

Authenticity of the Bible

سورة الفاتحة سورة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا

الضَّالِّينَ

Sura 'Al-Fatihah' (The Opening) 1:1-7

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, The Beneficent, the Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgment, You (alone) we worship; You (alone) we ask for help. Show us the straight path, The path of those whom You have favoured; Not the (path) of those who earn Your anger nor of those who go astray.

وَتَعْرِفُونَ الْحَقَّ وَالْحَقُّ يُحَرِّرُكُمْ

Jesus said: "...and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32)

Warning—This pamphlet contains words of the Qur'an in Arabic and English.

Please use appropriately.

NOTE: Authoritative Islamic texts are the Qur'an and Hadith. Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah (verse numbers differ slightly in different versions). Sura always stands for a chapter in the Qur'an. Islamic belief is that Muhammad is the perfect example to be followed by all Muslims. Whatever he said, practiced or approved is called Hadith. There are six different sets of authentic ahadith (Hadiths): Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmizi, Sunnan Ibn Majah and Sunnan Nasa'i. This pamphlet is intended to show the teachings and examples of Muhammad, and is not intended to be offensive to Muslims; many Muslims may have little real knowledge of what their god, Allah and their prophet has said on this topic.

From the dictionary we see that 'authenticity' means the state or quality of being original or genuine with this genuineness established beyond doubt. Other synonyms are "real", "authoritative" and "trustworthy", as opposed to being false or a sham.

The Bible is not just one book but is a collection of sixty-six books divided into Old and New Testaments.

How did the various books come to be written? Who wrote them? When? And how did these in particular come to be found in the Bible? What was Allah's view regarding the Bible?

Islamic Teaching Concerning the Bible

Islamic teaching is internally contradicting. On the one hand, it gives very high regard to the Scriptures, and on the other hand, it claims they are corrupted.

☪ The Qur'an gives the Judeo-Christian Scriptures such noble titles as, 'the Book of God,' 'the Word of God,' 'a light and Guidance to man,' 'a decision on all matters,' 'the Gospel with its guidance and light confirming the preceding Law,' and "a Guidance and warning to those who fear God."

☪ Sura 5:46 teaches that the Gospel and the Torah come from God: '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.' See also Sura 5:47, 68 and 69. Surah 5:47 commands Christians to check their own Scriptures concerning the truth of Allah's teaching.

Sura 4:171 teaches that Jesus was a Messenger of God.

Allah told Muhammad to go to Christians and Jews for advice, because they had the Scriptures of God.

☪ Sura 10:94-95 O Muhammad, '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 no wise of those in doubt' (See also 2:41).

The Qur'an claims that no one can change the Word of God. (Sura 6:115/116; 10:65; 18:27/28; 48:23; 50:28-29). In spite of this, Islamic scholars teach Muslims that the Jews corrupted the words of the Scriptures (Sura 2:41-42, 59; 3:71, 3:78; 4:46) and some do not know the Scriptures at all (Sura 2:78). An Islamic theologian says, "While Muslims need to believe in the Torah, the Zabur [Psalms] and the Injil [Gospel], nevertheless they have been tampered with."

This is contradictory. Allah and Muhammad would not have asked Muslims to refer to and judge with a corrupted version of the Torah & New Testament. The Gospel and Torah that was available at the time of Muhammad must have been considered authentic. So now, let's examine whether the Scriptures have been changed since A.D. 600.

The Old Testament (OT)

The Old Testament, which contains thirty-nine books of the Christian Bible, is also the Holy Scriptures of the Jewish People. They were first written down in Hebrew, with minor portions written in Aramaic, the ancient languages of the Jews.

Until 1947, the oldest manuscripts of the Old Testament (OT) were from the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. In 1947, the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered near Qumran. By 1956, more than 800 scrolls had been found. These scrolls

were dated between 200 B.C. and 68 A.D. These scrolls are virtually identical to copies of scrolls found in the ninth-century manuscripts. The careful copyists had made very few, if any, errors or alterations to the text over one thousand years. In other words, *the OT that we have today is the same as the Scriptures Muhammad was encouraged to check against his own revelation.*

The New Testament (NT)

Some Muslims say that the Injil [Gospels] spoken of by the Qur'an is not the New Testament (NT). It is not the four Gospels now received as canonical, they argue. It is a single Gospel which Jesus received and which He taught. Only fragments survive in the canonical Gospels. They say that the text has been forged or tampered with.

There are literally hundreds of New Testament copies that predate Muhammad, ensuring an accurate transmission from the original Gospels. The test for the historicity of the NT surpasses all other ancient texts. The Gospels available at the time of Muhammad are identical to the Gospels contained in the New Testament today. Muslim rejection of the New Testament text is contrary to overwhelming manuscript evidence.

Superior Revelation?

Sometimes there are ambiguities in the views that Muslims have about the Bible. A well known Muslim reformer, Muhammad Abduh writes, *"The Bible, The New Testament and the Qur'an are three concordant Books; religious men study all three and respect them equally. Thus the Divine teaching is completed, and the true religion shines across the centuries."* Others say, *"Judaism lays stress on justice and right, Christianity on love and charity and Islam on brotherhood and peace."*

Some reject almost the entire Old Testament while others quote from the Tawrat (Torah) to give bad reports of the Banu Isra'il as proofs against the Jews and their religion.

There are Muslims that do believe in the accuracy of the Bible, yet claim that the Qur'an superseded all previous revelations based on the concept of progressive revelation. According to

them, the Qur'an is the last of the God-given Scriptures to have come down.

If that is true, there is a substantial problem for Islam: the Gospels (of Muhammad's time) proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God, if the Qur'an contradicts this, then its trustworthiness is in doubt because **the God of the Bible does not change** (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:20; Malachi 3:6). But, as we have already shown, the Qur'an internally contradicts itself regarding the Bible.

Responses to These Islamic Charges

The internal contradiction in the Qur'an can be explained by changes in attitude toward Christians and Jews. Early in Muhammad's career, when he was weak and needy, he taught that Muslims should treat Christians and Jews with respect but, as Muhammad grew in power, his attitude changed and he sought to kill Christians and Jews. (See our tract: *Jews and Christians in Islam.*)

Questions to Ask Yourself

- 1.If the Bible was changed why does the Qur'an call Muslims to believe the Taurat [Torah], Injil [Gospels], and Zabur [Psalms]?**
- 2.God claims that no-one can change his Word. What happened to this statement?**
- 3. When the Bible was changed did God notice it?**
- 4.If God wished, could He have preserved His Word?**
- 5.If God did not, or could not, preserve His Word (the Bible), how and why should we believe that He has preserved the Qur'an?**
- 6.Where is it expressly written in the Qur'an, that the earlier Holy Books were changed in their written form?**
- 7.If the Bible was changed why would Allah have commanded Muhammad to judge Jews by Torah, and judge Christians by the Injil (Sura 5:43-48)? In other words, how could Muhammad or Muslims judge them according to the Bible if it wasn't authentic?**

8.With the hundreds of copies and different translations, how could anyone have changed all of them?

9.When, and up to what time was the true uncorrupted Bible in circulation? Where is the original one now?

10.If Christians and Jews have two different religions, what's the purpose of their conspiracy? Why would Christians corrupt their own Bible?

11.Why would Christians die for a book they know is corrupted?

12.How do you know it was changed?

† The Bible says in Psalm 19:7-11, *"The Law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes... in keeping them there is great reward".*

The Teachings of the TORAH [the Law of God] are God's system of Instructions by which men are taught the Knowledge of God and they themselves are directed how to walk so as to please God, redeemed from their crooked paths. How then can men say that the Great God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, would allow His Laws to be tampered with? He watches over His Word to make sure that it comes to pass so He cannot be called a liar; God says that what He says He will do. His testimony and trustworthiness depends on the authenticity of the Bible.

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