansa and Lebid, who believed in the Quran, gave up inventing poetry after the Quran's revelation in respect for and awe of its styles and eloquence, the unbelievers had to confess: 'If we call it a piece of poetry, it is not. If we designate it a piece of rhymed prose, it is not. If we describe it as the word of a soothsayer, it is not.' At times, they could not help listening to the Prophet's recitation secretly at night but they could not overcome their arrogance and so believe in its divine origin.

Arabic became so rich through the Koran and attained such a high level that it developed as the language of the most magnificent civilization of world history with all its scientific, religious, metaphysical, literary, economic, juridical, social and political aspects

Despite its apparent simplicity, the Koran has such depths of meaning that everyone from the commonest of people to the most high-ranking

scholar, scientist and literary man, finds his share in it. The Quran is such a book that it illuminates the ways of poets, musicians and orators, sociologists, psychologists, scientists, economists and jurists. Also, the founders of all the true spiritual orders and the schools of law and conduct found in it the principles of their orders and schools. The Quran has shown everybody the ways to solve their problems. It also satisfies everyone in his spiritual quests. Is there another book of the same character, quality and level next to the Koran?

The Koran describes man with all his physical and spiritual aspects and contains principles to solve all the problems that may appear at any time and in any place concerning all the social, economic, juridical, political and administrative fields of life. Furthermore, it satisfies both the mind and spirit at the same time and guarantees happiness in both worlds.

However great a genius one may be, it is impossible for one to establish rules to solve all kinds of problems that mankind may encounter until the Last Day. Even the best of systems that do not originate in the Koran or the Divine Revelation cannot last without undergoing revisions at least every 50 years. More important than this, none of those systems can promise man eternal happiness; the principles of all of them are restricted to the worldly life, which is transient and infinitely short when compared to the afterlife. By contrast, none of the principles which the Quran laid down centuries ago has become outmoded and worn-out with the passage of time, nor do they have any defects or shortcomings. For example, the Quran enjoins that wealth should not become a means of prosperity circulated only among the rich (al-Hashr, 59.7); that government offices should be entrusted to competent persons qualified for them and absolute justice should be the rule in public administration and judging between people (al-Nisa', 4.58), and it lays down that a man has only that for which he makes effort (al-Najm, 53.39) and that whoever kills a human being unjustly is as if he had killed all mankind (al-Ma'ida, 5.32). All such eternal, golden principles and many others like the prohibition of usury, gambling, alcohol and all kinds of illicit intercourse, and the injunctions with respect to praying, fasting, alms-giving and good conduct-principles strengthened through love and fear of God and through the promise of an eternal, happy life and fear of the

eternal punishment of Hell-constitute another undeniable proof for the Divine authorship of the Quran (3).

Also, the Koran unveils the mystery of man, creation and the universe. These three creatures of Allah, that is, man, the Kuran and the universe, are the three 'books' which make the Creator known to us. They are the three versions or expressions of the same truth. Therefore, the One Who has created man and the universe is He Who has revealed the Qur'an.

You cannot find one who does exactly what he tells others to do or one whose work exactly reflects himself. However, the Koran is exactly identical with the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, which received it from Allah and designed his life according to it. It could be said that the Koran is the embodiment of Muhammad in words or Muhammad is the embodiment of the Qur'an in belief and conduct. They are the two expressions of the same truth. This clearly shows that both the Qur'an and Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, are the works of Allah Almighty.

A writer usually writes under the influence of the conditions surrounding him. It is almost impossible to find a writer, whether he is a realist or idealist or even a science-fiction writer, who can write completely detached from the conditions surrounding him. By contrast, even though revealed in parts on certain occasions, the Koran is equally universal and objective where it deals with particular issues as it is exact and precise where it deals with universal matters. It uses precise expressions even while describing the beginning of creation and end of time and the creation of man and his future life in the other world. Also, just as it sometimes draws universal conclusions from particular events, so too it sometimes goes from universal principles to particular events. This is typical of the Koranic style, which is impossible to find in any human work and is, therefore, another sign of its Divine origin.

The Koran contains at least the principles of all the branches of knowledge either in summary or detail and not even a single piece of the knowledge it contains has ever been contradicted.

There has been no one in human history who has written books accurate to the same degree on both religion and law and sociology and psychology and eschatology and morality and history and literature and so on. However, the Qur'an contains at least the principles of all the branches of knowledge either in summary or detail and not even a single piece of the knowledge it contains has ever been contradicted. Must this not be enough for one unprejudiced to acknowledge its Divine origin?

Which writer can claim that whatever he writes is absolutely correct and cannot be contradicted until the Last Day? At a time when the conclusions of science soon become 'outmoded' and worn-out and even the previous divine Scriptures such as the Torah and Gospels undergo continuous alterations-even a superficial study of the issues of the Bible published in different times and in different languages will be enough to see the great alterations it has undergone-the truths of the Koran retain their freshness. As time passes, the Koran grows ever younger. Despite all the efforts to find mistakes and contradictions in it since the beginning of its revelation, it has remained unchanged and displayed its uniqueness, conquering every day new hearts and its hidden unlimited treasures being discovered one by one or growing to full bloom like a heavenly rose with countless petals.

However knowledgeable you are and if you are famous for your truthfulness, can you speak on behalf of the president, the prime minister and all of the ministers, and also on behalf of the associations of literary men, lawyers and craftsmen, and the board of university lecturers and scientists? If you can, can you claim that you represented them all as perfectly as each would want you to? If you can, can you legislate for all the affairs of the country? This is just what the Prophet achieved through the Koran. Now, how can you claim that an unlettered one, who had had nothing to do with any such affairs until his fortieth year, achieved this without Divine inspiration and support?

If Prophet Muhammad had written the Koran by himself, he should never have mentioned some incidents concerning him.

The Koran gives an important place to the slander hypocrites uttered against Aisha the Prophet's wife. No one, especially if that one claims Prophet-hood, mentions a grave slander against his wife in the book he writes by himself.

- Daniel Pipes claims that a few scholars go even further, doubting the existence of Muhammad.

As for those who doubt the existence of Muhammad, I would say: 'The divine disposition of events in the coming of Islam and its promulgation by the Holy Prophet are themselves evidence of the truth of Islam and its all reaching character; for there is nothing which it has not influenced.'

In *Histoire De La Turquie*, Paris, 1854, Vol. II, PP. 276-277, the French historian Lamartine described Muhammad in the following words:

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislators, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one third of the inhabited world; and more than that he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs, and the souls...his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death; all these attest not to an imposter but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was two-fold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with words...On the basis of a Book (the Koran), every letter of which has become law, he created a nationality which blended together people of every tongue and every race."

Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?"

Ranking the Prophet No. 1 in his list of the most influential of all heroes of history, the American researcher, astronomer, and mathematician Dr. Heart writes:

"My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels. It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be the most influential single figure in human history."

If Muhammad never existed, his followers never would have reached one billion and five hundred million followers inhabiting the four corners of the world! Moreover, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. Thousands of non-Muslims embrace it every day.

- Daniel Pipes opposes the Koranic verse stating that the Jews were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus.

Pipes opposition shows his ignorance of the Bible and the Gospel altogether.

Curses were pronounced on those among the children of Israel who rejected faith, by the tongue of David as indicated in Psalms cix 17-18; Lxxviii 21-22 (therefore the Lord heard this and was wrath: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel; because they believed not in God, and trusted not in His salvation."); Psalms L xix. 22-28, and Psalms v. 10.

They were also cursed by the tongue of Jesus: “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell? (Matt. xxiii. 33 and Matt. xii. 34).

The Koran confirms these curses:

Cursed were the unbelievers of the children of Israel by the tongue of David, and Jesus Mary’s son; that, for their rebelling and their transgression (Al-Maidah,, 78).

They used not to forbid one another from evil-doing, sins and disbelief which they committed.

They forbade not one another any dishonor that they committed; surely evil were the things they did (Al-maidah, 79).

At the time of the Prophet the Jews breached their covenant with him and allied themselves with his enemies at the time of war in order to see him defeated. For that reason Allah’s wrath fell upon them. And in torment they will abide.

Thou seest many of them making unbelievers their friends. Evil is that they have forwarded to their account, that Allah is angered against them, and in the chastisement they shall dwell forever (Al-Maidah, 80).

Their treachery went to the extent that they even tried to kill the Prophet twice.

A good portion of the Children of Israel disobeyed their Lord in several instances. They incurred His curse (see Deut. xi. 28, and xxviii. 15-68: and numerous passages like Hoses viii. 14 and ix 1); they provoked His wrath (see numerous passages like Deut. i 34; Matt. iii 7); they forsook Allah, and worshipped evil (see Jeremiah, xvi. 11, 13). That is their record.

The Jews angered Allah when they denied Him and slaughtered their Prophets. The Jews shed the blood of Prophet Zachariah, son of barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar (Mart. Xxiii, 35). They also killed John the Baptist. He was bound, imprisoned,

and beheaded, and his head presented to a dancing harlot (Matt. xvi. 1-11.).

Those who disbelieve in the signs of Allah and slay the Prophets without right, and slay such men as bid to justice – do thou give them the good tidings of a painful chastisement; their works have failed in this world and the next; they have no helpers (Al-Imran, 21, 22).

- Daniel Pipes rejects the Koranic verses describing the Jews who breached the Sabbath as descendants of apes and swine.

The punishment for breach of the Sabbath under the Mosaic Law was death (Exod. Xxxi. 14). There have been Jewish people living as a fishing community in a seaside town who persisted in breaking the Sabbath and were turned into apes.

Allah says in the His Last Testament:

And well you know there were those among you that transgressed the Sabbath, and We said to them, 'Be you apes, miserably slinking!' (Al-Baqara, 65).

As mentioned in the Koran, the Jews of Medina hated Muslims for no other reason than that they believe in Allah and the Koran and in all divine books which had been sent down before. Perhaps they hated Muslims because they submit to their Lord and obey Him while most of the Jews were in rebellion against Allah, their Lord.

The Koran says in this respect:

Say: "People of the Book, do you hate us for any other cause than that we believe in Allah, and what has been sent down to us, and what was sent down before, and that most of you are ungodly?" (Al-Maidah, 59).

Then Allah instructed his prophet to say to them, "Shall I inform you of what is worse: you stir yourselves against your kind, and worse, against yourselves, and far worse is that you have come within the measurement of Allah's wrath."

Accordingly, Allah has decreed that they be monkeyfied and be vested with swinish disposition, and their monkey and swine-like character and behavior be viewed with contempt and that they be despised and rejected of men and be worshippers of idols. These and such like persons have indeed assumed the worse position in society here and Hereafter and strayed far away from the path of rectitude.

The Koran says:

Shall I tell you of recompense with Allah worse than that? Whomsoever Allah has cursed, and with whom He is wroth, and made some of them apes and swine, and worshippers of idols – they are worse situated, and have gone further astray from the right way (Al-Maidah, 60).

For men possessed by devils, and the devils being sent into swine (see Matt. viii 28-32). Or perhaps both apes and swine are allegorical: those who falsified Allah's scriptures became lawless like apes, and those who succumbed to filth, gluttony, or gross living became like swine.

- Daniel Pipes attacks Hamas and claims it is an organization of terrorism.

On January 25, 2006, democratic elections were held for the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), the legislature of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Final results show that Hamas won the election, with 74 seats to the ruling Fath organization. Hamas with the majority of the 132 seats was able to form a majority government on their own. Of the Electoral Lists, Hamas received 44.45% and Fath 41.43% and of the Electoral Districts, Hamas party candidates received 41.73% and Fath party candidates received 36.96%.

Hamas is not a terrorist group as Pipes claims. Hamas now leads a legitimate, democratically elected government. In the context of nearly 40 years of Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, Hamas is best understood not as a terrorist group but as, "the radicalized military expression of a national liberation movement." Hamas resorted to force in the past in order to resist Israeli occupation, but now it fully engages

the rules of democracy and focuses its efforts on social welfare programs for poor Palestinians. Former world leaders, including Nelson Mandela and the late Menachem Begin, former prime minister of Israel, also employed violence in nationalist struggles. Hamas is the only Palestinian group with the legitimacy and expertise needed to bring peace.

- Daniel Pipes claims that Islam wants to impose itself on the United States

Muslims living in foreign countries respect their own values and at the same time submit to the law of the host country. Muslims in America live willingly under the American constitution, but also we must not neglect the fact that some important aspects of a Muslim life should be dealt with according to the Islamic Law, such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, women and men rights in Islam, custody, guardianship, Halal food, commercial transactions devoid of usury and so forth. As for capital punishment, Muslims submit completely to the articles of the American constitution concerned. They don't use the Islamic capital punishment in the host country at all.

Muslims in the United States and Europe have the right to live in piety according to their own law. In the west Muslims are surrounded by all kinds of temptation and dissipation. To mention just a few: sex outside marriage, fornication, gambling, pornography, nakedness, severed family ties, narcotics, trafficking, wine, pork, using usury in transactions, crime, rape...etc. If Muslim youth are subjected to such temptations and social ills they might be driven to total ruin with no end.

The Islamic Law (Sharia) has been operating in UK in parallel to the British legal system, since 1982. Sheikhs issue religious rulings on matters of Muslim personal or civil law such as divorce, marriage, inheritance and settlement of dowry payments.

Those prohibiting Muslims from applying certain rules of their law are in fact opposing Allah's commands. They in fact have taken Allah as

a rival. Are Pipes and all those standing behind him a match to Allah? Allah defends his religion and fights with the believers.

Lo! Allah defendeth those who are true. Lo! Allah loveth not each treacherous ingrate (Al-Hajj, 38).

Those working hard to prohibit Muslims from applying their peaceful law have earned evil deeds, they have chosen a dangerous path, they are but bringing the wrath of Allah over their heads.

As we read in the Koran:

For them is chastisement in the present life; and the chastisement of the world to come is yet more grievous; they have none to defend them from Allah (al-Ra'd, 34).

Why then all this senseless uproar we see from Daniel pipes and the hate mongers using him?

- Pipes displays a racist's distaste for Muslim immigrants. He argues that Western European societies are unprepared for the massive immigration of brown-skinned peoples cooking strange foods and maintaining different standards of hygiene...All immigrants bring exotic customs and attitudes, but Muslim customs are more troublesome than most!

All Jews in the United States are allowed to abide by their Jewish beliefs and law. If you happen to drive by in New York City in Brooklyn in the Williamsburg, Boro Park or Crown Heights area, you can easily notice Jewish groups living together in neighborhoods where they could continue with their Orthodox Jewish Traditions, Customs and Culture. Most of them are wearing long black garbs, black hats and long beards. Men have curls by their side. The women will be dressed according to their Jewish Tradition. A custom called Tzniyus (modest). No part of their body will be exposed except from their palm and face. They will only wear skirts or dresses, for pants are forbidden. Married

women will either wear a wig or Tichel (head-scarf) to cover their hair.

On the other hand, we see veiled Muslim women are attacked in Europe and the United States, the Sharia law is attacked, Muslims are considered as terrorists... etc.

The Jews enjoy eating their kosher food, while a big fuss is made over Muslims' Halal food!

Why then this detestable double standard?

It seems that Daniel Pipes has forgotten that his parents were immigrants too. His parents were Polish Jews who had each fled German-occupied Poland, and met in the United States.

At the end of World War II millions of refugees were homeless, the European economy had collapsed, and 70% of the European industrial infrastructure was destroyed. Around 50-72 million persons died. The Jewish population suffered horribly. Hundreds of thousands of Jews, survivors of the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis, sought secure homes beyond their native lands.

About 6 million Polish citizens – nearly 21.4% of Poland's population – died between 1939 and 1945 as a result of the occupation many of whom were Jews. Over 90% of the death toll came through non-military losses, as most of the civilians were targeted by various deliberate actions by Germans and the Soviets.

Polish immigration to the United States occurred in waves. The first wave of immigrants, arriving in the mid-1800s through 1914, were considered a chlebam, or "bread," emigrants (Corrsin, 1983; Greene, 1980) because they came to America for economic and religious reasons. Of these immigrants, 35 percent were illiterate unskilled laborers in their own country (Lieberson, 1980). These immigrants took low-paying jobs and lived in crowded dwellings just to make a meager living.

Individuals in the second wave were primarily political prisoners, dissidents, and intellectuals from refugee camps all over Europe. These waves of poor white-skinned immigrants cooking strange foods and maintaining different standards of hygiene took decades to assimilate in the American society. They also had their own customs and traditions which were totally different from the native customs of the host country. No one criticized the Polish immigrants while trying to assimilate into American culture. No one criticized them while trying to align themselves with other middle-class and professional groups in America.

Why all this ugly racism Daniel Pipes is spreading about Muslims?

- Daniel Pipes claims that Islam has nothing to offer

It is Islam that has taught human beings that the Lord their God is One and Only. That He has no partners, no wife, and no son, and that there can be no compromise on the unity of God.

It is Islam that has taught human beings that they are all equal and that no Arab is superior to non-Arab, nor a non-Arab is superior to an Arab and that the best of all of us in the sight of God is the one who is most righteous.

It is Islam that has taught human beings that they are all brothers and sisters created from a single pair of a male and a female.

It is Islam that has taught humanity the value of the intellect, the importance of reflection, and the role of the mind in attaining faith. Christians teach that one can never become a believer except when the Holy Spirit mysteriously occupies one's heart. Islam teaches that faith is the fruit of reason and it is through continuous reflection on the wonders of creation that faith can be obtained, maintained, and nurtured.

It is Islam that has taught humanity that people of all races, all colors, and all ethnicities are perfectly capable of attaining faith in the One and Only God. Hindus believe that Hinduism is just for those

privileged to be born in the faith and therefore they do not invite the "less privileged" to embrace their faith. Jews believe that they are the chosen race and even when they accept others to embrace Judaism; those converts are always lower in rank than those born as Jews. Islam rejects all that and calls upon all people of all backgrounds to submit themselves to their Creator. Once they do, they automatically become members of the community of Islam with the same rights and duties as any other Muslim. Islam is not, and can never be, the monopoly of one race or a certain linguistic group.

It is Islam that has taught humanity that God is absolutely just and Merciful and that He will never punish one person for the sins of others. Christianity teaches that Adam and Eve had bequeathed their sin to all their descendants and thus all humans are born in this "Original Sin" and therefore Jesus Christ had to be sacrificed on the cross to redeem humanity of its 'original sin.' Islam says, NO. Humans are not born in sin. No person will be held accountable for another's mistakes. Every soul will pay for its own deeds, only. Divine justice is absolute.

It is Islam that has taught humanity that righteous deeds are necessary for salvation. Faith is indispensable, but not sufficient. Humans will be admitted to Paradise by their faith and their righteous acts. They have to go together, hand in hand. Many Christian denominations teach that faith in Jesus is enough for salvations. If you accept Jesus sacrifice on the cross, then you are saved regardless of what you may do afterwards because Jesus has already paid for all your sins. Islam totally disagrees. No one can pay for your sins. Faith, doing righteousness, avoiding evil, and continuous repentance are the only ways for salvation. Islam does not accept, nor condone the corrupting influence on the individual as well as the society that can be caused by the idea of a "guaranteed" salvation.

It is Islam that has taught humanity how to balance the needs of this life and the next. Islam does not accept the idea that renunciation of this world is the best means to get salvation in the next. Catholicism and Buddhism teach that by living a reclusive life, one can attain higher spirituality. Buddhism even taught the recluse must make his living by begging. Islam rejects the whole notion of the alleged

goodness of renouncing the world. Islam teaches that best means for advancement in the next life is by getting involved in the affairs of this world by commanding good and forbidding evil; by helping one another in righteousness and piety; by doing Jihad, by struggling against all forms of evil, injustice, tyranny, intolerance...Islam does not teach rejection of the world, it teaches involvement, struggle, and change.

It is Islam that has taught humanity that kindness to parents, to kin, to neighbors, and to fellow humans is an essential part of faith and righteousness. Christianity claims that Jesus has taught that one cannot come closer to God unless one hates one's father, mother, wife, children,... (Luke 14:26) Islam teaches the opposite. One cannot come closer to God unless one acts so kindly towards one's mother, father, family, neighbors, etc.

It is Islam that has taught humanity that God is very close to them and that He is with them wherever they are and that He hears their prayers and respond to them. Islam teaches that God is so close that He needs no intermediaries to mediate between Him and His servants. Islam does not accept the concept of priesthood and clergy acting as mediators between God and humans. Islam teaches that one does not have to confess one's sins to a priest in order to get forgiveness. One can simply confess one's sins to God without any human intervention, seek forgiveness, and God will grant it. Many Jews today still believe that prayers cannot reach God and get a response from Him unless the prayer is made at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. Some even fax their prayers or send it via the Internet to Jerusalem so that someone there would take it and put it on the Wailing Wall to reach God. Islam teaches that wherever one maybe, one can pray to God, confess to God, seek God's help and forgiveness, and God will certainly respond. No human intervention is needed, no special place or time is necessary. God is always very close.

It is Islam that has taught humans to accept and respect their human nature. Islam recognizes the strengths, the weaknesses, and the needs of humans. Islam never requires humans to behave as angels or to ignore their physical and emotional needs. Christianity does not allow divorce. Islam recognizes it as a human reality. Catholicism

considers celibacy an ideal. Islam does not.

There is nothing like Islam on earth. There is no faith, no religion, no ideology, no system of belief that can rival Islam in its clarity and simplicity, in its submission to God, the One and Only; in its rationality and intellectual depth; in its egalitarianism and equality; in its spirituality; in its code of ethics; in its unparalleled balance between the needs of this life and the demands of the hereafter. Islam has elevated the human soul, body, and mind to heights that have never been reached by any other faith or tradition. Islam is the only religion that has truly enabled human beings to fulfill their humanity.

Islam is not just a set of ideals; it is a tremendous force capable of transforming and regenerating individuals as well societies and whole nations. The influence of Islam upon the first society that embraced it, the Arabian Peninsula, was nothing short of a revolution. Islam has revolutionized Arabia in all aspects of life: politically, economically, socially, and above all morally.

It was Islam that transformed the fiercely independent-minded Arabs who knew no government, obeyed no authority, recognized no state into a nation with a government, a capital, and a respected authority.

It was Islam that taught the anarchic Arabs how to elect a head of state from among themselves and how to run their government upon principles of mutual consultation.

It was Islam that taught the Arabs who never agreed on any form of law to build a nation based on the rule of one sacred, just, and merciful law. Islam also taught them that they were all equals before the law and no one even the daughter of the Prophet was above the law.

It was Islam that transformed the intensely militant Arabs from a group of tribes massacring each other all the time -- to the extent that they had to agree on four months of peace every year to prevent their whole race from extinction due to the incessant wars -- into one nation with united tribal armies able to confront and defeat the armies of the surrounding superpowers: the Byzantines and the Sassanids.

It was Islam that abolished usury from Arabia and taught the Arabs how to make business transactions justly and fairly without exploitation or abuse.

It was Islam that abolished the gruesome habit of female infanticide from Arabia.

It was Islam that taught the Arabs that women were full human beings, not mere chattel, and that they were their sisters in humanity and in faith. It was Islam that guaranteed for Arabian women their rights to: inheritance, property, divorce, and independent legal personality.

It was Islam that eradicated Alcohol, with all its evils, from Arabia. It was Islam that ended all forms of prostitution, gambling, and intoxicants from the Arabian society. And it was Islam that opened all doors for freeing slaves.

It was Islam that uprooted racism from the Arab mind completely to the extent that the deeply racist and arrogant Arabs would accept to be soldiers in armies whose leaders were black Africans.

And above all, it was Islam that transformed the idolatrous and superstitious Arabs into believers in the One and Only God. It was Islam that transformed them from idol worshippers into a people who stand together in one line in prayer and prostrate their heads to the Almighty.

Arabia before Islam was a society bound by tradition and precedent. Whatever was customary was right and proper. Whatever the forefathers had done deserved to be imitated. Islam rejected this blind faith in tradition. Islam challenged all the customs of the society. Islam questioned all the mores and manners of the Arabs. Islam introduced to them the standards of morality and the fundamentals of right and wrong. Islam taught them how to think critically of everything around them and how to reject the bad habits and keep the good ones. Islam showed them the proper way for peace and happiness in this life and felicity in the next. This was the essence of the revolution that Islam was.

The question that irresistibly comes to the mind is this: that was the past, what about now? Can Islam revolutionize the world today as it did to seventh century Arabia? Is Islam relevant today? Does Islam have anything to offer today's world? Yes, a great deal.

For Muslims living in the West, it would be reasonable to focus on what Islam has to offer to the Western society at the dawn of a new millennium. The West has its own virtues as well as vices. Islam can improve and enhance all the virtues while eliminating -- or, at least, minimizing -- the vices.

In a society where alcohol is the number one cause of criminal death and injury; where alcohol costs billions of dollars each year in medical expenses and property damage; where alcohol consumption causes the death of hundreds of thousands of people annually; where alcohol is a major cause of rape and domestic violence -- Is there any faith more able than Islam to prevent all the ills of alcohol?

In a society still tormented by racial strife; where "black" churches are continuously fire-bombed by bigots of all kinds; where one rarely sees a black person in a "white" church or a white person in a "black" church -- Islam has so much to offer because Islam does not tolerate the very idea of a "black" mosque or a "white" mosque; Islam obliges believers to stand together in one line, shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot, and prostrate their foreheads to God so that they learn they are all humble servants of the Almighty.

In a society where violence against women has risen to alarming proportions, where it is not safe for women to walk alone in the dark, where even institutions of higher learning have to provide 'walk home service' to protect women on campus at night - Islam has much more to contribute than escort services or karate lessons. Islam does implant modesty and sense of propriety in the minds of the believers, Islam eradicates vulgarity, and Islam eliminates any possibility that men view women as sex objects.

In a society as violent as the United States where some 25000 lives are taken every year by handguns alone; where 5% of the world population consume 50% of the world's illegal drugs despite the arrest of some 700,000 drug dealers every year; where a car is stolen

every few seconds; where a woman is raped every few minutes - Islam has a lot more to offer than merely putting more cops in the streets. Islam teaches that prevention is better than cure and that crime can best be reduced by taking care of the family, the community, and the neighborhood. Islam attaches great esteem and honor to the role of the mother because when she takes proper care of her children, the whole society benefits. Islam reminds the fathers of their duties, encourages the neighbors to take care of each other's needs, strengthen community bonds, advocates commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong instead of apathy and individualism. Islam always eliminates problems from their roots.

In a society afflicted with intense individualism, excessive materialism, fierce consumerism, and unabashed sensualism; Islam has the intellectual and the spiritual power required to rectify all the excesses of the society because Islam preaches moderation and balance in all worldly and other-worldly affairs.

The influence of Islam is not limited to the social and moral domains; it extends to the political, economic, legal, cultural, and educational realms as well. Two examples should suffice.

In the realm of politics: the egalitarian nature of Islam requires major reforms in the way democracy is practiced in the society today. As it stands, the existing democracy is elitist and lopsided in favor of the wealthy, the powerful, and the special interests. The average person almost has no meaningful say in how things are run by the elite. This state of affairs falls far short of the ideal of mutual consultation in all affairs advocated by Islam.

In the realm of economics: capitalism left unregulated has a tendency to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. In a period of ten years only (1978-1987) the poorest fifth of the American population got 8% poorer while the richest fifth got 13% richer. This is the nature of capitalism; wealth breeds more wealth, sometimes even without any effort or creativity. Islam obliges all rich people to pay part of their wealth annually to the poor so that the wealth gets redistributed in the society in order to protect the poor from perpetual poverty and give them a fair chance to compete in a world dominated by the tyranny of

capital.

There is so much in Islam that can truly make the West, and indeed the whole world, a safer, better, and more decent place to live in. Islam is a formidable force with potential great enough to revolutionize the world and radically change the course of history as it once did some 1400 years ago (4).

Islam has all of this and so much more to offer the world!

- Pipes calls Muslims 'barbarians and potential killers. They represent a threat for Jewish, Christians, women and homosexuals.'

Stating that Muslims are barbarians and potential killers clearly indicates that Daniel Pipes is the most ignorant man of the religion of Islam and Muslims. The man's head is devoid of any knowledge; he is like an ignorant parrot repeating what he hears from the biased media. He had the nerve to consider 1.5 billion Muslims as killers and barbarians! His statement shows blatant racism, he separated Muslims from the rest of mankind and considered them as barbarians and potential killers! Maybe he thinks the Jews are of higher rank as compared to all other people, and why not, aren't they the "Chosen People"? his evil racism compels me to explain again and again the facts Pipes tries to avoid, or due to his ignorance is not aware of.

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 then 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).

The essence of Islam is to avoid all extravagances on either side. It is a sober practical religion. It is the religion of intermediacy. Islam is a just witness between Judaism and Christianity. The mission of Islam is to curb the extreme formalism of the Mosaic Law and the extreme 'other worldliness' professed by Christianity. The witness must be unselfish, equipped by first-hand knowledge and ready to intervene in the cause of justice. Such is the position of Islam among rival systems.

The Koran says about the nature of the Islamic nation:

Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witness against mankind, and that the Messenger be a witness against 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.

In doing so, 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 worshipers.

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 five-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.

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.

This is the true nature of Muslims and the greatness of their religion. This is what they achieved to fulfill the prophecies of earlier prophets.

As for the impudent claim that Muslims are barbarians and potential killers, I am content with what the Nobel Prize of Literature Jose Saramago said about the suffering of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation and compared it with the same suffering of the Jews in the Nazi boot camps: “The repression from Israel is the worst form of Apartheid. Nobody has the faintest idea of what is going on here, even the best informed people. Everything is in pieces, the land is destroyed and nothing else may be planted. All this smells like a boot camp, like Auschwitz. The Israeli have turned into NAZI JEWS” , he declared after a visit to Palestine in March, 2002.

Although the image that Israel distributes about herself is that of an oppressed nation, it is with heavy hearts that we present these crimes that stand for themselves for the brutality of the Israeli Army and the heartlessness of its soldiers who seem to have a thirst for blood.

The following list of massacres reflects the nature of the Zionist occupation of Palestine and Lebanon and show that massacres and expulsions are organized atrocities against disarmed Palestinians with the aim of establishing great Israel on the expense of the Arab land.

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| The King David Massacre | Sabra And Shatila Massacre |
| The Massacre at Baldat al-Shaikh | Jibsheat Massacre |
| YEHIDA MASSACRE | Sohmor Massacre |
| KHISAS MASSACRE | Seer Al Garbiah |
| QAZAZA MASSACRE | Maaraka Massacres |
| The Semiramis Hotel Massacre | Zrariah Massacre |
| The Massacre at Dair Yasin | Homeen Al-Tahta Massacre |
| NASER AL-DIN MASSACRE | Jibaa Massacre |
| THE TANTURA MASSACRE | Yohmor Massacre |
| | Tiri massacre |

BEIT DARAS MASSACRE
 THE DAHMASH MOSQUE
 MASSACRE
 DAWAYMA MASSACRE
 HOULA MASSACRE
 SHARAFAT MASSACRE
 Salha Massacre
 The Massacre at Qibya
 KAHR QASEM MASSACRE
 Khan Yunis Massacre
 The Massacre in Gaza City
 AL-SAMMOU' MASSACRE
 Aitharoun Massacre
 Kawnin Massacre
 Hanin Massacre
 Bint Jbeil Massacre
 Abbasieh Massacre
 Adloun Massacre
 Saida Massacre
 Fakhani Massacre
 Beirut Massacre

Al-Naher Al-Bared Massacre
 Ain Al-Hillwee Massacre
 Oyon Qara Massacre
 Siddiqine Massacre
 A-Aqsa Mosqie Massacre
 The Ibrahimi Mosque Massacre
 The Jabalia Massacre
 Aramta Massacre
 Eretz Checkpoint Massacre
 Deir Al-Zahrani Massacre
 Nabatiyeh (school bus) Massacre
 Mnsuriah Massacre
 The Sohmor Second Massacre
 Nabatyaih Massacre
 Qana Massacre
 Trqumia Massacr
 Janta Massacre
 24 Of June 1999 Massacres
 Western Bekaa villages Massacre:
 The Gaza Cast Lead Massacre
 (2008-2009)
 The Mavi Marmara Massacre May
 31, 2010
 The Nakba Day Massacre May 15,
 2011
 The ongoing Silent or Silenced
 Massacre
 The June 5 2011 Naksa Day
 Massacre

- According to Pipes the night journey of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Jerusalem referred to in the Koran never happened. In the Los Angeles Times, Pipes wrote: “The

Prophet Muhammad never went to the city, nor did he have ties to it.”

By denying the occurrence of the night Journey of Prophet Muhammad Pipes wants to say that the Arabs and Muslims have no right to the city of Jerusalem and the Palestinians must be expelled from it. His allegation was that the Koran did not mention the city by name. But his deceiving nature made him hide the fact that the story of the night journey was also mentioned in detail in the Sunna of the Prophet.

To begin with, Jerusalem has been a predominantly Arab city since it was established by the Yabousyyun, who were one of the Arab tribes migrating from Arabia with the Canaanites to Palestine in 3000 BC. They named the city Oresalem (the city of peace) The Hebrew and Eastern name of Orshalem was derived from the original name, but the Romans named it Elia Capitolina after their emperor Elia Hedrianus. Muslims conquered the city in 638 CE, and it was named Al-Quds and Beit Al-Muqdes after Al-Qudous, which is one of Allah’s 99 names, because of its significant status in Islam. Actually, Jerusalem is the city of all heavenly faiths because it is the only place in the world that contains holy places for all three faiths. The Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque are located there for the Muslims, the Church of Al-Qeyameh for the Christians, and the so-called Wailing Wall and Solomon’s Temple for the Jews.

In addition, the city has intimate connections for Muslims. It was their first Qiblah; it was the location of Al-Isra’ (the Night Journey) of our Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) as mentioned in Surat Al-Isra’, verse 1; and there are specific instructions mentioned in Hadith that “Saddles should be prepared only for three mosques: Al-Masjed Al-Haram (in Mecca), Al-Masjed Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem), and My mosque (in Medina).” Consequently, Jerusalem has a significant religious status in the Holy Land—Palestine, the land of prophets and messengers (peace be upon them all).

Accordingly, Jerusalem is an Islamic land because Islam is the universal faith of all prophets and the closure of the Heavenly faiths. Also, the city has quite a strategic location in the heart of the Arab world and a lot of natural resources. Owing to this, both Palestine and

Jerusalem have been attacked by many foreign invaders, including Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Assurians, Babylonians and finally the imperial Zionism, which invaded Palestine through a series of international conspiracies. It is a fact that Jerusalem has been an Arab Islamic city until the advent of the Zionist Movement, when the city became a strategic target to establish the Jewish national State in Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital. In the process of realizing this objective, many Zionist aggressions have been carried out against the Arab and Muslim rights in the city. This plan passed through two stages—the British Mandate and then the division resolution—and at two levels—the local activities and the world support—the result of which manifested itself in the establishment of the Zionist State of Israel in 1948.

Going back to the statement of Daniel Pipes that the Prophet Muhammad never went to the city, nor did he had ties to it, I state here that the incident of the Night Journey was also mentioned in detail in the Sunna of the Prophet.

The Sunna of the Prophet is the second reliable source after the Koran from which Muslims learn their religion. The Sunna of the Prophet is holy and divine, exactly as the Koran. The Sunna was also inspired to Muhammad through the archangel Gabriel.

The Koran says:

As also We have sent among you, of yourselves a Messenger, to recite Our signs to you, and to purify you, and to teach you the Book (the Koran) and the Wisdom (the Sunna), and to teach you that you knew not (Al-Baqarah, 151).

Consequently, Muhammad does not speak of his own desire, it is only a revelation revealed taught by the archangel Gabriel.

The Koran says:

By the Star when it plunges, your comrade is not astray; neither errs, nor speaks out of caprice. This is naught but a revelation revealed, taught him by one (Archangel Gabriel) terrible in power (Al-Najm 1-6).

Allah therefore commanded Muslims that whatever the Prophet commands them to do, they must do, and whatever he forbids them to do, they do not do.

Allah says in the Koran:

Whatever the Messenger gives you, take; whatever he forbids you, give over. And fear Allah; surely Allah is terrible in retribution (Al-Hashr, 7).

The night Journey (Al-Isra') of the Prophet Muhammad was a journey from Makkah to Jerusalem and was followed by the Heavenly Ascent (al-Mi'raj) which took the Prophet through the seven Heavens and brought him to the All Mighty Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. It was one of the most incredible events in the history of humanity and occurred at a time when the Prophet was going through the most difficult phase in his life. The pagans of the tribe of Quraish vanquished the Prophet and put him under siege for three years, and the Arabs of Altaêf threw him with stones until his feet bled. Allah then rewarded him with the night journey to strengthen his faith and enables him to face the difficult challenges to come during his prophet-hood.

The Koran says about the night journey:

Holy is He Who carried His bondman by night from the sacred Mosque (Masjid al-Haram) to the Mosque (Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem) around which We have put blessings that We might show him Our grand signs. No doubt, He is the Hearing, the Seeing. (Al-Isra' 17:1).

Then he approached and came closer, and was at a distance of but two bow-lengths or even nearer. (An-Najm 53: 8-9)

Referring to the Sunna, Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "When the Messenger of Allah was taken on the journey of Israa', he ascended to Sidrat Al-Muntaha, which is a tree in the sixth heaven, and where everything terminates. Everything which ascends from the earth is held there and then is taken afterwards, and everything that descends to the earth is held there and then is taken down" (Reported by Ahmad and Muslim).

Imam Ahmad, Ibn Majah and other scholars reported that Maymoonah bint Sa'ad or Sa'eed, a servant of the Prophet, asked: O Messenger of Allah! Give us an answer (judgment) on Bait Al-Maqdis –Jerusalem. He said: “The land of Mahshar –congregation- and Manshar –resurrection. A land where you should go visit, and pray therein...”

From the above narrations it seems that Jerusalem i.e. Bait Al-Maqdis is the land of congregation 'AlMahshar'. Whether this congregation is happening before the actual start of the Hour or after the resurrection begins the conclusion is the same. Eventually people will be taken to the earthly station of their congregation before their ascension to heaven. And that earthly station is Bait Al-Maqdis.

The arrival of Prophet Muhammad at Jerusalem had many implications regarding religious guidance and leadership. His physical arrival there when there was no mention of him or his Message amongst the people of the Holy Land meant that his Message was universal to all. His historical meeting with the prophets and messengers of Allah and especially the prophets of the Children of Israel was another sign that the winds of change were about to blow. This was an announcement of a new establishment, the establishment of a new chapter in the Judeo-Christian tradition. It has now received a new addition to its tradition, a Muslim tradition. His arrival at Jerusalem was the beginning of the story, the story that changed the course of history.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas ibn Malik that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: I was brought al-burraq who is an animal white and long, larger than a donkey but smaller than a mule, who would place its hoof at a distance equal to the range of vision. I mounted it and came to Bait-al Maqdis (Jerusalem). I then tethered it to the ring used by the Prophets. I entered the area of the Mosque and prayed two rak'ats in it. I then came out and Gabriel brought me a vessel of wine and a vessel of milk. I chose the milk, and Gabriel said, 'You have chosen al-fitra' (the natural way-natural disposition).

He then ascended with me into the lower heavens and requested that they be opened. It was said: 'Who are you?' He responded: 'Gabriel'.

It was then said: 'Who is with you?' He responded: 'Muhammad'. It was then said: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' He responded: 'Revelation has been sent to him'. It was then opened for us and there I was with Adam. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Then we ascended to the second heaven and Gabriel requested that it be opened. It was said: 'Who are you?' He responded: 'Gabriel'. It was then said: 'Who is with you?' He responded: 'Muhammad'. It was then said: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' He responded: 'Revelation has been sent to him'. It was then opened for us and when I entered Jesus and John welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Gabriel ascended with me to the third heaven and requested that it be opened. It was said: 'Who are you?' He responded: 'Gabriel'. It was then said: 'Who is with you?' He responded: 'Muhammad'. It was then said: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' He responded: 'Revelation has been sent to him'. It was then opened for us and there I was with Joseph, who was given a great portion of beauty. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Gabriel then ascended with me to the fourth heaven and requested that it be opened. It was said: 'Who are you?' He responded: 'Gabriel'. It was then said: 'Who is with you?' He responded: 'Muhammad'. It was then said: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' He responded: 'Revelation has been sent to him'. It was then opened for us and there I was with Enoch. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Gabriel then ascended with me to the fifth heaven and requested that it be opened. It was said: 'Who are you?' He responded: 'Gabriel'. It was then said: 'Who is with you?' He responded: 'Muhammad'. It was then said: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' He responded: 'Revelation has been sent to him'. It was then opened for us and there I was with Aaron. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Gabriel then ascended with me to the sixth heaven and requested that it be opened. It was said: 'Who are you?' He responded:

'Gabriel'. It was then said: 'Who is with you?' He responded: 'Muhammad'. It was then said: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' He responded: 'Revelation has been sent to him'. It was then opened for us and there I was with Moses. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being.

Gabriel then ascended with me to the seventh heaven and requested that it be opened. It was said: 'Who are you?' He responded: 'Gabriel'. It was then said: 'Who is with you?' He responded: 'Muhammad'. It was then said: 'Has revelation been sent to him?' He responded: 'Revelation has been sent to him'. It was then opened for us and there I was with Abraham who was leaning against the bayt al-ma'mur into which enter seventy thousand angels each day never to return.

Then I was brought to the sidrat al-muntaha, the Lote Tree of the Furthest Limit, whose leaves were like the ears of an elephant and whose fruits at first appeared insignificant. But when Allah spread His command over them they transformed to the point where no one in creation could describe their beauty. Then Allah revealed what He revealed to me. He then made obligatory for me fifty prayers every night and day.

I began my descent until I reached Moses who asked me: 'What has your Lord made obligatory for your community?' I said to him, 'Fifty prayers.' He then said, 'Return to your Lord and ask Him to reduce them, your community will not be able to bear that. I know the people of Israel from long experience and I have tested them.' I then returned to my Lord and said, 'O Lord, make things lighter for my people'. He then reduced it by five prayers for me. I then returned to Moses and he said to me, 'Your community will not be able to stand that. So return and ask Him to make things lighter.' I kept going between my Lord and Moses until Allah said, 'O Muhammad, there are five prayers every night and day. Each prayer is equal to ten prayers making them equal to fifty prayers. Whoever intends a good deed and does not do it, there will be written for him a single good deed. If he does it then there will be written for him ten good deeds. Whoever intends an evil deed and does not do it then there is nothing written against him. If he does it then there is written for him one evil deed.'

I then descended until I reached Moses and informed him of what had occurred. He then said to me, 'Return to your Lord and ask Him to make things lighter.' The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace then said, 'I have returned to my Lord until I felt ashamed before Him.'" (From the hadith collection of Sahih Muslim).

So as you see Daniel Pipes, Jerusalem really matters to Islam.

- Daniel Pipes announced that the Palestinians are a defeated people. He believes they must be repressed and annihilated. His excuse is that they are suicidal bombers and kill innocent Jews. He believes that if the Palestinians are repressed they will realize that there is no other way than to surrender and live in humility with the Israelis.

I deal first with the issue of suicide bombers. The plan of the Israelis is not to live in peace with Palestinians in two states. The intension is to expel all Palestinians from Palestine and make them live as refugees in inhuman refugee camps or in neighboring countries. The aim is to keep to the Palestinian land totally to themselves by vacating it from the Palestinians. Accordingly, oppressive means are used: false excuses to demolish the houses, kill the elderly, women, men, children, uprooting olive trees, steeling their water and electricity, preventing them from getting health care and education, frequently putting them under siege...etc.

According to international agreements, the Palestinians are deprived from possessing guns and arms; they are in fact a disarmed people. In order to retaliate and restore extorted rights the Palestinians have no other way but suicide bombing. Islam allows fighting back to regain extorted rights, and those fighting to defend themselves and die while fighting are martyrs. The biased western media pictures suicide bombers as a bunch of mentally disturbed cowards because they kill innocent people, but it doesn't mention that civilian Palestinians were murdered first, and their sons and daughters were retaliating by taking revenge.

Suicide is not in accord with Islamic beliefs and practices. The Koran does tell Muslims, "Do not kill yourselves" and warns that those who disobey will be "cast into the fire." The Prophet Mohammed is reported to have said that a suicide cannot go to paradise because the soul put into man is a trust, and it originally belongs to Allah and not to man.

Islam does not want people to be tolerant to evil and injustice for fear of incurring the displeasure or wrath of those who happen to be in strength and power. Those who tolerate this are, in the eyes of Islam, no better than the evil-doers. For the selfish and greedy, there is no place of honor in Islam. The moral and religious attitude of Islam must follow its adherents in all walks of life.

So the question arises: is what the Palestinians are doing is suicide, or legitimate and highly commendable when undertaken for reasons of jihad (defending one's self and property). Going into war knowing with certainty that one will die, is not suicide (intihar) but martyrdom (istishhad), a much-praised form of self-sacrifice in the path of God, a way to win Paradise in the Hereafter.

Attacks on enemies are not a suicidal action, but heroic martyrdom in which the Mujahed (one fighting in the cause of Allah to restore his property or defend his family) is not fighting out of hopelessness and despair, but is driven by an overwhelming desire to cast terror and fear into the hearts of the oppressors.

In other words, in Islam, suicide for personal reasons is abominable, while suicide for jihad is admirable.

Some hate mongers call suicide bombers struggling under the repressive methods of the Israelis mentioned above: "terrorists". The terrorist is the one who hides in the shadow, then kills while hiding, then runs away for his life. The Palestinian however, sacrifices his life first, hence his act here is not an act of cowardice, but an act of bravery, an act of martyrdom.

But Daniel Pipes is right about one thing here: “The Palestinians are a defeated people.” Yes, the vanquishing of the Palestinian community is almost complete, and the whole world is watching without interfering. Yes, the Palestinians are a defeated people when the Israelis did the following:

- Separated the Palestinian population into several fenced enclaves.
- Routed the barrier so that Israeli West Bank settlements are included in Israel.
- Incorporated the Jordan valley and other Palestinian lands into Israel.
- Surrounded prominent West Bank cities by Israeli forces.
- Denied Palestinians ready access to other parts of the West Bank.
- Strangled Palestinian life.
- The support by the United States and a minority of the world to the vanquishing of a people, the refusal of the mass media to accurately portray the Middle East crisis and the inability of an anguished world to take appropriate action to prevent the catastrophe re-shapes the modus operandi of the 21st century world. The world has accepted the notions that social justice is a hypocritical selective process, international law has no validity and the oppressed have no protection. Business as usual: the demonic is approved and relations are governed by power and force.
- Infrastructure has been destroyed including schools and factories while hospitals have been overwhelmed with the sick and injured. The current need for food and medical supplies has been worsened by the continuing blockade that prohibits fuel, food, equipment and other humanitarian goods from coming into the city. This has been the case for 18 months. In the current crisis seriously injured people who need treatment in Egypt due to lack of adequate medical facilities in the Gaza are experiencing difficulties in crossing the borders. There has been a lack of electricity and other essential services resulting in deplorable conditions for residents. The UN reported a

- Human Dignity Crisis on December 18, days before the bombing commenced.
- The Occupation of Palestinian territory is classic colonialism with apartheid features including a wall that restricts people's movement for work, business, culture and family life. This Occupation continues to be supported by the US government. The F-16s and Apache helicopters as well as the TOW, Hellfire and Bunker missiles that are being used are provided by the US government meaning that our tax dollars support this carnage and oppression. The US government provides Israel with \$3 billion in military aid annually.
 - The expanding regionally, via settlements, to establish Greater Israel and its capital in Jerusalem.
 - Canceling the Jerusalem Arab municipal council elected by the citizens and confiscating all of the records of real estate and property. Then the mayor of the city was deported on 27 March 1968, the Arab council was changed to an Israeli municipality, and Jewish officials replaced the Arabs.
 - Canceling the Arab departments such as the courts, the health centers and social affairs, while some were annexed to similar Israel departments such as the postal service and the State hospital.
 - The citizens of Jerusalem had to refer to the legal Islamic court in Jaffa because none of these would be available or recognized in Jerusalem.
 - Canceling the Jordanian regulations and forcing the citizens to refer to the Israeli courts.
 - Applying the Israeli tax regulations on the Arabs in Jerusalem.
 - Canceling the current educational syllabuses and imposing the Israeli ones in all stages. However, Israel stopped this in 1970 except for the elementary schools. In addition, Israel has not allowed Arabs to establish an Arab University in Jerusalem although there is a Hebrew University in the city.

- Issuing Israeli IDs for Arabs in Jerusalem by the Israeli Ministry of Interior.
- Obliging Arab traders and craftsmen to register their names with the concerned Israeli institutions in order to get a license.
- Closing the Arab banks in Jerusalem and confiscating their funds, forcing the Arabs to deal with Israeli banks in order to merge and mix the Arab economy with the Israeli counterpart.
- Separating the economy of Jerusalem from the economy of the West Bank by establishing a system of multiple customs centers around the city.
- Applying the Israeli tax regulations on the Arabs in Jerusalem.
- Canceling the current educational syllabuses and imposing the Israeli ones in all stages. However, Israel stopped this in 1970 except for the elementary schools. In addition, Israel has not allowed Arabs to establish an Arab University in Jerusalem although there is a Hebrew University in the city.
- Issuing Israeli IDs for Arabs in Jerusalem by the Israeli Ministry of Interior.
- Obliging Arab traders and craftsmen to register their names with the concerned Israeli institutions in order to get a license.
- Closing the Arab banks in Jerusalem and confiscating their funds, forcing the Arabs to deal with Israeli banks in order to merge and mix the Arab economy with the Israeli counterpart.
- Separating the economy of Jerusalem from the economy of the West Bank by establishing a system of multiple customs centers around the city (5).

It is a big tragedy to see the world watching the annihilation of a whole population without interfering to stop the Zionist massacre against the Palestinians.

It is a tragedy to see the Republican presidential and Tea Party candidate, Newt Gingrich in order to beg for the Jewish votes announced in May 2011 that the Palestinians are an invented people. "Remember, there was no Palestine as a state. It was part of the Ottoman Empire," Gingrich said. "And I think that we've had an invented Palestinian people, who are in fact Arabs, who are historically part of the Arab community. And they had a chance to go many places and for a variety of political reasons, we have sustained this war against Israel now since the 1940s," the GOP candidate said. "I think it's tragic."

The Palestinian Authority and the PLO, incidentally, explicitly recognized Israel's right to exist in 1993. But Gingrich and Israel of course deny not only Palestine's right to exist in actual fact; they deny Palestinians the right to exist—in history, in culture, in textbooks, and of course in the most important state of them all: in a state of their own.

Gingrich's cynical efforts to attract attention to himself with divisive and destructive statements did not help his presidential ambitions, since they were aimed at putting the peace between Israel and the Palestinians that Americans yearn for even further out of reach than it is today. Gingrich's announcements are apparently cynical, destructive, racist and a cheap stunt to get votes.

Gingrich also called Palestinians "terrorists." The comments struck at the heart of Palestinian sensitivities about the righteousness of their struggle for an independent state. Applying the label "invented" suggests that the Palestinian quest for independence is not legitimate.

Gingrich comments were apparently made for political gains. It is a cheap attempt to get more votes. Gingrich by his irresponsible and destructive announcements sold America's interests by denying international Law and democratic principles.

What's good for America is secondary to the extremists like Gingrich and those who listen to him. The only thing that matters to him is to implement an extreme right-wing agenda.

No wonder, with such blind hatred to the Palestinian people and ignorance in politics, Gringrich evidently lost his race to the White House.

In addition to the Israelis who are guilty of committing such ceaseless human crimes, those helping them abroad (Zionists, the Religious Right, Christian Zionists, neo-conservatives, Tea Party, Republicans joining such groups), share with the Israelis the guilt of such crimes as well.

In Islam those who unjustly hurt innocent believing men and women, bear on themselves a calumny and a glaring sin. They suffer the penalties of a double guilt; their own sins and the injuries they caused to the oppressed.

The Koran says in this respect;

And those who hurt believing men and believing women, without that they have earned it have laid upon themselves calumny and manifest sin (Al-Ahzâb, 58).

- Daniel Pipes is quick to parrot that radical and fundamental Islam is the problem and moderate Islam is the solution.

What is wrong with commendable radicalism? Do you understand the meaning of the word? I doubt very much! The word radical means: the most basic and important parts of something. Consequently, Radicalism means: belief in radical ideas and principles. In other words, radical Islam means: Living according to the principles of the Koran and the authentic teachings of the Prophet. And this what most Muslims do. By sincerely following the principles of their religion, they spread piety and decency in any society they live in. They cause no harm to their non-Muslim neighbors or the constitution of the host country.

What is wrong with commendable fundamentalism? Do you understand the meaning of the word in the first place? I again doubt

very much. The word fundamentalism means: the practice of following very strictly the basic rules and teachings of any religion. What is wrong with that? Most of the pious Muslims strongly adhere to the principles of their religion without harming the society they live in. Or maybe Daniel Pipes prefer more radical and fundamental Christianity which already penetrates his society like cancer. Or he may prefer radical and fundamental Judaism which joined forces with the Christian Right in order to oppress the Palestinians and confiscate their land!

Daniel Pipes claims that moderate Islam is the solution? The religion of Islam is a moderate religion since its first initiation and Muslims are moderate people already.

Allah enjoins in the Holy Koran:

“Thus have We made of you a nation, Justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over the nations. “ (Al-Baqarah, 143).

In the above verse Allah offers us a clear direction on our stand in life: to be justly balanced in everything that we do!

The Golden Rule in Islam is moderation. Let us consider the wisdom of Luqman as he addresses his son, as Allah describes it in the Holy Koran:

"And swell not your cheek (for pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for Allah loves not the arrogant boaster. And be moderate in your pace, and lower your voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass." (Luqman, 18-19).

In Islam moderation means the middle way. The scholar, Yusuf Ali, in his comments on these Koranic verses, says: "In all things be moderate. Do not go the pace, and do not be stationary or slow. Do not be talkative and do not be silent. Do not be loud and do not be timid or half-hearted. Do not be too confident, and do not be cowed down."

Islam enjoins upon its followers to observe moderation in all things relating to man's conduct and behavior. Islam does not tolerate

revelry and yet it does not shun all joy, zest and adventure. It adopts a middle course between the extremes and discards Puritanism and moral anarchy. But it allows freedom and satisfaction to all natural human desires and instincts, including even the instinct of war provided certain limitations are strictly observed.

Islam recognizes that social conditions have a great influence in shaping human character and, therefore, it tries to set right the social, political and economic systems of mankind in accordance with its moral and spiritual values. Islam does not recognize that mere improvements in social, political and economic conditions, (as preached by capitalism, communism, and other Western type of "isms") will make people virtuous and prosperous in their conduct of life.

Islam advocates and insists upon individual reform and self-discipline through unswerving belief in God, His line of Prophets, their respective scriptures, the angels, His last Prophet Mohammed and the resurrection after death on the Day-of-Judgment. Islam lays final responsibility on the individual for all his actions.

In Islam, you cannot plead that because you were born in an evil environment, therefore you could not shake off its evil influence to lead a pious, virtuous and ordered life, and that society was responsible for your crimes and sins of omission and commission. There is no appeal against Islamic law which is the Law of Allah and one must necessarily discipline himself according to it if one desires well-being in life and salvation after death.

At every step of his life, the Muslim is always guided by the Laws of Allah embodied in the Holy Qur'an and expounded by the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Among all the religions of the world, Islam stands alone teaching humanity that political powers must be subordinated to ethical values, that religion should not be allowed to serve the ends of a state which is not informed and actuated by moral values, ideals and decencies. Islam is the only religion that made international brotherhood a reality. It recognizes no racial and political

barriers. It stands alone for its complete freedom from the domination of priestly class and the burden of cumbersome ceremonials and rituals.

The only paramount aim of Muslims in life is the selfless service of mankind, strictly in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an both in letter and spirit. And it is due to this unique dedication to the service of mankind that there are today 1.5 billion Muslims spreading all over the world, whose faith in their religion remains as staunch and unshakable as it has ever been in spite of all the political and social revolutions of the world ever since the death of Prophet Muhammad.

So Islam is already a moderate religion. All Muslims adhere to this moderation. However, I admit that some Muslims are strong radicals and must be reformed. Instead of responding aggressively to this alien extreme radicalism, the reasons behind this phenomenon must be identified first then ways of reform must be suggested.

There are indeed global causes of Islamic extreme radicalism which has gone international. One factor is the "Latin Americanization" of the Middle East by U.S. policy-makers and strategists. Just as Latin America had for nearly two centuries been regarded by the United States as fair ground for imperial manipulation and for periodic military interventions, much of the Muslim world, especially the Middle East, have more recently been treated with similar imperial arrogance. U.S. imperialism in Latin America had been an Empire of control rather than occupation. The same is true of American imperialism in the Middle East.

The second major trigger of globalized Islamic extreme radicalism is the brutal occupation of the Palestinian land by the Israelis, the annexation of Jerusalem and the United States' enormous material, diplomatic, and uncritical support of the Jewish state. Israeli behavior cannot even be censured by the United Nations Security Council without encountering the American veto. Because of the United States, Israel has been enjoying almost total immunity since at least the 1967 Middle East War. The United States provides Israel with an

umbrella of impunity. The resulting international frustration has aroused widespread rage throughout the Muslim world.

The third international trigger of Islamic extreme radicalism is the multiple humiliations of Muslims in so many different countries. Three Muslim countries are under direct foreign occupation (whether acknowledged or not) – Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. Two Muslim populations are under some kind of international trusteeship – Bosnia and Kosovo. Several Muslim minorities elsewhere are struggling for self-determination against enormous military odds – including Kashmir, Chechnya, Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand and elsewhere. No other civilization in the contemporary world is under a comparable sense of siege. This is quite apart from lower intensity rivalries between Muslims and non-Muslims in Nigeria, the Ivory Coast [Cote d'Ivoire] and Ethiopia.

Almost all the contributions in this debate agree that there are also domestic causes of Muslim strong radicalism, as well as global causes. Such domestic causes include authoritarian Arab monarchs and other undemocratic Muslim regimes. But even those domestic angry forces might not have risen to levels of terrorism if they were not reinforced by a resentment of American support for most Muslim dictators for decades – especially oil-rich dictators. Pro-democracy forces in countries like Egypt, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were enough to politicize Islam, and even to radicalize it. But the rise of the temperature to terrorism is almost always ignited by anti-Americanism or anti-Westernism, even at the domestic level.

In an atmosphere where Muslims are treated unjustly in the United States, with this feeling that their religion is under siege, only fanatic groups will flourish. Moderation and liberalization can only flourish in a free and quieter environment.

The necessary climate for an Islamic renewal is hampered by the forces which have put Islam on the defensive. Both political moderation and doctrinal liberalization among the Muslim masses will remain difficult as long as the United States remains imperial and

Islamophobic in foreign policy, Israel continues to brutalize and occupy the Palestinian population, and the rest of the world permits the humiliation of Muslims from Chechnya to Afghanistan, from Kashmir to Iraq. When Muslims are politically radicalized, they often tend to be resistant to doctrinal liberalization. The ultimate causes of radicalization are primarily non-Muslim in origin. But the Muslim world suffers the most from the excesses of both political radicalism and doctrinal conservatism (8).

The Muslim whom Daniel Pipes thinks is moderate is either a lone wolf with no credibility in the Muslim stream, an apologist for pipes' own radical views on the Middle East, or both. These whom Pipes consider as moderate Muslims are soft spoken and nice looking guys. They are recognized as allies by the western governments who often turn to them for advice on how to defeat terrorism. They are clear favorites to the western media because they say what the west likes to hear. They are regular guests in the western media which introduce them as 'experts in Islamic affairs and turns to them to learn about Islamic issues. The western media provides these hypocrites with free platforms to spread their lies virtually unchallenged.

Such hypocrites are described by the West as 'moderate Muslims'. They usually appear as good doers who are active in the community and Islamic charity works, which enhances their image even further. They sell their religion for a small price by pleasing the westerners on the expense of their belief.

- The second group the westerners consider them as moderate Muslims are those who believe in Islam but find it hard to keep up with its commands. They enjoy the pleasures of modern life and try hard to convince their minds that there is nothing in Islam that is against modernity. The contract with Allah becomes binding once Muslims say the Shahada statement: "I witness there is no God but Allah and that Mohammed is His messenger". All Muslims, have signed that agreement with Allah and are aware of their commitments. But the sins these Muslims commit in an open western society usually make their

minds and power of reasoning finally shut down and their human conscience will be numbed to the Islamic principles and practices. They are ready to please the westerners and tell them what they want to hear.

- Daniel Pipes claims that Islamism is an ideology that demands man's complete adherence to the sacred law of Islam and rejects as much as possible outside influence. It is imbued with a deep antagonism towards non-Muslims and has a particular hostility towards the West. It amounts to an effort to turn Islam, a religion and civilization, into an ideology.

The term 'Islamism' and also 'Islamist' are invented terms that are misleading, and Daniel Pipes introduced them for his purposes and Agendas. We Muslims have no such terms in our vocabulary. Likewise, If Pipes has something against Christianity for example he would have invented the term Christianity or Christianist! If he has something against his own people, the Jews he would have invented the term Jewdist! The matter is simple, he just attaches the letters 'ism' or 'ist' to any word to invent a new ideology that would serve his evil purposes.

In Pipes view, the only Muslims who can avoid the charge of "Islamist" are those that do not criticize Israeli behavior and do not support the right of Palestinians to a state.

If we suppose the terms 'Islamism' and 'Islamist' have become now common terms, I would understand them in a totally different manner. I would understand 'Islamism' not as an evil ideology as Pipes frequently suggest, but rather a code of life ordained by Allah, the Creator, to His servants.

The only way I understand 'Islamism' is that all human beings were created in order to worship Allah alone, and that the basis of all true worship is Allah-consciousness. Since the teachings of Islam encompass all aspects of life and ethics, Allah-consciousness is

encouraged in all human affairs. Islam makes it clear that all human acts are acts of worship if they are done for Allah alone and in accordance to His Divine Law. As such, worship in Islam is not limited to religious rituals. The teachings of Islam act as a mercy and a healing for the human soul, and such qualities as humility, sincerity, patience and charity are strongly encouraged. Additionally, Islam condemns pride and self-righteousness, since Almighty Allah is the only judge of human righteousness. The Islamic view of the nature of man is also realistic and well-balanced. Human beings are not believed to be inherently sinful, but are seen as equally capable of both good and evil. Islam also teaches that faith and action go hand-in-hand. Allah has given people free-will, and the measure of one's faith is one's deeds and actions. However, human beings have also been created weak and regularly fall into sin. This is the nature of the human being as created by Allah in His Wisdom, and it is not inherently "corrupt" or in need of repair. This is because the avenue of repentance is always open to all human beings, and Almighty Allah loves the repentant sinner more than one who does not sin at all. The true balance of an Islamic life is established by having a healthy fear of Allah as well as a sincere belief in His infinite Mercy. A life without fear of Allah leads to sin and disobedience, while believing that we have sinned so much that Allah will not possibly forgive us only leads to despair. All human beings will ultimately be judged by Allah for their beliefs and actions in their earthly lives. In judging human beings, Allah will be both Merciful and Just, and people will only be judged for what they were capable of. Islam teaches that life is a test, and all human beings will be accountable before Allah. A sincere belief in the life hereafter is key to leading a well-balanced life and moral. Otherwise, life is viewed as an end in itself, which causes human beings to become more selfish, materialistic and immoral.

Main tenets central to Islam is the absolute sense that there can only be one God - Allah - and that he is the source of all creation and disposer of all lives and events. Hence, there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Messenger. All people should become a single

Umma - community - witnessing to that fact. On the day of Judgment, all will rise from the dead and be sent to heaven or hell according to their deeds.

Sharia, the divine law of Islam is derived from the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet by which Muslims should live their lives. It embraces every aspect of life, including family relations, inheritance, taxation, purification and prayer.

I understand the word 'Islamist' as a word expressing a devout Muslim who abides sincerely by the rules and tenets of his religion. He submits completely to the will of Allah. He strives to surrender to Allah's commands every step of the way. He believes in Allah, His angels, His revealed Books, His Messengers, the Day of Judgment, and pre-destination. He believes in the five pillars of Islam on which his life is founded. These are:

- 1- The Testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger.
- 2- Establishing of the five daily Prayers (Salaah). These prayers are ritualistic in nature and adherence to the ritual practice is required. The location at which one prays is not strictly defined as long as one is able to establish the Qiblat.
- 3-The Giving of Zakaah (charity), which is generally 2.5% of the yearly savings for a rich man working in trade or industry, and 10% or 20% of the produce for agriculturists. This money or produce is distributed among the poor.
- 4- Refraining from eating, drinking and having sex from dawn to dusk in the month of Ramadhaan (Sawm).
- 5-The Pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca during the month of Zul Hijjah, which is compulsory once in a lifetime for one who has the ability to do it. This ability includes the financial means and the physical strength since the hajj can be strenuous.

Believing sincerely and living ardently by such Islamic rules and tenets is not a flavored version of totalitarianism or a movement that openly relies on state power for coercive purposes as Daniel Pipes erroneously suggests.

- Daniel Pipes denounces democracy for Muslims and claims that the Middle East is not ripe for democracy!

In the aftermath of Hamas's victory in the Palestinian democratic legislation election, Daniel Pipes has called for the Bush administration to suspend further elections in the Middle East until it can be assured that their outcome will favor US interests!

Pipes's article: "Democracy's bitter fruit" published in Canada's *National Post*, then reprinted in the *Australian* under the headline "Region not ripe for democracy", Pipes advised Bush administration to take heed that urging the Middle East to democracy will bring deadly enemies to power. Pipes complains that ideological enemies in the Middle East have not yet been defeated and he demands that the Bush administration works to defeat radical Islam, insisting that only when Muslims see that this is a route doomed to failure will they be open to alternatives. In other words, Pipes is demanding Palestinian society to be brought to its knees. Hamas' election victory represents an expression of the Palestinian people's ongoing resistance to the Israeli occupation. For Pipes, the priority for the US and Israel must be to crush this popular defiance (9).

Daniel Pipes further writes, "The Hamas-led Palestinian Authority must be isolated and rejected at every turn, thereby encouraging Palestinians to see the errors of their ways."

As a big failure in politics, he did not see why the Palestinians brought Hamas to power. He did not see or rather deliberately neglected the fact that the peace process has seen ongoing Israeli settlement expansion in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, and countless Israeli military raids in occupied territories, including the assassination of militants, demolition of homes, and bombing and strafing of civilian areas. Israel's separation wall has been used to illegally annex a large swathe of the West Bank, and to cut off East Jerusalem from any other Palestinian area. The previous Palestinian authority's prostration before Israel and the imperialist powers has

produced nothing but failed hopes, corruption and deepening impoverishment for ordinary Palestinians. Despite all this, the population remains unwilling to submit to Israeli and the US demands. In Pipes view, the Palestinian will must be broken into pieces, this is what must be changed. Pipes suggests that an embargo on all foreign funding for Palestinian institutions currently under consideration from the US and EU would certainly have a devastating effect on the occupied territories.

This is how the brilliant political analyst sees how peace and democracy be established in the Middle East – to cow the Palestinian people.

As for the claim that the Middle East is not ripe for democracy, in fact Democracy is very much embedded in the ideology of Islam. In Islam there is no dictatorship, popes or totalitarianism. Islam does not believe in any kind of Monarchy or oligarchy.

Islam called the Arabs to Shura (mutual consultation) more than fourteen centuries ago, at a point in history when the rest of the world had but a faint idea about democracy.

In Islam compulsion is incompatible with religion because religion depends upon faith and will, and these would be meaningless if induced by force.

Allah says in His holy Book:

There is no compulsion in religion. Truth has come clear from error; therefore whoever disbelieves in evil and believes in Allah has taken a firm support that never gives way. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing (Al-Baqarah, 256).

If it had been Allah's plan not to grant the free will that he has granted to man in order to choose between belief and disbelief, His omnipotence could have made all mankind believers. But this would bring no merit on them. Allah wished to endow man with faculties and capacities, so that he should strive and explore faith, and bring himself into harmony with Allah's will. Men of faith must not be

impatient or angry if they have to contend against unfaith, and most important of all, they must guard against the temptation of forcing faith, by imposing it on others by physical compulsion. Forced faith is no faith. Muslims should strive spiritually and let Allah's plan work as He wills.

And if your Lord had pleased, whoever is on the earth would have believed, all of them together. Would you then compel the people to become believers? (Yunus, 99).

The Prophet of Allah is sent to teach and direct people to the right path. He is not sent to force their will, or punish them, except insofar as he may receive authority to do so. Punishment belongs to Allah alone. And punishment is certain in the Hereafter, when true values will be restored.

Then give warning! You are only to warn them; you are not their overseer (Al-Ghashiah 21, 22).

Islam welcomes cooperation with humanity altogether because Islam emphasizes that the nation of humanity is one nation.

Surely this nation of yours is one nation, and I am your lord; so serve Me (Al-Anbiya, 92).

After the Prophet migrated from Makkah to Medina in 622CE, he established the first Islamic state. For 10 years he was not only the leader of the emerging Muslim community in Arabia, but also the political head of Medina. He ruled as political head as a result of the tripartite compact that was signed by the Muslim immigrants from Makkah, the indigenous Muslims of Medina, and the Jews of Medina. The Prophet chose to draw up a historically specific constitution not based only on the eternal and transcendent principles revealed to him but also sought the consent of all who would be affected by its implementation. Thus, the first Islamic state was based on a social contract that was constitutional in character, and had a ruler who ruled with the explicit written consent of all the citizens of the state.

The constitution of Medina established the importance of consent and cooperation for governance. According to this compact, Muslims and non-Muslims were equal citizens of the Islamic state, with identical rights and duties. Communities with different religious orientation enjoyed religious autonomy. The constitution of Medina established a pluralistic state. The principles of equality, consensual governance, and pluralism were central to the compact of Medina.

In establishing the compact of Medina, the Prophet demonstrated a generous democratic spirit towards its entire inhabitants whether Arabs or Jews.

When the Prophet knew that the infidels of Makkah were coming to attack his city, Medina, with 3000 fighters, he consulted his companions about the most effective way to defend the city. His companion Salman al-Farsi advised him to dig a deep and wide trench around the open side of Medina. The unbelievers were unable to cross the trench but put the city under siege for one month. They ran out of food and water, and they were forced to go back to Makkah when Allah sent a severe wind which destroyed their tents and dispersed their animals.

Cooperation between people is an Islamic imposition. The following verse is addressed to all mankind and not only to the Muslim brotherhood. Mankind is descended from one pair of parents and therefore all people are equal before Allah. The most honorable of them in the sight of Allah is the most righteous.

O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most god-fearing of you. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware (Al-Hujurat, 13).

...Help one another to piety and god-fearing; do not help each other to sin and enmity. And fear Allah; surely Allah is severe in punishment (Al-Maidah, 2).

The political system of Islam depends totally upon Ashura (consultation). Shura, as a principle, is rooted in the Koran itself.

There is in the Koran a whole chapter called 'Ashurara'. Shura is an Arabic word for consultation. It was the method by which pre-Islamic Arabian tribes selected leaders and made major decisions. Scholars of Islam agree that the principle of Shura, or consultative decision-making, is the source of democratic ethics in Islam.

Shura is predicated on three basic precepts. First, that all persons are equal in human and civil rights. Second, the public issues are best decided by majority view. And third, the three principles of justice, equality and human dignity, which constitute Islam's moral core, and from which Islamic conceptions of human and civil rights derive, are best realized, in personal as well in public life, under Shura governance.

In the Koran the community of the faithful is described as the one that – among its other attributes – administers its affairs by mutual consultation. This mode of consultation is depicted as constituting the very process by which binding decisions on public matters are reached. The community here is deliberating on public matters collectively. The next verse shows clearly that Shura in Islam is a binding decision-making process.

And those who respond to their Lord and establish prayer and who on matters other than those Allah has decreed, conduct them by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We bestow on them (As'Shura, 38).

Ibn Kathir said while explaining the previous verse: "Shura is mentioned after answering the call of Allah (Islam), and performing prayer, which is the pillar of Islam. After Shura is mentioned, Zakat (alms giving) and charity are mentioned. So, mentioning Shura between prayer and Zakat is an indication of its importance.

Islam stipulates popular consent (*rida al awam*), as a pre-requisite to the establishment of legitimate political authority, and collective deliberation (*ijtihad jama'i*), as a requisite to the proper administration of public affairs. Beyond that, Islam stipulates collective responsibility (*mas'ulyah jama'yyah*), for maintaining the public good of society.

And by affirming all humans as equal before Allah, Islam stipulates equality before the law. By rejecting man's subservience to anyone but Allah, Islam stipulates freedom as the natural state of man; hence liberty within the limits of law is an Islamic stipulation. The famous question asked by the second caliph Omar ibn al-Hhattab, "When did you enslave the people, knowing that they were born free by their mothers?" speaks volumes about Islam's innate resentment of anything that arbitrarily violates personal freedom.

Any thorough reading of Islam would show that there are authentic Islamic positions stressing public consent, collective deliberation, shared responsibility, personal freedom, justice, equality, and dignity of the human individual, all conceived within the Shura framework of governance.

The principle of Shura was applied to its full extent by the Holy Prophet as mentioned above, and fully acted upon by the early rulers of Islam. The first four caliphs after the Prophet were chosen by Shura.

The first caliph after the Prophet, Abu Bakr, established a council of prominent Sahāba (companions of the Prophet) and consulted them regularly in matters concerning the Islamic state. After the expansion of Islam to vast areas, the second caliph Omar established further another consultation body in which only the Muhagereen (immigrant companions of the Prophet) participated. The purpose was to discuss and solve the many problems and issues arising from the countries recently joined to the new Islamic state. The council then had its two houses like modern democratic systems. Islamic history is full of examples that how the caliph consulted the council and how the members reacted, criticized and gave their opinions.

If we look at the political system during the rule of the four caliphs who came after the Prophet, we can see a well disciplined government, whose caliph is politically elected by the majority of Muslims. The caliph had limited sovereignty and power. His main role

was confined to establish peace and security in the society, armed forces, foreign policy and distribution of financial resources.

There was complete supremacy and rule of law. Courts were independent and free to give its verdict on any matter presented before them, if it was against state or caliph. The government couldn't interfere in their decisions. The Caliph had no right to forgive or condone those who were convicted by the courts. All people were equal before the law, whether rich or poor, ruler or farmer. Nothing was hidden from people in matters regarding government and state. In Friday prayer in the big mosque, the caliph normally discusses with the people the important issues of the state. The caliph was held responsible before his people, and every person could enquire about anything he sees disturbing his life. Democracy was ruling in its best form.

The Koranic concept of sovereignty is that it is universal, transcendental, indivisible, inalienable, and truly absolute. Allah the absolute is the primary law-giver, while the caliph (Allah's agent on earth) enjoys marginal autonomy necessary to implement and enforce the laws of Allah.

Allah is therefore the primary sovereign, but sovereignty has been delegated in the form of human agency.

The concept of Khilafa (caliphate) in Islam means Allah's delegation of authority to the nation (ummah) to maintain peace, justice and prosperity on earth according to His instructions. The concept is universal in that every individual member of the nation is legally obligated to ensure the proper execution of the delegated authority. Representative governance, through which alone this collective obligation can be properly fulfilled, thus becomes constitutionally mandatory in Islam. Absolute, cosmic sovereignty belongs to Allah, but sovereignty on earth, Allah has delegated to the nation (ummah), the people, through the mandate of caliphate (khilafa). By collectively enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong, the nation would move ahead, achieving unprecedented heights in human development.

The political task is to reflect on how this Allah-given agency can be best employed in creating a society that will bring welfare and goodness to the population now and in the future.

The caliphs considered the caliphate as a test from Allah. If they tyrannize, their punishment will be greater than ordinary persons because they have been given the responsibility to rule over people by implementing equity and justice as indicated in the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet. In that they are Allah's vicegerent on earth with the purpose of giving people their due and protect their rights.

Abu Bakr, the first caliph said in his inaugural speech, "O people! I have been appointed as a ruler upon you even though I am not the best among you. If I perform well, you should help me and guide me. If I do wrong, you must keep me on track. Truth is a trust and lie is distrust. Your weakest will be a stronger near me until I make him get his right back, and your strongest will be a weakest near me until I compel him to give you your right back. The nation which forgets Jihad (struggle for the cause of truth), Allah disgraces it, and the nation which spreads evil, Allah spreads miseries in it. If I obey Allah and His Prophet, you must obey me, and if I disobey Allah and His Prophet, you are not bound to follow me. May Allah bless you."

Upholding these principles, the second caliph Omar said, "Where I do right, assist me; where I do wrong correct me."

Once Omar became sick. He was advised to take honey. There was honey in the exchequer but he refused to take it without public consent. He went to the mosque and asked the people, "If you allow me then I shall take a bit of honey."

This was the sense of responsibility Omar had. He gave the people the right to criticize him. An ordinary person wouldn't hesitate to oppose and contradict the caliph himself.

Once Omar was addressing a crowd in the mosque, and proposed that women should lower their dower. A woman stood up and asked him in a loud voice, "Fear Allah, who are you to bind us?" The woman was right in her claim. Omar immediately realized that she was right

and he was wrong, so he said, "Praise be to Allah that a woman from Medina knows better than Omar."

The fourth caliph Ali ibn abi Taleb sent a letter to his governor to Egypt, Malik ibn al-Ashatar al-Nukha'i. Ali wrote:

"Know, O Malik that I am sending you to a country which has been subjected before you to both just and unjust rulers, and so the people will judge you in the same way that you now stand in judgment of your predecessors. Therefore, let good works be your true assets. Discipline yourself, and covet not that which is not rightfully yours. Train your heart to feel compassion for the people, to love them and be kind to them. Do not behave like ferocious beasts toward them, snatching away their sustenance, for the people are of two categories: either your brothers in religion, or your fellow human beings."

Historically the term caliph was used as the title of the monarchs who ruled the medieval Muslim empire. In the Koran, the Arabic words for caliph and caliphate have a different meaning. These terms in the Koran have the more general meaning of steward and stewardship. In this way, Adam, as the first human is identified as Allah's caliph or steward on earth as mentioned in the verse above.

In this way, the term caliphate refers to the broad responsibilities of humans to be the stewards of Allah on earth. This stewardship is bestowed on the entire group of people, the community as a whole. Such a society carries the responsibility of the caliphate as a whole and each one of the individuals shares the divine caliphate. This is the point where democracy begins in Islam. Every person in an Islamic society enjoys the rights and powers of the caliphate of Allah and in this respect all individuals are equal.

The Koran has presented Shura as a principle, and not as a system of governance. The Koran thereby has left it to successive generations of Muslims to continue to strive toward a more perfect realization of the Shura principle.

The Shariah (Islamic law) does not specify how Shura should be conducted or how many people need to be consulted under all circumstances. It has neither specified a way to select such people nor has it specified a method for surveying opinions or collecting votes. All the Shariah does is to show that Shura is an obligation on the leader and, at the same time, a right for the nation. It also made it clear that Muslims should conduct their affairs by Shura.

Today world democracies are suffering from a major vacuum, which is the vacuum of spirituality. Islam can provide the framework for combining democracy with spirituality. In Islam the sovereignty of one man contradicts the sovereignty of Allah. Blind obedience to one man-rule is contrary to Islam. The Islamic state is built on the affirmation of the "Oneness of Allah". All people are created equal, and they worship only one God, Allah. Also the noblest of them in the sight of Allah is the most god-fearing and not the wealthiest or the most powerful. These Islamic principles provide the foundation of Islamic democracy. A form of a democratic system can be formulated comprising these ethics.

Democracy must now start in Muslim countries, not as a cultural import, but as an imperative of civilized life rooted in and supported by the ideas and ideals embedded in their own Islamic heritage. These principles and values are universal, permanent, and non-relativistic: the principle of justice, equality and human dignity, and values such as faith, reason, virtue, knowledge, cooperation, personal integrity, and economic prosperity. A concrete and progressive expression of these principles and values can come about under neither authoritarian nor totalitarian governance, but rather under Shura, or democratic governance that is committed to the supremacy of these principles and values.

It is high time that Muslims re-visit Islam and re-examine its moral ideas, and to justify demands for reform by indigenous Islamic criteria for Shura governance. If they do so earnestly, they will see that Shura governance is essentially democratic governance – liberating, uplifting and conducive to progress.

Today, many Muslim countries are in various stages of democratization. For example, nearly 800 million out of 1.4 billion Muslims live in democracies, and unlike the US, four Muslim nations have or had women heads of government. Turkey, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Pakistan have elected women to power, and Iran has a woman vice president. As it seems, it is just a matter of time before the entire Muslim world democratizes.

The West sometimes claims that Sharia (Islamic law) is anti-democratic. The truth however, is that Sharia is decidedly democratic. The reason for Islam's great record of tolerance and pluralism in the past is the correct understanding and application of the Sharia. The Shariah is elicited from the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. The Koran advocates consultative governance, and the practice of the Prophet, as enshrined in the Compact of Medina, treats minorities equally, and he governed by consent and consultation.

There is another claim that the West is more secular than the Muslim countries. In the United States however, there was a president who believed in "faith-based initiatives" and had Bible sessions in the White House. The United States had also Christian Mullahs running for president like Pat Robertson and Jesse Jackson. The federal government also employed thousands of chaplains and actually provided religious services. The Christian Right is a major political force and Christian values (abortion, gay unions) do shape the political landscape. American politics is not entirely secular.

Today, the Muslim world suffers from a deep sense of insecurity, largely from the West, which it sees as a force determined to separate Muslims from Islam. We have seen how insecurity can immediately undermine the protection of rights. Even the US, the most powerful and democratic state – undermines many rights guaranteed under the Bill of rights. When Muslim societies will feel safer and will be assured that the West is not seeking to re-conolize them or destroy their faith, they too will become more democratic and protective of individual rights (10).

Epilogue

Blaming Islam for the lack of democracy is led today by neo-conservative pundits who often present Islam as the new villain to be confronted by American military power. Although many of the anti-Islam writers and neo-conservative pundits play on the fear of the general public by publishing books for a general audience, others have been done for policymakers under the cover of respected institutions and think tanks, such as the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the RAND Corporation. They all talk about the rise of intolerance, anti-democratic tendencies and terrorism on all Muslim individuals and groups that closely adhere to Islamic values and practices. RAND openly advocates “religion building” as the only way to counter terrorism and anti-Americanism.

Religion building is an invitation to world powers to reform Islam. It is a call for re-interpreting Islam and re-structuring Muslim societies as to counter the rise of militancy in Muslim societies.

There is no contention over the need for reform in Muslim societies and communities. Indeed reform has been underway for more than a century now and Muslims have been engaged in an internal struggle to redefine modern Islamic societies in ways that aim at empowering civil society and ensuring democratic control.

The contention is rather over how reform is to be achieved, and who is more capable to do the reform. A call for external intervention to restructure the Islamic faith is faulty, and is guilty of misreading Islam and ignoring the sociopolitical reality that gives rise to global terrorism (8).

Religion building is perilous, complex, ill-conceived, and practically untenable. The rise of radical Islam cannot be explained purely on the level of religious doctrine. Radicalization of Muslim politics is directly connected to the rise of authoritarian Middle Eastern regimes that suppress open debate and silence opposition. Such regimes have long enjoyed the support of successive US administrations.

The United States' foreign policy, which has been frequently characterized by Muslims as one of inconsistency and double standards – one that supports friendly dictators and corrupt, but useful regimes in Muslim world, while pushing for democratic reform in Eastern Europe, one that protests Palestinian violence against Israel, but remains silent in the face of Israel violence in Palestine. Indeed, the politicization of Islam and the rise of anti-Americanism are directly linked to the very efforts that aim at marginalizing Islam and forcing Western secularism on Muslim society.

The United States should support and cooperate with political forces with the Middle East that uphold the values of freedom, equality and tolerance of ethnic and religious diversity.

American Muslims can be of great help in fighting terrorism and extremism, and in bridging the deepening divide between the US and the Muslim world. American Muslims have already made remarkable achievements at reconciling Islamic values with the founding principles of the United States, and have managed to develop good and important experiences as to how Islamic values can bear on modern living. But for that to happen, American Muslims need to be involved in policy making and implementation, rather than allowing themselves to be marginalized and chastised (8).

In addition to involving American Muslims in consultation on policies relating to Islam, the Muslim world, and the war on terror, civil society and government organizations should: (1) engage Muslim leaders who represent social and political groups that are committed to democracy, instead of relying completely on the views of experts who do not have firsthand contact with Muslim groups; (2) ensure that US foreign policy is always respectful of democratic principles and values, the rule of law, and protection of human rights; (3) apply the same sets of principles and values to all people, regardless of their religious and ethnic affiliation; (4) withdraw support from authoritarian regimes, and send a clear message by requiring an open political

system and free and fair elections as a pre-condition for economic co-operation; (5) have a clear position regarding Islam, and avoid sending mixing messages to Muslim communities and societies (8).

The punishment at the Day of Judgment is severe and would certainly touch all those who attack the religion of Islam – the last divine revelation to mankind. The Christian Right and its alliance with the Zionist right wing as well as the Republicans supporting them, in addition to the Israelis, will all share before Allah the crimes of daily murdering, assassinating and the ethnic cleansing of thousands of unarmed civilian Palestinians. They will be the greatest losers before Allah in the Day of Judgment. Their striving goes astray in the earthly life, while they deem they are working good deeds. Allah shall not assign to them any weight on the Day of Judgment, and if they don't desist and repent their recompense will be torture in the blazing Fire of Hell.

Do they think because they are wealthy now and have the power to impose their will upon others, will be left uncontrolled without being charged? The universe is not theirs to spread mischief in the land, but belongs to Allah, its Creator. They must be smart enough to guard themselves against the calamities Allah brings to the evildoers in the present life. They must be wise enough to protect themselves in the Hereafter from chains, fetters and a raging fire prepared for the evildoers. They must be intelligent enough to protect themselves from a Day when man shall behold what his hands have forwarded, and shall say, 'If only I were mere dust and had not been raised to suffer the disgrace and the chastisement'.

Islam is a Message of peace, and Muhammad is the Prophet of mercy to all mankind. Correlating Islam with violence and terrorism is outrageous and insulting. Only ignorant persons would make such remarks. They ignore the barbarism that was displayed by Christian armies during the Crusades to retake Jerusalem, or the cruelty with which the Spanish inquisition treated the Muslims and Jews of Spain, or the millions of Christians killed by Napoleon Bonaparte and Hitler in wars; and what about the millions of Christians killed along the

centuries by the popes of the Catholic Church because they opposed the catholic religion. The enemies of Islam overlook the fact that Islam arrived in Malaysia, Indonesia, India, China and the Philippines through good conduct, commerce and trade, not war. How about the overwhelming expansion of Islam in America and Europe in contemporary age without a sword!

A terrorist is the one who assaults civilians, their property, their freedom and human dignity; demolishes their houses; besieges their villages; confiscate their earnings. Isn't that what America is doing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Israelis to the Palestinians in the West bank and Gaza, backed of course with a blind support from America!

The neocons in the U.S. with their antagonistic policies and warmongering individuals support an extremist ideology that is a threat to peace. The forces of evil make an alliance with each other, and seem thus to make a profit by their mutual bargains. But this is only in the material world. When the limited term expires, their vain and false bargains will be exposed, and there will be nothing but regrets.

The neocons, and their alliance with the Christian Right and the Zionism Right Wing think that America has the divine right to rule the world and impose its political and religious system on all people.

America must not play God and rule the world. Allah is the one who rules the world and not any of His creatures. America must not play the world policeman. This stirs up opposition inside the US and abroad. However, this provoking concept - ruling the world - is still favored by Republicans. Republican presidential front runner Mitt Romney, appearing before cadets at a South Carolina military college, proclaimed that 'God' created the United States to lead the world and that President Obama has willfully weakened the nation. God did not create this country to be a nation of followers. America is not destined to be one of several equally balanced global powers." Romney added, " America must lead the world, or someone else will."

In the sight of Allah, the Creator, this sort of arrogance is totally condemned and rejected. Being a super power is not something to

boast about. Great nations can perish in seconds. Los Angeles had been devastated by Hurricane Katrina and 80% of it sunk under water. The hurricane left behind despair, disease and death and transformed a great American city into a scene of third-world privation. Japan is still reeling from the devastating earthquake and tsunami of March 11, 2011, and the nuclear crisis and huge leaks of radiation it set off. Also, the great tsunami of 2004 was one of the worst disasters in history. The huge earthquake triggered a series of devastating tsunamis along the coasts of most landmasses bordering the Indian Ocean, killing over 230,000 people in fourteen countries, and inundating coastal communities with waves up to 30 meters high. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history. Indonesia was the hardest-hit country, followed by Sri Lanka, India, and Thailand.

Allah - the Lord of creation - has destroyed many rogue nations in the past because of their blasphemy and perversion. Nations like those of Lut, Pharaoh, 'Ad, Nuh and Thamud all mocked the signs of Allah and spread mischief in the land. Allah ruined them and turned them into examples for the future generations.

The Koran says:

That is of the tidings of the cities We relate to thee; some of them are standing and some stubble. And We wronged them not, but they wronged themselves; their gods availed them not that they called upon, apart from Allah, anything, when the command of thy Lord came; and they increased them not, save in destruction.

Such is the seizing of thy Lord, when He seizes the cities that are evildoing; surely His seizing is painful, terrible.

Surely in that is a sign for him who fears the chastisement in the world to come; that is a day mankind are to be gathered to, a day to witness, and We shall not postpone it, save to a term reckoned (Hud 100-104).

It should be well understood that Allah the Master of the Kingdom, the lord of power and rule, gives the Kingdom to whom He will, and seizes the Kingdom from whom He will. He exalts whom He will and abases whom He will. He is powerful over everything. He is capable of doing all things.

The enemies of Islam think they are the only ones who are guided and their religion is the only true religion. They view Islam as a violent religion, monumental scam, an invention of Muhammad, and Muslims are people astray. The fact of the matter is that these hate mongers do not believe in Islam in the first place, this is why they attack Islam without feeling any sense of guilt. They think that by attacking Islam in such despicable manner, are best serving their religion. They do not know that by attacking Islam they have advanced something hideous and have made an abominable assertion. They claim piety for themselves, but in fact they promise one another nothing but delusion. Allah knows best who is pious and who is on the right path. They always forget that every act small or great is related in writing and put on record. It was decked out fair to them their devising, and they are barred from the way; and whom Allah sends astray, for him there is no guide. For them is chastisement in the present life; and the chastisement of the world to come is yet more grievous; they have none to defend them from Allah.

They behave as if they have the secret of the unseen, but they are empty triflers. The greater losers in their works are those whose striving goes astray in the present life, while they think they are working good deeds. Those are they who disbelieve in the Koran, ridicule the Prophet of Islam, and torture Muslims. Their works have failed, and on the Day of Resurrection Allah shall not assign to them any weight. Their recompense is Hell, for that they took the Koran – the last Testament to the world - and the Messenger in mockery.

Those who defy Allah and His Apostle or challenge them, have come within the measure of Allah's wrath and have incurred Allah's curse in this world and the world to come, and there awaits them the torment that is laid upon the damned. The Koran talked about this.

Those who hurt Allah and His Messenger, Allah has cursed them in the present world and the world to come, and has prepared for them a humbling chastisement. (Al-Ahzab, 57).

They forgot that they will be sent back to the Knower of the things secret and open; and He will tell them the truth of the things they did.

Everything that they have done is in the scrolls, and everything, great or small, is inscribed (Al-Qamar 52, 53).

Or do they think We hear not their secret and what they conspire together? Yes indeed and Our Messengers are present with them writing it down (Az-Zukhruf, 80).

In the West, Muslims are badly treated for no valid reason except that they are Muslims. According to the teachings of Islam those who unjustly hurt Muslim men and women in whose hearts reigns piety have laid upon themselves calumny and manifest sin:

And those who hurt believing men and believing women unjustly have laid upon themselves calumny and manifest sin (Al-Ahzab, 58).

The enemies of Islam capitalize on their foolishness and wickedness to destroy Islam. They however, will never succeed in their evil plan for Islam as the religion of truth will continue to prevail over all religions.

Every religion which commends itself widely to human beings and lasts through some space of time has a glimpse of truth in it. But Islam being the perfect light of truth is bound to prevail. As the greater light, through its own strength, outshines all lesser lights, so will Islam outshine all else, in spite of the displeasure of those to whom light is an offensive.

The Lord of creation says in the Koran:

They desire to extinguish with their mouths the light of Allah; but Allah will perfect His Light. Though the unbelievers be averse. It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may uplift it above every religion, though the unbelievers be averse (As-Saff 8- 9).

Islam is now firmly established in the hearts of all Muslims inhabiting the globe. The strong belief of Muslims in their faith can never be shaken by dialectical assaults, on the contrary such disputations recoil on the heads of those who indulge in them.

The truth of Islam is final, it does not come and go, but stays to restore the true balance – unlike falsehood which by its very nature is doomed to perish.

If Islam was just some false religion as its enemies claim, would so many people, from Western scholars to Christian missionaries, to hate mongers have to tell so many lies about it? The reason is that the ultimate truth of Islam stands on solid ground and its unshakable belief in the unity of Allah is above reproach. Due to this, the enemies of Islam cannot criticize its doctrines directly, but instead make up things about Islam that are not true so that people lose the desire to learn more about Islam.

Human efforts to defeat Allah's plan will only bring humiliation to those who indulge in them. Such efforts besides their failures will land them in an abyss of punishment.

As the Koran says:

And those who strive against Our signs to void them – those shall be arraigned unto the chastisement (Saba', 38).

The enemies of Islam will soon come to know the consequences of their insolence when they are afflicted with misfortunes in health and wealth in earthly life, followed by a severe torment in the grave, and in the Day of Judgment will be confronted with the torment that is laid upon the damned – the chastisement of burning in Hell. Here they will realize who is further astray from the way.

All the works directed to fight Islam is in vain. Whether the enemies of Islam like it or not, Islam is going to prevail. Islam is going to spread like a rising tide. The wide-spread of Islam was stated in the Koran 14 centuries ago:

They desire to extinguish Allah's Light with their mouths. But Allah refuses to do other than perfect His Light, even though the unbelievers detest it. It is He Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the True Religion to exalt it over every other religion, even though the idolaters detest it. (Al-Tawba 32, 33)

The Koran also indicates that Islamic morality will spread throughout the world:

Allah has promised those of you who believe and do right actions that He will make them successors in the land, as He made those before them successors, and will firmly establish for them their religion, with which He is pleased, and give them, in place of their fear, security. "They worship Me, not associating anything with Me." Any who disbelieve after that, such people are deviators. (An-Nur, 55).

In addition to these verses, many sayings of the Prophet, assert that the Koran's moral teachings will prevail. In the last days before the end of the world, humanity will experience a period in which wrongdoing, injustice, deceit, fraud, wars, strife, conflict, and moral degeneration is wide-spread. Then will come the Golden Age, in which these moral teachings will begin to spread among people and finally prevail throughout the world.

The Prophet said: "The dwellers of the heavens and the earth will be pleased. The earth will bring forth all that grows, and the heavens will pour down rains in abundance. From all the good that Allah will bestow on the inhabitants of the earth, the living will wishes that the dead would come to life again." (Mukhtasar Tazkirah Qurtubi, p .437).

"The earth would turn like the silver tray growing vegetation..." (Sunan Ibn-i Majah)

"The earth will be filled with equity and justice as it was previously filled with oppression and tyranny." (Abu Dawud).

Allah says in the Koran:

Allah has written: 'I will be victorious, I and My Messengers.' Allah is Most Strong, Almighty (Al-Mujadilah, 21)

It is recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said, "Allah made the eastern and western parts of the earth draw near for me to see, and the rule of my Ummah (nation) will extend as far as I saw.

Imam Ahmad recorded from Tamim Ad-Dari that he said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying, "This matter (Islam) will keep spreading as far as the night and day reach, until Allah will not leave a house made of mud or hair, but will make this religion enter it, while bringing might to a mighty person (a Muslim) and humiliation to a disgraced person (who rejects Islam). Might with which Allah elevates Islam (and its people) and disgrace with which Allah humiliates disbelief (and its people).

Allah directs the history of the universe along the course of His foreordained plan. The plan is divine laws and commandments. The commandments are controlled by Him through His laws according to His design and plan. His creation is not haphazard. Everything has its appointed time, place and location as well its definite limitation. Every word, deed, and thought of man has its fullest consequences. Nobody can interfere with Allah's work and plan, and no change in His creation. He is able to destroy all His creatures and create again in an instant by His own power.

The Koran says:

Is not He, who created the heavens and, earth, able to create the like of them? Yes indeed; He is the All-Creator, the All-Knowing. His command, when he desires a thing, is to say to it 'Be' and it is. So glory be to Him, in whose hand is the dominion of everything, and unto whom you shall be returned (Yasin, 80-83).

Everything will perish but His Face. The mountains and valleys, the sun and the moon, men, women, ships, empires, the wonders of science and arts, and the wonder of human glory, all will pass away.

The Koran says:

All that dwells upon the earth is perishing, yet still abides the Face of thy Lord, majestic, splendid (Al-Rahman, 26, 27).

This will take us to the wisdom of creation. The purpose of creation is to worship Allah alone without associating with Him any partners. Man was not created in vain, but rather, to worship Allah and follow His Laws. Those who follow the path of Allah are the righteous, and deserve to enter Paradise beneath which rivers flow. Those who do not follow His path are the wicked who earn eternal doom in Hell. Had mankind been produced for any other reason than worshipping Allah, people would have been like animals that will be neither rewarded nor punished; they simply eat, drink and reproduce. Such a state would have been degrading for man, as well as negation of the wisdom of creation.

The Koran says:

What, did you think that We created you only for sport, and that you would not be returned to Us? So Exalted is Allah, the true King, no one has the right to be worshipped but He, the Lord of the Supreme throne (Al-Mu'minun, 115, 116).

The wisdom of creation is not hoarding wealth, or being a super power dominating other nations. The wisdom of creation is not materialistic gains and accumulating riches, but rather worshipping Allah alone and following His Law. Man must be certain that he will be brought back to Allah for accountability, for nothing can lessen each soul's responsibility for its own deeds. Each soul will carry its fate round its own neck. If man were so immersed in the evanescent falsehoods of this life to turn away from Allah, the true and the eternal, he will have a crude awakening when the Judgment comes. These very things he thought so enjoyable here, will be a grievous burden to him that day, which he will not be able to escape or lighten.

Finally, Daniel Pipes had concluded a bad bargain with his supporters and sponsors when he accepted the task of tarnishing the public image of Islam. He earned Allah's wrath when he attacked the Koran - the last divine revelation to mankind. He was born to be a loser when he decided to attack Muslims, Allah's sincere worshippers and devotees on earth. His oppressive attitude towards the Palestinians

by depriving them from living peacefully on their land is an example of his racial prejudice and bigotry.

The wretched man thinks that he is free to throw his venom here and there. In doing so it is only himself he destroys but he is not aware. Know him not that Allah knows his secret and what he conspires together? Know him not that Allah knows the things unseen? He is insolent in the earth wrongfully, but his insolence is only against himself. A brief enjoyment of this worldly life, then in the end unto Allah is his return, then He shall tell him what he was doing.

In Pipes' world, free of speech is sacred. People can talk about anything without restriction. But in our world words must not cross the limits. Offensive words touching Allah, the Creator, His Koran, His Prophet and believing Muslims is an unforgivable sin that has terrible consequences. Our Prophet taught us a golden rule. He said, " The faith of a servant is not put right until his heart is put right, and his heart is not put right until his tongue is put right." The Prophet also said, " ...Is there anything more than the harvest of the tongues that throws people on their faces into the Fire?"

The Prophet said:

"Whoever can guarantee what is between his jaws and what is between his legs (private parts), I guarantee him the Garden."

The Prophet said:

"O people! The harvest of tongue is the unlawful sayings, which are many, and among which there are sayings tantamount to disbelief. Mockery of Allah, His religion, His Book, His Messengers, His signs, and His righteous servants as regards their modes of worship, all lead to disbelief in Allah and the exclusion out of the fold of faith. This mockery is one of the fruits of the tongue. Falsehood, backbiting, tale bearing, obscenity, reviling and cursing, are all forms of the fruits of the tongue."

"A man may utter a word in which he finds no faults, though it may cause him to fall down into the Hell for seventy years."

In Sahih Al-Bukhari, it was narrated on the authority of Samurah bin Jundub, in a part of the dream seen by the Prophet:

"Two angels came to him and while they accompanied him, they passed by a person lying and another standing with an iron hook in his hand pushing it inside the mouth of the former till it reached the jaw bone, and then tore off one side of his cheek, and then did the same with the other side; in the meantime the first side of his cheek became normal again and then he repeated the same operation again." The two angels told the Prophet: "He was a liar and used to tell lies, and the people would report these lies on his authority till they spread all over the world. So, he will be punished like that till the Day of Resurrection.

Every word man utters is recorded. The Koran says:

Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it) (Qaf, 18).

The Prophet said:

Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day say something good, or better keep silent."

The Koran says:

O believers, fear Allah, and speaks words hitting the mark, and He will set right your deeds for you and will forgive you your sins. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has won a mighty triumph (Al-Ahzab 70, 71).

A man through his actions and words, sows the seeds of either good or evil. On the day of Resurrection he harvests their fruits. Those who sow the seeds of good words and deeds harvest honor and blessings; those who sow the seeds of evil words and deeds reap only regret and remorse. But Daniel Pipes insists of giving Allah over him a clear authority.

As the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet teaches, in the present world the enemies of Allah will be afflicted with terrible worldly calamities. At the time of death, they will die disgracefully, feeling

hungry and thirsty. Their thirst would be so great that all the water of the oceans of the earth will not be able to quench it. When they are laid in the grave to 'rest,' the earth will squeeze them so hard that their ribs on one side will pierce into the other side. Fire will be burned inside of them and they will be rolled in cinders. A serpent with fiery eyes and iron nails equal to the length of a day's journey will keep on thrashing them until the Last Day. Each blow will push them to a depth of seventy arm's length, and the punishment will last until the Day of Judgment.

If Daniel Pipes could but see himself when he is stationed before the Fire and says: "Would that I was but sent back to the world, then I would not deny the signs of Allah. Know him not that for those who oppose Allah and his Messenger, is the Fire of Hell to abide therein? That is the extreme disgrace.

In Hell there is an evil tree called Zaqqum. It springs out of the bottom of Hell Fire. The shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devil.

Now Daniel Pipes listen to the Koranic verses indicating the terrible fate awaiting you and all people like you:

Lo, the Tree of Zaqqum is the food of the guilty, like molten copper, bubbling in the belly as boiling water bubbles. "Take him, and thrust him into the midst of Hell, then pour over his head the chastisement of boiling water!"

"Taste! Surely thou art the mighty, the noble. Truly this is what you used to doubt (Al-Dukhan 43-50).

Those who want to dispute with me with opposing arguments, let them delay their arguments until the Day of Resurrection. They will stand before Allah and He will ask them, "Was it with my verses you were mocking at?"

As we have been taught by the Koran, they will not be allowed to answer or argue. They will wait to hear the final verdict. It is either Hell or paradise. There is no other alternative.

We Muslims follow what is revealed to us, and we are patient and constant until Allah gives judgment. He is the best of judges.

References

- 1- David Halton: Faith and politics: The rise of the religious right and its impact on American domestic and foreign policy. Larkin-Stuart Lectures Toronto, March 8-9, 2007.
<http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca>
- 2- Matthew Lyons: Christian Rightists and Neocons: A 25-year Alliance.
<http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/~lyonsm/alliance.htm>
- 3- IPS Institute for Policy Studies-www.ips-dc.org. Daniel Pipes.
- 4- The Koran is the word of God and an undeniable proof for Muhammad's prophet-hood. http://www.thewaytotruth.org/the_holyquran/wordofgod.htm
- 5- Zionist Aggression Against Arab Rights in Jedrusalem. By: Dr. Hassan Sayed Suleiman.
- 6- Source:<http://www.themodernreligion.com/basic/islam-offer.html>
- 7- Liberal Islam versus Moderate Islam: Elusive Moderation and the Seige Mentality. By Ali A. Mazuri. Institute of Global Cultural Studies, Binghamton University of New York.
- 8- Louay Safi: Blaming Islam. Examining the Religion Building Enterprise.
http://aninsight.org./2006/12/blaming_islam.html
- 9- Daniel Pipes denounces democracy for Muslims
By: Rick Kelly.World Socialist Web Site.
www.wsws.org/articles/2006/pipes-f02.shtml
- 10- 10- The Shura Principle in Islam. Safek Jawad Sulaiman.
http://www.alhewar.com/Sadek_Shura.Htm