**The Islamic Religion**

 *By David Mathews*

For three and twenty years, in patience,
Conflict, hope, and final triumph,
Did this Prophet of Allah receive
And teach the Message of the Most High.
It came, like the fruit of the soul's own yearning.
To teach profound spiritual truths,
Answer questions, appeal to men
In their doubts and fears, help and put heart
In them in moments of trial, and ordain
For them laws by which they could live
In society lives of purity, goodness and peace.

These messages came as inspiration
To Mohammed as the need arose,
On different occasions and in different places:
He recited them, and they were recorded
By the Pen: they were imprinted on his heart
And mind, and on the memory
Of his loving disciples: as the body
Of sacred Scripture grew, it was arranged
For purposes of public prayer and reading:
This is the book, or the reading, or the Qur'an.

*Introduction* (C. 40. & 41.) of 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali's
**The Meaning of THE HOLY QUR'AN**

It is good to study the beliefs of others, it is good to search for the truth. Why should a Christian examine the doctrines and teachings of the Islamic religion? For the same reason a Moslem might examine the doctrines and teachings of Christianity. Paul has commanded in 1 Thessalonians 5:21, "*Test all things; hold fast what is good*." If a Christian desires to test the beliefs of a different religion, he must first acquire of knowledge of what that religion believes, and why the followers of that religion accepts those doctrines. Once a Christian has established an accurate knowledge of the teachings of another religion, he can examine each of those beliefs against the Bible. Examination will undoubtedly reveal areas of agreement and disagreement. For a Christian, the identification of contradictions is enough to prove the inadequacy of the other religion. However, if a Christian desires to convert members of the other religion to Christianity, he must motivate followers of that religion to reject the "revelations" which they previously considered sacred, and then convince them that the Bible is the sacred revelation which they ought to love, study, and obey.

Mohammed claimed verbal inspiration in the Qur'an, with one out of the many examples found in Surah 12:2-3, "We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an, in order that ye may learn wisdom. We do relate unto thee the most beautiful of stories, in that We reveal to thee this (portion of the) Qur'an: Before this, thou too wast among those who knew it not." Moslems ardently and sincerely believe that Mohammed was inspired, "The Koran is the earliest and by far the finest work of Classical Arab prose. For Moslems it is the infallible word of God, a transcript of a tablet preserved in heaven, revealed to the Prophet Mohammed by the Angel Gabriel" (Introduction to N. J. Dawood's translation of The Koran). Mohammed's inspiration is a central tenet of the Moslem faith, "Islam is built upon five points: -- the witness of there being no deity except Allah, and of Mohammed being the apostle of Allah; the performing of prayer; the giving of alms; the pilgrimage to the house; and the fast of Ramadhan" (*The Forty-Two Traditions of An-Nawawi*, #3, as found in Robert O. Ballou's The Bible of the World). For Moslems, the Qur'an is a sacred book, a revelation of Allah, and the source of guiding principles for the decisions of life. Christians who seek and know the truth must respect the character and beliefs of Moslems, and teach them with humility and love.

Not till forty years of earthly life had passed
That the veil was lifted from the Preserved Tablet
And its contents began to be transferred to the tablet of his mind,
To be proclaimed to the world, and read and studied
For all time -- a fountain of mercy and wisdom,
A warning to the heedless, a guide to the erring,
An assurance to those in doubt, a solace to the suffering,
A hope to those in despair -- to complete the chain
Of Revelation through the mouths
Of divinely inspired Prophets.

*Introduction* (C. 28.) of 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali's
**The Meaning of THE HOLY QUR'AN**

**Muhammed and His Revelation**

Muhammed considered himself a Prophet, and Moslems have listed him among the notable prophets witnessed by history: Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, and Jesus. "They say: 'Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided (to salvation).' Say thou: 'Nay! (I would rather) the Religion of Abraham, the True, and he joined no gods to Allah.' Say ye: 'We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail [Ishmael], Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to all the Prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: and we bow to Allah (in Islam). So if they believe as ye believe, they are indeed on the right path; but if they turn back, it is they who are in schism." (Surah 2:135-137). Moslems believe that Muhammed restored the worship of the Prophets which Jews and Christians had corrupted by the addition of human doctrines and invention of new deities (as Christians accepted the Trinitarian doctrine and the divinity of Jesus). Muhammed's faith was not a new faith, and his revelation was not a new revelation. Instead, he taught the doctrine of Allah as originally given to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Jesus.

Jews and Christians of Muhammed's day did not agree with his claims to restore true worship of God, which is one reason why passages are present in the Qur'an which defend its inspiration: "This Qur'an is not such as can be produced by other than Allah; on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it, and a fuller explanation of the Book -- wherein there is no doubt -- from the Lord of the Worlds. Or do they say, 'He forged it'? Say: 'Bring then a Surah like unto it, and call (to your aid) anyone you can, besides Allah, if it be Ye speak the truth!" (Surah 10:37-38). Criticism of the Qur'an is evidence that the critic has not listened to it, "Nay, they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge they cannot compass, even before the elucidation thereof hath reached them: thus did those before them make charges of falsehood: but see what was the end of those who did wrong" (Surah 10:39). Muhammed's charge against the Qur'an's accusers is explained in the notes of 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali, "The Unbelievers reject Allah's message simply because they cannot understand it and without even giving it a chance of elucidation in any of these ways" (Note 1431, Surah 10:39, p. 490 of The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an). Christians ought to carefully examine Muhammed's revelation before rejecting it, specifically because evidence of its truth or falsehood is found in its very pages.

Muhammed attributes his revelation to the Gabriel, saying in Surah 2:97-98, "Say: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel -- for he brings down the (revelation) to they heart by Allah's will, a confirmation of what went before. And guidance and glad tidings for those who believe -- whoever is an enemy to Gabriel and Michael -- Lo! Allah is an enemy to those who reject faith." Christians might not have confidence in the angels who inspired Muhammed, as Paul has warned against angels who brings different revelations and new gospels, "*I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed*" (Galatians 1:6-8). Moslems might object to the application of Paul's warning to the angels who inspired Muhammed, reasoning that the gospel which Muhammed preached was not different from that which the Prophets of God have preached since the days of Abraham. Quoted above was a passage from the Qur'an which listed Muhammed as the latest among the Prophets of God, including Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Moses and Jesus as predecessors of Muhammed.

If Muhammed's message was identical to the inspired teachings of Prophets recognized by Jews, Christians and Muslims, then perhaps he was inspired. Muhammed argued in the following manner, "They say: 'Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided (to salvation).' Say thou: 'Nay (I would rather) the Religion of Abraham, the true, and he joined not gods with Allah.'" (Surah 2:135). Not only does Muhammed teach the original faith as revealed to Abraham, his revelation confirms the previous Scriptures which are recognized by Jews and Christians: "And when there comes to them a Book from Allah, confirming what is with them -- although from of old they have prayed for victory against those without Faith -- where there comes to them that which they (should) have recognized. They refuse to believe in it but the curse of Allah is on those without Faith." (Surah 2:89). In Surah 12:111, Muhammed's revelation is again identified as a confirmation of previous Scriptures: "There is, in their stories, instructions for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it -- a detailed exposition of all things, and a Guide and a Mercy to any such as believe."

According to these passages, the truths contained in the Jewish and Christians Scriptures are confirmed in the inspired utterances of Muhammed. If that is the case, Moslems cannot deny that truth is present in the Bible -- both the Old and the New Testaments. A Christian (or a Jew) might wonder why they should seek guidance in the Qur'an, if the same truths present in Muhammed's revelation are present in their own Scripture. Confirmation of previous Truth is a poor foundation for a new religion, which means that Muhammed's teachings must differ in some ways from the Scriptures of Jews and Christians if he wishes for his followers to become Moslems. It is inescapable, then, that Muhammed's revelation must differ from the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. The presence of differences must create stress between Muhammed's desire to portray his revelation as confirmation and Muhammed's desire to establish a new religion which differs from both Judaism and Christianity.

Muhammed explicitly confesses to the inspiration of the Torah and the Gospel, saying in Surah 3:2-3, "Allah! There is no god but He -- the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. It is He who sent down to thee (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; it is He who sent down the Law (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this, as a guide to mankind, and He sent down the Criterion (of judgment between right and wrong)." If God had inspired previous Scriptures, then perhaps Jews and Christians (who rely on the Law and Gospel) are saved. Salvation is available to Jews and Christians in their respective Scriptures in Surah 5:46, "And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him: We sent him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the Law that had come before him: A guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah." Guidance for the righteous is found, according to Muhammed, in the Gospel of Christ. From statements such as these, it is reasonable to conclude that salvation is available to Jews and Christians. Confirmation is found in Surah 2:62, which declares: "Those who believe (in the Qur'an), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians -- any who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall their grieve."

Jews and Christians do not need Muhammed, as salvation is available to them through the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Some people have sought to extend Muhammed's apparent inclusiveness to include polytheistic and pantheistic religions:

The Koran does not condemn other religious traditions as false or incomplete but shows each new prophet as confirming and continuing the insight of his predecessors. The Koran teaches that God has sent messengers to every people on the face of the earth: Islamic tradition says there has been 124,000 such prophets, a symbolic number suggesting infinitude. Thus the Koran repeatedly points out that it is not bringing a message that is essentially new and that Muslims must emphasize their kinship with other religions ... The Koran naturally singles out apostles who were familiar to the Arabs -- like Abraham, Noah, Moses and Jesus, who were the prophets of the Jews and Christians. It also mentions Hud and Salith, who had been sent to the ancient Arab peoples of Midian and Thamood. Today Muslims insist that if Muhammed had known about Hindus and Buddhists, he would have included their religious sages ... On the same principle, Muslims argue, the Koran would have honored the shamans and holy men of the American Indians or the Australian aborigines.

p. 152 of Karen Armstrong's A History of God

Evidence would indicate that the Muslims that Karen Armstrong has in mind are a minority, as the behavior of Muslims in the Middle East has not demonstrated inclusiveness towards the Jewish nation and Jewish religion. Karen Armstrong looks to the Qur'an for proof of Muslim inclusiveness, as she quotes Surah 29:46, "Do not argue with the followers of earlier revelation otherwise in the most kindly manner -- unless it be such of them as are set on evil doing -- and say: 'We believe in that which has been bestowed upon us, as well as that which has been bestowed upon you: for our God and your God is one and the same, and it is unto him that we [all] surrender ourselves.'" Is the Islamic religion inclusive, or is it exclusive? Exactly what is Islam's relation to Judaism and Christianity.

As the record of man are imperfect,
And the memory of man unstable:
The names of many of these messengers
Are known in one place and not in another,
Or among one people and not among others;
And some of their names have perished utterly;
But their message stands one and indivisible,
Even though it may have been forgotten,
Or twisted by ignorance, error, superstition or perversity;
Or misunderstood in the blinding light
Of time or tortuous Circumstances.

*Introduction* (C. 9.) of 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali's **The Meaning of THE HOLY QUR'AN**

**Exclusive Islam**

Muhammed's opinion regarding pagan religions is not inclusive, in spite of Karen Armstrong's devout wish to the contrary. In Surah 4:48, Muhammed declares that paganism is sin: "Allah forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else, to whom He pleaseth; to set forth Partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed." Muhammed's reaction against polytheism is derived from God's first commandment: "*You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God*.." (Exodus 20:3-5). Muhammed condemned the pagan practices of the Arabs, and he would have condemned the pagan religions of the Hindus, Buddhists or shamans. Moslems who are inclusive towards polytheistic and pantheistic religions have abandoned the teachings of Muhammed, just as Jews or Christians who seek ecumenical unity with pagan religions must disobey God's first commandment.

Muhammed held the pagan gods of the Arabs in low esteem, saying in Surah 7:194-196, "Verily those whom ye call upon besides Allah are servants like unto you: Call upon them, and let them listen to your prayer, if ye are (indeed) truthful! Have they feet to walk with? Or hands to lay hold with? Or eyes to see with? Or ears to hear with? Say: 'Call your "god-partners", scheme (your worst) against me, and give me no respite. For my protector is Allah.'" Muhammed's observations about the limitations of idols is inspired by the Bible, as God has taught in Psalm 115:4-8, "*Their idols are silver and gold, the work of man's hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; eyes they have, but they do not see; they have ears, but they do not hear; noses they have, but they do not smell; they have hands, but they do not handle; feet they have, but they do not walk; nor do they mutter through their throat. Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them*." God has never approved of idolatry, nor does God seek fellowship with the deities created by man. Muhammed's rejection of the pagan practices of his day is evidence enough that he would not identify Hindus, Buddhists, and shamans among the true Prophets of Allah.

If Muhammed did not accept the pagan religions of his time, and there is no reason to believe that he would have had fellowship with the polytheistic and pantheistic religions of either India or North America, then perhaps he was open minded concerning the religions of the Prophets of God which he identified as his spiritual predecessors. Evidence of fellowship among Muslims, Jews and Christians was found in Surah 5:69, "Those who believe (in the Qur'an), those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Sabians and the Christians -- any who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness -- on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve." Only a few scriptures previously, Muhammed confesses that some among the Jews and Christians follow a correct path in their spiritual life: "If only they had stood fast by the Law, the Gospel, and all the revelation that was sent to them from their Lord, they would have enjoyed happiness from every side. There is from among them a party on the right course: But many of them follow a course that is evil." Therefore, salvation is available to Jews and Christians who follow their Scriptures, just as salvation is available to Moslems who follow the Qur'an.

However, if such is the case, then it is difficult to understand the meaning of another passage in the Qur'an: "If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah), never will be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good)" (Surah 3:85). Islam is not identical to Judaism or Christianity, which means that Jews and Christians will suffer condemnation because they follow a religion other than Islam. 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali explains the passage by saying, "The Muslim position is clear. The Muslim does not claim to have a religion peculiar to himself. Islam is not a sect or an ethnic religion. In its view all Religion is one, for the Truth is one. It was the religion preached by all the earlier prophets. It was the truth taught by all the 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." (Note #418, page 150 of The Meaning of THE HOLY QUR'AN).

Either salvation is available in Judaism and Christianity, or it is not. If 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali's reasoning is correct, then it would follow that Islam is identical to Judaism and Christianity, or at least the original Revelation of Judaism and Christianity as given to Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. His reasoning is invalid, however, because it fails to acknowledge that from the beginning, Islam differed from Judaism and Christianity, and the three religions are distinct in their beliefs, doctrines and practices. Muhammed warned his followers against having Jewish and Christian friends in Surah 5:51, "O ye who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors; they are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily Allah guideth not a people unjust." Emphasis is placed on the warning as it is repeated in 5:57, "O ye who believe! Take not for your friends and protectors those who take your religion for a mockery or sport -- whether among those who received the Scripture before you, or among those who reject Faith; but fear ye Allah, if ye have Faith (indeed)." Not all Muslims hate Jews and Christians, nor are the above passages reason to believe that Muhammed desired that his followers hate Jews and Christians. Why then did Muhammed desire to isolate his followers from Jews and Christians?

In Surah 2:109, Jews and Christians are identified as a danger to Moslems because they wish to convert them away from Muhammed's teachings: "Quite a number of the People of the Book wish they could turn you (people) back to infidelity after ye have believed." Muhammed portrays Jews and Christians as deviously seeking to make Moslems infidels, although his real fear was that Jews and Christians might convert Moslems to the more ancient religions which were inspired by God through Prophets recognized by Muhammed. To preserve the Islamic faith, Muhammed isolated Islam from Judaism and Christianity, as he identified Islam with the religion of Abraham: "They say: 'Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided (to salvation).' Say thou: 'Nay! (I would rather) the religion of Abraham, the True, and he joined no gods with Allah.'" How then is salvation available to Jews and Christians who adhere to their Books and worship God with reverence?

Muhammed sought to identify Islam with the religion of Abraham. He argued that Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian in Surah 3:67, "Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in Faith and bowed his will to Allah's (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with Allah." Muhammed sought guidance from the example of Abraham, "Abraham was indeed a model. Devoutly obedient to Allah, (and) true in faith." (Surah 16:120). Muhammed's message was summed up in Surah 16:123: "Follow the ways of Abraham the True in Faith." As honorable a goal as Muhammed sought in following Abraham, his reasoning against Judaism and Christianity was flawed. Abraham was not a Jew or a Christian, nor was he a Muslim. As much as Muhammed would claim that his message was equivalent to Abraham's, it is impossible to verify. Even if Muhammed insisted that his message was inspired, that would not verify that his religion was Abraham's. Muhammed has already granted that Moses and Jesus were inspired Prophets, and both of those prophets taught messages which were distinct from each other and also Abraham.

Abraham did not have the ten commandments, and Abraham did not have the Law of Moses. Abraham and Moses did not have the Gospel. God's revelation to each of these Prophets differed, as God was revealing His will to mankind. As God spoke through the prophet Isaiah, "*Whom will He teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little*" (Isaiah 28:9-10). This former method of revelation was contrasted with God's revelation through Christ in Hebrews 1:1-2, "*God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the father by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He has made the worlds*." Christians reason that the Jewish prophets of the Old Covenant looked forward to a more complete revelation of God's will, as most eloquently stated in Jeremiah's prophecy: "*Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah -- not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt*." (Jeremiah 31:31-32). God's new covenant was established through Christ specifically so that it might provide salvation to all people, meaning that Christ's revelation left no room for a successor. For that reason Christ is resurrected, and forever reigning as King and Priest. Jesus needs no successor, "*And there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood*" (Hebrews 7:23-24). Therefore, the faith of Christ is not identical to the faith of Abraham, and the religion of Christ is not the same as the religion of Abraham.

**Islam's Contradictions with the Bible**

Muhammed's religion must differ from Judaism and Christianity. How then can the Qur'an confirm the scriptures of Judaism and Christianity? Muhammed's revelation is presented with a problem which confronts any religious group's efforts to establish a new "revelation" in addition to the Bible. Muhammed is not the only religious leader who sought to establish a religion with a new book of inspired teachings. Joseph Smith, Jr., did the same. Very prominent on the cover of The Book of Mormon is the claim: "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." Mormons portray their book as an additional revelation which does not conflict with earlier scriptures -- specifically the Old and New Testaments. Joseph Smith, Jr. attempts to justify his new "revelation" with a claim of perpetual revelation:

Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written. For I command all men, both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that ye shall write the words which I speak unto them; for out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written. For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it.

2 Nephi 29:10-12 of The Book of Mormon

Which is similar to a claim made in the Qur'an, "To every people (was sent) a Messenger: when their Messenger comes (before them), the matter will be judged between with justice, and they will not be wronged" (Surah 10:47). 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali explains the scripture's meaning in a note, "Every people or generation or nation has had its Message or Messenger: Allah revealed Himself to it in some way or another" (Note #1439, p. 493).

If God has sent prophets to every nation, and among those prophets are Joseph Smith, Jr. and Muhammed, then it must follow that the message of the Prophets must coincide, so that there is no confusion of God's revelation of Himself to man. As Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 14:33, "*For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints*." Therefore, God's message to His inspired prophets is identical. Joseph Smith, Jr. was aware of the necessity of conformity in God's message, as he says in 2 Nephi 29:8-9, "Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another. And when two nations shall run together the testimony of the two nations shall run together also. And I do this that I may prove unto many that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever." In the Qur'an, Surah 10:94, a similar confirmation of new "revelation" is found through the consistency of Muhammed's teachings with previous Scriptures: "If thou wert in doubt as to what we have revealed unto thee, then ask those who have been reading the Book from before thee: the Truth hath indeed come to thee from thy Lord: So be in nowise of those in doubt." Muhammed even illustrates the relationship of the Qur'an to the Bible through a story about Jinns (spirits) which were "(quietly) listening to the Qur'an: when they stood in the presence thereof, they said, 'Listen in silence!' When the reading was finished, they returned to their people ... They said: 'O our people! We have heard a Book revealed after Moses, confirming what came before it: it guides (men) to the Truth and to a Straight Path.'" (Surah 46:29-30).

A "confirmation" of previous scriptures must agree with those scriptures if it will successfully confirm their message. If the Qur'an was sent from God specifically so that it may confirm the Bible, then it will teach exactly what the Bible teaches. Paul describes the Biblical concept of unity in Ephesians 4:4-6, "*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*." Paul confronted the sinful divisiveness of the Corinthian Christians concerning their divisions, saying in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "*Now I plead with you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*." Agreement concerning beliefs and practices is essential to unity. Amos rhetorically asks, "*Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?*" (Amos 3:3). Modern "revelations" which attempt to confirm the Bible must decide which parts of the Bible they will agree with, because the God's revelation in the Bible is divided into several distinct covenants which contain different religious practices and laws to guide those under the covenant. Jesus used a parable to draw attention to the differences between His gospel and the Mosaic covenant: "*No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. Nor do people put new wine in old wineskins, or else the wineskin breaks, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine in new wineskins, and both a preserved*." (Matthew 9:16-17). A forceful application of Jesus' teaching is found in Hebrews 8:13, "*In that He says, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away*." God's message to man changed in the work of Jesus, as Jesus had fulfilled the requirements of the Mosaic covenant. Further adherence to the Mosaic covenant following Christ was no longer necessary, as it was actually detrimental to the salvation of those who rejected Christ because of their desire to follow Moses.

Christians who reverts to Judaism must repudiate his faith in Christ and Christ's gospel. Paul warned the Galatian Christians against those who sought to impose the Old Covenant's commands as a requirement of salvation, saying in Galatians 5:2-4, "*Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace*." Those who revert to Judaism cannot assert that their behavior can serve as a confirmation of Jesus' message. Why? Because Jesus message conflicts directly with that of Moses, "*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love*" (Galatians 5:6). In the same way, Jews who revert to the Abrahamic style of worship must repudiate Moses and Israel's covenant. Why? Because the elaborate system of sacrifice and temple worship which are described in the Torah was revealed long after the time of Abraham. Paul places Abraham and the law of Moses in context in Galatians 3:16-17, "*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. ... And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before God in Christ*." Abraham did not have the law of Moses, as God did not reveal that law until long after Abraham's death. To return to Abraham's message would mean a repudiation of all later revelations of God's prophets.

Muhammed's problem -- which is identical to Joseph Smith's problem, and all other people who claim revelations -- is that he must preserve the concept of continuity in God's revelation while departing from that same revelation. Why is departure necessary for these "prophets"? Because they are seeking to establish their own religion. If Muhammed and Joseph Smith had merely confirmed the message of the Bible, they would have produced Christians. However, their teachings produce Moslems or Mormons (respectively). What does that mean? Muhammed's purported aim of confirming the Bible either was a delusion or a lie, and its failure is easy to demonstrate.

**Does the Qur'an Contradict the Bible?**

Agreement between the Qur'an and the Old and New Testaments is implied in the many passages of the Qur'an which claim that the Qur'an confirms previous Scripture. Contrary to these claims are other scriptures which imply that Muhammed was aware of inherent differences between his teachings and the Bible. Two passages in particular are significant in their recognition of differences between the three religions which claim descent from Abraham. The first was quoted earlier, Surah 2:135, "They say: 'Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided (to salvation).' Say thou: 'Nay! (I would rather) the Religion of Abraham, the True.'" The second in found in Surah 3:66-67, "Ah! Ye are those who fell to disputing (even) in matters of which ye had some knowledge! But why dispute ye in matter of which ye have no knowledge? It is Allah Who knows, and ye who know not! Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in Faith, and bowed his will to Allah's (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with Allah." Muhammed believes that his faith was Abraham's faith, and he realized that Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian. If both of these propositions are true, then the Qur'an must not confirm either Judaism or Christianity -- for how can it confirm revelations which differ from Abraham's?

Examination of the Qur'an reveals that it differs from the Bible on many subjects. In spite of Muhammed's claims, the Qur'an cannot confirm the Bible, as in reality it contradicts the Bible. Several examples of contradictions between the Qur'an and the Bible:

**1. The Downfall of Satan**

The situation which motivated Satan's rebellion from God is described in Surah 7:11-12, "It is We Who created you and gave you shape; then we bade the angels bow down to Adam, and they bowed down; not so Iblis; he refused to be of those who bow down. (Allah) said: 'What prevented thee from bowing down when I commanded thee?' He said: 'I am better then he: thou didst create me from fire, and him from clay.'" God punished Satan, removing him from the Way. Satan responded with a threat, "Because Thou hast thrown me out of the Way, lo! I will lie in wait for them on Thy Straight Way: then I will assault them from before them and behind them, from their right and their left." (Surah 7:16-17). Following the removal of Satan from the Way is the familiar story of the temptation of Eve and the curses because of man's rebellion (7:20-25).

Surah 15:26-33 contains another account of Satan's downfall: "We created man from sounding clay, from mud molded into shape; and the Jinn race, We had created before, from the fire of a scorching wind. Behold! Thy Lord said to the angels: 'I am about to create man, from sounding clay from mud molded into shapes; when I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of My spirit, fall ye down in obeisance unto him.' So the angels prostrated themselves, all of them together: Not so Iblis: he refused to be among those who prostrated themselves. (Allah) said: 'O Iblis! What is your reason for not being among those who prostrated themselves?' (Iblis) said: 'I am not one to prostrate myself to man, whom thou didst create from sounding clay, from mud molded into shape.'" Following these verses is the punishment of Satan by God for his rebellion (15:34-39).

A more detailed account of Satan's reaction to God's command to worship Adam is found in Surah 17:61-63, "Behold! We said to the angels: 'Bow down unto Adam.' They bowed down except Iblis: He said: 'Shall I bow down to one whom Thou didst create from clay?' He said: 'Seest Thou? This is the one whom Thou hast honored above me! If thou wilt but respite me to the Day of Judgement, I will surely bring his descendants under my sway -- All but a few!' (Allah) said: 'Go thy way; if any of them follow thee, verily Hell will be the recompense of you (all) -- an ample recompense.'"

What does the Qur'an teach about Satan's rebellion?
1. The angels were created before Adam.
2. The angels were created of fire.
3. Man was created from clay.
4. Following God's creation of man, the angels were commanded to worship Adam.
5. Satan refused to worship man.
6. Satan's reply to the command contrasted the substance of angels (fire) from the substance of man (clay).
7. Satan determines to destroy mankind following his punishment.

The Bible does not give an account of Satan's rebellion, nor does it describe which commands of God Satan originally rebelled against. Muhammed explains why his revelation might differ from the Bible in Surah 12:102, "Such is one of the stories of what happened unseen, which We reveal by inspiration unto thee: nor wast thou (present) with them when they concerted their plans together in the process of weaving their plot." Supposing that Muhammed was inspired, then Christians might trust his stories. Another possibility is present: Muhammed might have relied upon human sources for his stories, instead of Divine revelation. Elaborations and additions to the Bible were produced by Jews, Christians and Gnostics from the earliest times, preceding the New Testament and the Qur'an. One such addition is the apocryphal Gospel of Bartholomew, which includes the following story concerning Satan's downfall:

But the devil said: "Allow me to tell you how I was cast down here, and how God made man.
"I wandered to and fro in the world, and God said to Michael: Bring me earth from the four ends of the world and water out of the four rivers of Paradise. And when Michael had brought them to him, he formed Adam in the east, and gave form to the shapeless earth, and stretched sinews and veins, and united everything in a harmonious whole. And he showed him reverence for his own sake because he was his image. And Michael also worshipped him. And when I came from the ends of the world, Michael said to me: 'Worship the image of God which he has made in his own likeness.' But I said: 'I am fire of fire. I was the first angel to be formed, and shall I worship clay and matter?' And Michael said to me: 'Worship, lest God be angry with you.' I answered: 'God will not be angry with me, but I will set up my throne over against his throne, and shall be as he is.' Then God was angry with me and cast me down . . .

p. 357 of William Barnstone's The Other Bible

Similarities between the Qur'an's account and the apocryphal account imply that Muhammed had either heard or read the apocryphal story.

Muhammed's source was not inspired, which is reason enough to believe that Muhammed was not inspired. The belief that God commanded his angels to worship Adam is absurd. Paul condemns paganism in Romans 1:21-23, "*although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of God into an image made like corruptible man -- and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things*." God does not approve of worship of man. Another evidence against the story is found in Revelation 22:8-9, "*Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, 'See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.'*" The angel's rebuke of John's worship emphasized that both men and angels ought to worship God. Therefore, God did not command the angels to worship Adam.

**2. Expansions of Biblical Stories**

Muhammed has much to say Biblical stories, and he often goes beyond the Bible's narrative to fill in details. It is unknown to what extent Muhammed is responsible for the additions, he might have relied on inaccurate oral accounts of the Bible. Otherwise, he might have responded to the natural human desire for more information by altering the stories so that they might closely fit his idea about how they should have occurred.

The familiar story of Cain and Abel is found in the Qur'an, Surah 5:27-31: "Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold! They each presented a sacrifice (to Allah): It was accepted from one, but not from the other. Said the latter: 'Be sure I will slay thee.' 'Surely,' said the former, 'Allah doth accept of the sacrifice of those who are righteous ...' The (selfish) soul of the other led him to the murder of his brother: he murdered him, and became (himself) one of the lost ones. Then Allah sent a raven, who scratched the ground, to show him how to hide the shame of his brother. 'Woe is me!' said he; 'Was I not even able to be as this raven, and to hide the shame of my brother?' Then he became full of regret." The Bible's account of Cain and Abel, contained in Genesis 4, does not record Cain's conversation with Abel or the raven's burial of Abel. The former most likely is an example of Muhammed's creativity, the latter is a legend.

Abraham's significance in the Qur'an is related to Muhammed's desire to identify his revelation to Abraham's. Several stories in the Qur'an relate events in his life which are not mentioned whatsoever in the Bible. Abraham disputed with a false teacher in Surah 2:258, "Hast thou not turned they vision to one who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had granted him power? Abraham said: 'My Lord is He Who giveth life and death.' He said: 'I give life and death.' Said Abraham: 'But it is Allah that causeth the sun to rise from the East: Do thou then cause him to rise from the West?' Thus was he confounded who (in arrogance) rejected faith." In verse 260 of the same Surah, Abraham asked God to demonstrate His power over life and death: "Behold! Abraham said: 'My Lord! Show me how Thou givest life to the dead.' He said: 'Dost thou not then believe?' He said: 'Yea! but to satisfy my own understanding.' He said: 'Take four birds; tame them to turn to thee; put a portion of them on every hill, and call to them; they will come to thee, (flying) with speed. Then know that Allah is exalted in Power, Wise.'" Christians and Jews might doubt the validity of these stories.

Muhammed is guilty of not merely expanding on the story of Moses, he also confuses the narrative and mixes it with another Biblical account. Muslims are commanded in Surah 29:39, "(Remember also) Qarun, Pharoah, and Haman: there came to the Moses with a Clear Signs, but they have behaved with insolence on the earth; yet they could not overreach (Us)." Moses did confront Pharoah in Exodus, however Haman was not present -- as Haman was the opponent of Jews in who Esther defeated in Esther. Moses' Pharoah and Esther's Haman were separated by almost a thousand years. Muhammed combined the two stories, relating in Surah 28:38, "Pharoah said: 'O Chiefs! No god do I know for you but myself: therefore, O Haman! Light me a (kiln to bake bricks) out of clay, and build me a lofty Palace, that I may mount up to the god of Moses: But as far as I am concerned, I think (Moses) is a liar!" Pharoah's request of Haman sounds like another Biblical story: "*And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. They said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.' They had bricks for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, 'Come let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top in in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the earth.*'" (Genesis 11:2-4). Haman was commanded to bake bricks to build a tower to heaven. Moslems might attempt to explain Haman as a separate individual in Egypt whose name was identical to the later Haman of Esther. That is not likely, nor is it possible to explain the similarity between Pharoah's desire to build a tower to heaven and the tower of Babel as a mere coincidence.

Solomon plays an important part in the Bible, as he is the king who built the Temple of God and is well known for his wisdom. Solomon's authority, according to Surah 38:36-38, included: "Then We subjected the Wind to his power, to flow gently to his order, whithersoever he willed -- as also the evil ones, (including) every kind of builder and diver -- as also others bound in fetters." Surah 34:12 describes Solomon's authority granted by God, "And to Solomon (We made) the wind (obedient): Its early morning (stride) was a month's journey, and its evening (stride) was a month's (journey); and we made a Font of molten brass to flow for him; and there were jinns that worked in front of him, by the leave of his Lord, and if any of them turned aside from Our command, We made him taste of the Penalty of the Blazing fire." Even Moslems have some difficulty in accepting the "font of molten brass" granted Solomon, as 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali struggles with it in his notes, "'Also, he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof: and a life of thirty cubits compassed it about' (II. Chronicles iv. 2). The receptacle or 'sea' or Font was made of molten brass: presumably it contained flowing water for washing with." (Note #3804, p. 1086). While that explanation sounds reasonable enough, N. J. Dawood's translation would exclude it: "To Solomon we subdued the wind, traveling a month's journey morning and evening. We gave him a spring flowing with molten brass, and jinn who served him by leave of his Lord. Those who them who did not do Our bidding We shall punish in the fire of Hell. They made for him whatever he pleased: shrines and statues, basins as large as watering troughs, and built-in cauldrons." (p. 183 of N. J. Dawood's The Koran, 34:12ff).

Muslims have good reason to avoid the implications of a spring flowing molten brass, as it is a legend. If Solomon did have such a spring, the Bible would have mentioned it. Whatever source inspired the story, whether Muhammed or another human, it is an error. Muslims ought to share a similar discomfort with Solomon's power over the wind and Jinn, as the Bible does not even hint of Solomon possessing such powers. In these examples, the Qur'an is manifestly in error, speaking about matters which cannot confirm the Bible for they are not present in the Bible. A full description of every legendary addition to Biblical stories would demand more space and time then currently available, so comparison of the Old Testament stories which the Qur'an corrupts must end with these examples, which are sufficient to question the Qur'an's inspiration.

**3. Early miracles of Christ**

Mary responded to the Spirit's message of Jesus' conception with a prophecy, "And Allah will teach him the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel, and (appoint him) a messenger to the Children of Israel, (with this message): 'I have come to you, with a sign from your Lord, in that I make for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave: and I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I quicken the dead, by Allah's leave.'" (Surah 3:49). Allah speaks to Jesus in Surah 5:110, "O Jesus the son of Mary! Recount My favor to thee and to thy mother. Behold! I strengthen thee with the holy spirit, so that thou didst speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. Behold! I taught thee the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel. And Behold! Thou makest out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My leave, and thou breathest into it, and it becometh a bird by My leave." According to Muhammed, Jesus created birds out of clay and gave them life.

No miracle account of the gospels records Jesus making birds out of clay and bringing them to life through a miracle. 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali attributes the miracle in his note on the passage: "This miracle of the clay birds is found in some of the apocryphal gospels; those of curing the blind and the lepers and raising the dead are in the canonical gospels." (Note #390, p. 140). The miracle is found in *The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy of the Savior* (36): "Now, when the Lord Jesus had completed seven years from his birth, on a certain day He was occupied with boys his own age. For they were playing among clay, from which they were making images of asses, oxen, birds, and other animals; and each one boasting of his skill, was praising his own work. Then the Lord Jesus said to the boys: The images that I have made I will order to walk. The boys asked Him whether then he were the son of the Creator; and the Lord Jesus made them walk. And they immediately began to leap; and then, when He had given them leave, they again stood still. And He had made figures of birds and sparrows, which flew when He told them to fly, and stood still when He told them to stand, and ate and drank when He handed them food and drink." (Ante-Nicene Fathers, volume 8, p. 412). Needless to say, the legend is false, and the gospel is filled with similar absurd stories about Jesus which were all invented by a particularly creative imagination. For example, section 47 (p. 414): "At another time, when the Lord Jesus was returning home with Joseph in the evening, He met a boy, who ran up against Him with so much force that He fell. And the Lord Jesus said to him: As thou hast thrown Me down, so thou shalt fall, and not rise again. And the same hour the boy fell down, and expired."

How much faith do the above stories merit? None. The Bible is very specific about Jesus' first miracle, which is recorded in John 2. A marriage feast at Cana was attended by Jesus and His family. During the course of the feast, the wine was exhausted. Jesus responded with a miracle, creating wine out of water: "*Jesus said to them, 'Fill the waterpots with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, 'Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.' And they took it. When the master of the feast has tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, 'Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then that which is inferior; but you have kept the good wine until now*.'" (John 2:7-10). John points out the importance of the miracle in the next verse, saying, "*This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him*." Any doubts that Jesus had performed no miracles before then are removed when reading the only gospel to record anything concerning the early life of the Savior, Luke. Luke's record of Jesus' life from birth to the beginning of the ministry is present in Luke chapter 1-2. Neither chapter hints at miracles during these years, saying in conclusion in Luke 2:52, "*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man*." Consider also the reaction of the citizens of Nazareth to Jesus' message, as recorded by John, "*Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?*" (John 6:42). Certainly if Jesus had performed miracles as a child, the residents of Nazareth would have remembered them.

**4. Rejection of Jesus in the Qur'an**

Within the gospels and Christian teaching, Jesus possesses all authority. Jesus' authority is established upon His divinity, as witnessed by God through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. If the gospels are correct in their description of Jesus, Muhammed is not needed, and no further revelation of God's word is anticipated. According to Jesus, He is the perfect manifestation of God, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him*" (John 14:6-7). God set Jesus apart on the Mount of Transfiguration, declaring: "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!*" (Matthew 7:5). Simeon prophesied of Jesus in Luke 2:29-32, "*Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.*" Jesus was given a message which was not limited to Israel, nor was it limited to His own time. Following the resurrection, Jesus commanded the apostles to teach His message universally, for it applied to all humans, and Jesus' authority was unlimited: "*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age*" (Matthew 28:18-20). For these reasons, the author of Hebrews introduces his book by emphasizing Jesus' uniqueness as the perfect revelation of God superseding all previous prophets: "*God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds*." (Hebrews 1:1-2). When Jesus began teaching difficult subjects, and lost many disciples, He asked those who remained, "*Do you also want to go away?*" Peter responded, "*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God*." (John 6:67-69). Jesus has no equal, as Jesus is God. God's authority is not limited by time or space, and God needs no successor.

Jesus needs no successor, and followers of God do not need Muhammed, if the gospels are correct in their description of His nature. Moslems are aware of the problem Jesus presents to Muhammed and Muhammed's revelation. Muhammed was aware of the threat Jesus posed to his message, which is why the Qur'an challenges Christian doctrines about Christ's message, divinity, death and resurrection. What is the Qur'an's teachings concerning Jesus?

Muhammed objected to the doctrine of the Godhead, teaching in Surah 5:72-75, "They do blaspheme who say: 'Allah is Christ the son of Mary.' But said Christ: 'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' Whoever joins other gods with Allah -- Allah will forbid him the Garden, and the Fire will be his abode. There will for the wrongdoers be no one to help. They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no god except Allah. ... Christ the son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away Before him." Testimony concerning Jesus' divinity is found in many places in the Bible, the most powerful being John 1:1, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" and Isaiah 9:6, "*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*." Divine titles are applied to Christ in the Bible. Several individuals worshipped Christ without rebuke from Jesus, particularly Thomas, who responded to the wounds of the resurrected Lord by saying: "*My Lord and My God!*" (John 19:28). Jesus' divinity is attested to in many different places in both the Old and New Testament. Space will not permit a complete discussion of all of evidence for and arguments against Jesus' divinity, it is only important at this time to know that the Qur'an explicitly denies a Biblical doctrine.

Muhammed has Jesus condemn worship of Himself in the Qur'an, Surah 5:116-117, "And behold! Allah will say: 'O Jesus the son of Mary! Didst thou say unto men, "Worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of Allah"?' He will say: 'Glory to thee! Never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, Thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my heart, though I know not what is in Thine. For Thou knowest in full all that is hidden. Never said I to them aught except what Thou didst command me to say, to wit, "Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord"'." Jesus taught the Jews in John 5:22-23, "*For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father who sent Him*." God is honored through the worship and obedience that men offer him. If Christ is honored in the same way that God is honored, then He is worthy of worship and obedience. Jesus equated His own glory with the Father's in John 17:5, "*Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was*." Jesus' glory is related to His divine nature, which means that Jesus is worthy of worship. Paul says as much in Philippians 2:9-11, "*Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*"

Muhammed had even more difficulty with the resurrection. He outright denies the resurrection through denial of Jesus' death in Surah 4:156-158, "they uttered against Mary a grave false charge; that they said (in boast), 'We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah' -- but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not -- nay Allah raised him up unto Himself." 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali does not seek Biblical evidence for Muhammed's theory, as he is forced to rely on apocryphal gospels and heretical sects: "But some of the early Christian sects did not believe that Christ was killed on the cross. The Basilidans believes that someone else was substituted for him. The Docetae held that Christ never had a real physical or natural body, but only an apparent or phantom body, and that his crucifixion was only apparent, not real. ... The Gospel of St. Barnabas supported the theory of substitution on the Cross. The Qur'anic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews, notwithstanding certain apparent circumstances which produced that illusion in the minds of some his enemies." (Note #663, p. 236). Here is a clear example of a Islamic doctrine which is specifically designed to contradict the Bible, and cast in doubt the truth of the gospels and apostles.

Paul presents the central doctrine of the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, "*For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures*." Isaiah's prophecy of Christ in Isaiah 53 declares that the Messiah must die, "*For He was cut off from the land on the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked -- but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit found in His mouth*" (Isaiah 53:8-9). Jesus prophesied the same to his disciples, as Matthew records in Matthew 16:21, "*From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day*." John records a sermon of Jesus in John 10, in which His death is predicted, and its meaning is explained: "*I am the good shepherd, and the good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ... No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This command I have received from My Father*" (John 10:11, 18). Jesus voluntarily died for the salvation of His sheep. Peter's accusation against the Jews on Pentecost was based upon their decision to kill Jesus, "*Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know -- Him, being delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified and put to death*."

Denial of Jesus' death is equivalent to denial of His resurrection. Without the resurrection, Jesus' Gospel lacks meaning, and obedience to it is pitiable. "*Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen, and if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain*." (1 Corinthians 15:12-14). Jesus died, and Jesus was resurrected. Denial of these doctrines is a rejection of Jesus. It will also lead to rejection of the Old Testament and the numerous prophecies defining Jesus, His life, death and resurrection.

Moslems might place their faith in heretic sects and apocryphal gospels which were written by adherents of those sects. Christians might reason that Jesus, Paul, Peter, and the authors of the Gospels are a more reliable source then heretics and Muhammed. Muhammed did rely upon questionable materials when composing the Qur'an, and allowed the errors of his time to pollute his work.

But Muhammed came in the fullest blaze
Of history; with no learning he put to shame
The wisdom of the learned; with pasture folk
He lived and worked, and won their love; in hills
And valleys, caves and deserts, he wandered,
But never lost his way to truth and righteousness
From his pure and spotless heart the Angels washed
Off the dust that flew around him; through the ways
Of crooked city folk, he walked upright and straight,
and won from them the ungrudging name
Of the Man of Faith who never broke his word.

*Introduction* (C. 9.) of 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali's
**The Meaning of THE HOLY QUR'AN**

**Conclusion**

Muhammed believed that angels revealed the Qur'an to him, and he denied any human involvement in his work. Some Arabs, Jews and Christians of Muhammed's day denied his prophethood and rejected his revelation, charging: "'Nay,' they say, '(these are) Medleys of dreams! -- Nay, he forged it! Nay, he is (but) a poet! Let him then bring us a Sign like the ones that were sent to (Prophets) of old!'" 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali explains the charges in his notes: "The charges against Allah's inspired Messenger are heaped up 'Magic!' says one: that means, 'We don't understand it!' Says another, 'Oh! but we know! He is a mere dreamer of confused dreams!' If the 'dreams' fit in with real things and vital experiences, another will suggest, 'Oh yes! why drag in supernatural agencies? he is clever enough to forge it himself!' Or another suggests, 'He is a poet! Poets can invent things and so them in beautiful words!' Another interposes, 'What we should like to see is miracles, like we read of in stories of the Prophets of old!'" (Note #2668, p. 796).

God was not the source of Muhammed's revelation. Muhammed did not teach Abraham's doctrine, as he had no direct contact with Abraham's teachings. Muhammed did not teach Moses' doctrine, as he has departed from the Torah. Muhammed did not teach Christ's gospel, as he rejected Christ, and denied the central teachings of the New Testament. Muhammed did rely upon apocryphal gospels and imaginary legends to formulate a religion. Muhammed performed no miracles because he was not inspired by God, and he was not a true Prophet. For these reasons, it is good for a person to reject Muhammed and seek a different revelation instead of Muhammed's Qur'an.

Christians who desire to teach Moslems must learn what they believe, and to what extent they have faith in the Qur'an. Differences exists among those who call themselves "Moslems", just as denominations divide those who call themselves "Christian." What is the truth? What is God's will? How should humans live? Answers to these questions are found in Christ, as Jesus' life is evidence enough of His honest, and Jesus' death is evidence of His life, and Jesus resurrection is evidence of His Divinity and all-sufficiency. Christians do not need Muhammed. Moslems do not Muhammed either, if they desire truth and honestly seek to honor and obey God.