

THE APOLOGY OF AL-KINDI

by Anton Tien

DIALOGUE

The 'ABBASID  
'Abdullah b. Ismail  
al-Hashimi

and

The NESTORIAN  
'Abd al-Masih b. Ishaq  
al-Kindi

c. 820 A.D.

Al-Kindi lived in Baghdad at the court of Ma'mun, son of the famous Harun ar-Rashid, about the year 820 A.D. (205 A.H.) He belonged to the royal tribe of Kindi in Arabia — the only Arabian tribe which retained the Christian faith after the advent of Islam. The genial and liberal-minded Caliph gathered round him the learned and gifted of all lands, and among them al-Kindi naturally found his place. While in the royal service he formed a friendship with 'Abdullah, a cousin of Ma'mun, with whom he was in the habit of discussing the respective merits of Christianity and Islam. The result of these discussions was a correspondence between the two protagonists, famous in its day, a

double record of which has been discovered, first of all by the American missionaries in Egypt, and later in the north of Turkey. The complete text of the correspondence has been published by the Society for Promoting of Christian Knowledge, and a full translation is now, for the first time, offered to English readers in the belief that it will prove of interest to many. The chief value of the correspondence lies in the fact that it enables us to see Christianity, not through Western spectacles, but as presented to Orientals by one who was himself a child of the East.

#### THE APOLOGY OF AL-KINDI

(A) In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.<sup>1</sup>

(B) It is said that in the reign of 'Abdullah al-Ma'mun, there lived a man of noble descent, a Hashimite and, I believe, an 'Abbasid,<sup>2</sup> known far and near for his scrupulous piety and for his devotion to the faith of Islam. He was wholly absorbed in the discharge of religious duties. This man had a friend, one of the best of men, a man of breeding and culture, belonging to the Kindi tribe; a member of the caliph's suite and placed near to his person, equally distinguished for his attachment to the Christian faith. Between these two there reigned a great kindness and affection. They had perfect confidence, each in the sincerity of his friend, as was known to the caliph and all his court. For various reasons I prefer not to mention their names, but the Hashimite wrote a letter to the Christian in the following terms:

#### THE MUSLIM'S SUMMONS

(C) In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate.

(D) Let me begin my letter by wishing you mercy and peace, after the manner of my master, the lord of the prophets, Muhammad, the

messenger of God, on whom may God be gracious, Heaven's blessing rest on him! Our best authorities, trusty men, on whose word we may rely and to whom we owe our knowledge of the Prophet, tell us that it was his custom, when he entered into conversation with any, to begin by wishing them mercy and peace in their intercourse with him. He made no difference between his own people and strangers,<sup>3</sup> between the faithful and idolaters; but rather, he wished to say that God had disposed him well to all men, and that his mission was not one of harshness and severity. In acting thus he appealed to the example of God, saying that "God is kind and pitiful to His faithful people." In the same way, when I have been at the Court of our Imams,<sup>4</sup> the caliph's enlightened and upright men, God be gracious to them one and all, I have noticed that, as one result of their perfect breeding and exalted rank, their magnanimity and generous dispositions, they followed the example of the Prophet, on whom Heaven's blessings rest! They know no distinction, nor did they favor one above another. I desire to follow in their steps and to imitate their example, claiming for myself some share in the admirable qualities I admire in others. I begin then by wishing you mercy and peace; lest my letter should fall into the hands of the Recording Angel, and he should disown me.<sup>5</sup>

(E) I am stirred up to show my regard for you by the fact that my master, Muhammad, on whom Heaven's blessing rest, has spoken of friendship as next neighbor to religion and faith, and you know I have subscribed myself an obedient servant of the Prophet of God, Heaven's blessing rest upon him! I am impelled to this course when I consider the excellent services you have rendered, your loyalty to us, and the kind and friendly feeling you have not only cherished, but manifested to us. I have further noticed how my cousin, our lord, the Amir of the Faithful,<sup>6</sup> may God aid him, honors you and keeps you near his person, confiding in you and speaking well of you. Must I not commend to you what I commend to myself, to my own household and my family? Must I not counsel you in all sincerity and with perfect frankness, placing before you those great religious verities which we hold by the grace of God? Nor has He committed them to us alone, but to all His creatures, promising therein a great reward at the Resurrection, and immunity from the penalties of sin in the future state.<sup>7</sup> For, saith He,

the most High and ever Blessed, "Abraham was of the orthodox faith" (Qur'an 2:129).<sup>8</sup> Again He speaks, most Glorious and Great, whose word is truth, "They who believe in our signs, they are Muslims." (Qur'an 27:83). And further, confirming this He saith, "Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but an orthodox Muslim. He was not one of the idolaters." (Qur'an 3:60) I wish then for you what I wish for myself. My heart yearns over you when I see your high breeding and perfect culture, the exquisite refinement and grace with which religion has stamped your every feature, the repute in which you are held and the progress you have beyond most in your religion; in a word, your loyalty to such light as you have. I said, I will put before him what God has graciously revealed to us. I will teach him in the kindest and gentlest way, what I believe; thus following the commandment of God, who is Glorious and Great, and has said, "Do not dispute with the People of the Book excepting in the kindest way." (Qur'an 29:45). I will use only the most courteous of terms and the gentlest of tones. I will speak kindly to you that, if possible, you may be roused and return to the Truth, quickened into a desire by what you hear from me of the Word of God, the Glorious and Great, which was sent down to that seal of the prophetic order, that lord of mankind, the Prophet Muhammad, on whom Heaven's blessing rest. I do not despair of you, but cherish the hope that God, who directs as He wills, may make me His honored instrument in this good work. I find Him, ever Blessed and most High, saying in His sure word, "The only religion God acknowledges is Islam." (Qur'an 3:17) Confirming this He says further: "Whatever men may invent for themselves, in the way of religion besides Islam, it shall not be accepted of them, they shall suffer in the world to come." (Qur'an 3:79) This He further confirms in one decisive word; "Oh ye who believe, fear God in sincerity, and do not die till ye are within the fold of Islam." (non-Qur'anic)

(F) Now may God save you from the ignorance of unbelief and open your heart to the light of truth; you know that for many years past I have been immersed in the study of comparative religion. I have read the literature of many nations, particularly the scriptures of your own Christian community. I have read through the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which God sent down to Moses and Christ and

the other prophets, Heaven's blessing rest on them. The scriptures of the Old Testament comprise the Law, the book of Joshua the son of Nun, the book of Judges, the two books of Samuel the prophet, the two books of Kings, the Psalms of David the prophet, the Wisdom of Solomon, his son, the book of faithful Job, the book of Isaiah the prophet, the books of the other twelve prophets, the book of Jeremiah the prophet, the book of Ezekiel the prophet, the book of Daniel the prophet, these are the Old Testament scriptures. The New Testament scriptures are these: the Gospel in four parts, the first by Matthew, the tax-gatherer, the second by Mark, the nephew of Simon who is called Cephas, the third by Luke the physician, and the fourth by John the son of Zebedee. Of these four Gospels two were written by members of the Apostolic band,<sup>9</sup> men who were in constant attendance on Christ, on whom Heaven's blessing rest, viz., those of Matthew and John. Two were by men who were numbered with the seventy whom Christ, Heaven's blessing rest on him, sent forth to preach the Gospel among the nations; viz., those of Mark and Luke. Next in order we have the Acts of the Apostles, what they did and taught after the ascension of Christ, as written by Luke; and the fourteen epistles of St. Paul, all of these I have read and studied. I have read of Timothy and the rapid steps by which he obtained primacy<sup>10</sup> among you, distinguished not only by his administrative powers, but by his intelligence and understanding.

(G) I have read of the three principal sects into which the Christian church is divided. First, there are the Melkites, who accepted Marcianus as their king, at the time of the schism which took place between Nestorius and Cyril; these are the Roman party. Secondly, the Jacobites, the most heretical of all, wanton and mischievous and, surely, furthest from the truth; who assent to the teaching of Cyril the Alexandrian, Jacob Baradaeus and Severus, bishop of Antioch. Thirdly, the Nestorians; these are your own party; and, on my honor, in their views they most strongly resemble the truth as conceived by men who speak reasonably. They are most favorably disposed to us of the Muslim community.<sup>11</sup> Muhammad spoke very highly in their praise and gave them special conditions and securities. He constituted himself and his people their guardians, and gave them deeds, signed and sealed, after

he came to power and when his power was established. They came to him, and put themselves under his protection, recalling to his mind how they had helped him by advertizing his claims and declaring the divine powers committed to him — God be gracious to him. Heaven's blessing rest on him! That is to say, even before he was ever himself conscious of inspiration, the monks bore testimony to the powers which were divinely entrusted to him, and for that reason he, God be gracious to him, Heaven's blessing rest on him, was very friendly to them, and sought intercourse with them, and held prolonged conferences with them when he travelled in Palestine and other places. The monks and hermits honored him, and preached obedience to him, telling the people that it was the purpose of God to exalt him and to give him a famous name.<sup>12</sup> As a body, the Christians inclined to him. They warned him of the intrigues of the Jews and the heathen Quraysh; how they meant mischief and sought to do him hurt. They did this because of their affection for him, and the honor in which they held him and his friends; and, when he was inspired, God bore witness to them, through him, in the Qur'an saying: "You shall find that the Jews and the idolaters, i.e., the Quraysh, are the most bitter enemies of the faithful; the nearest and most friendly to them, you shall find those who say, 'We are Christians.' It is because they are under ecclesiastical rule; they are not proud." (Qur'an 5:85). Our Prophet, Heaven's blessing rest on him, knew by inspiration the sincerity of their purpose and intent. They were the true followers of Christ, walking in his ways and receiving his precepts. They did not allow murder, or acknowledge the right of private property. They did not overreach one another, or act wrongfully, or practice guile. They sought peace; they abjured envy and hate, and were, in these respects, superior to other men. On this account our Prophet gave them special terms and securities, and constituted himself and his people their guardians and gave them a charge; while God showed him, as He did, their real worth and the purity of their domestic life. We acknowledge all this; we do not dispute or deny it. We have regard to what are facts; and desire to maintain the same relations with them, and to accept the same responsibilities.

(H) I have myself met many of these monks, noted for their extreme

abstinence and great learning. I have been their guest in their cloisters and churches. I have been present at the long prayers, or offices, seven in number which they make Matins, Lauds, Prime, Tierce, Sext, or Midday. None towards afternoon, and Vesper, said at sundown, prayers of intercession, which they say at the evening hour, and those prayers which they offer before they take their nightcap. I have witnessed the wonderful zeal they display, their prostrations and genuflections, when they touch the earth with their cheeks and beat their brows and cross their arms while they are praying. All this they do in private. On Sunday and Friday nights, and on feast days, they keep vigil, standing upright praising God, repeating the Sanctus and singing Psalms the whole night through. At break of day, too, they offer prayers. In all this they make mention of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. On certain days, as at Easter, they throng the churches and stand there with bare feet, in sackcloth and ashes, weeping floods of tears and sobbing in a wonderful way. I have seen the preparation of the sacred wafer; how carefully, and with what cleansing rites, it is baked; and the long prayers made while it is offered, with extraordinary protestations, during the act of elevation at the altar in what is known as "the Shrine," along with flagons of wine. I have seen how the monks in their cells, on certain days, observe feasts, the greater and the lesser fast, and so forth. I have been present with them at these services and a witness of all this; and I know well what I say.

(I) I have conversed with their Metropolitans and bishops famous for ripe scholarship and fine culture, and not less for their Christian character and the rigor of their abstinence. In all my intercourse with them I have tried to be impartial, aiming only at truth. I have put aside, as unworthy of me, anything like insistence or acerbity. I have not lorded it over them, nor stood on my dignity with them. I have allowed them perfect freedom to make good their cause, and to speak out their minds, without fear. I have never taken them to task for this, nor have I cavilled at anything they might say. That I leave to others — the rabble rout. Fools I call them, though they are of my own persuasion. The root of the matter is not in them nor any reason to which one might appeal; neither religion nor good manners restrains them, but they are disputatious, arrogant, overbearing. With them, pride of

Empire takes the place of argument. I must confess that in my intercourse with the Christians, when I have questioned them, inquiring as to their ideas and convictions, they have always given me a satisfactory answer. There has not been a suspicion of insincerity on their part in our discussions; but I have always found them, on close acquaintance, as I had heard of them at a distance. I have written all this at full length, after profound and particular research, lest you should imagine that I am ignorant of the matter under discussion. I wish those who may read what I write to realize that I am intimately acquainted with the Christian case in all its bearings.

(J) And now, God grant it to you, by all the knowledge which I have of your religion, and by all my old affection for the Truth as God has revealed it, and which I have adopted as my own, I summon you to the true Faith. Paradise is yours; nor need you fear the fires of hell on condition that you worship the one God, Sole, Eternal, neither begetting nor begotten, nor has He any peer. Such is the definition He, the most Glorious and Great, has given Himself; nor is He known to any of His creatures but to Himself alone. I summon you to the worship of the one God, as thus defined. Nor do I add, in this, by one jot to what He has said of Himself, whose name is Glorious, exalted in His memorial, lofty, great, without peer. This was the religion of your father and ours, Abraham, God be gracious to him, who also was an orthodox Muslim. Still further I summon you to bear witness, and confess the prophetic rank of my master, the lord of mankind, friend of the Lord of the universe, seal of the prophetic order, Muhammad, son of 'Abdullah the Hashimite, of Quraysh descent, an Arab of the country and town of Mecca,<sup>13</sup> master of the rod and the pool and the camel<sup>14</sup> who intercedes for us, friend of the Lord of power, companion of Gabriel the faithful spirit. God sent him to preach and teach all men everywhere, "with good guidance and true religion, to enlighten him on all religious matters, however the idolaters may repudiate him." He summoned all men everywhere, East and West, by land and sea, mountain and dale, in mercy and kindness, with good works and kindly dispositions and, in gentleness. Won by his gracious ways, they responded everywhere to his summons, and bore witness that he was the messenger of God, who is Lord of all, to all who accept His teaching.



All men confessed and paid him homage when they saw the absolute sincerity of his teaching and the soundness of his cause, the clear and indisputable evidence he furnished in a book inspired of God; the like of which no man or Jinn could produce. "Say, if man or Jinn should conspire to produce such a book as this, they could not, though they stood back to back." (Qur'an 17:90)<sup>15</sup> Here, surely, is proof enough of his mission. So then he summoned them to the worship of the one sole eternal God, and they embraced his religion and submitted to him. They were not scornful or overbearing, but humbled themselves, confessing him, and seeking light and guidance at his hand. In his name power was given them over those who disputed his claims, and denied his mission in an antagonistic and self-righteous spirit. God gave them power over the nations, and humbled the peoples under their yoke. None were excepted save those who received his doctrine and professed the faith, and testified. These saved their lives and property and families, paying tribute and accepting humiliation. Now, God be gracious to you, this witness was borne by God before the world was made. Written on His throne are the words: "There is no god but God; Muhammad is His Messenger."<sup>16</sup> By God, there is no God but He who is Lord of the throne of Omnipotence.

(K) I summon you still further, to the five prayers. He who offers them shall have interest, and be reckoned among the winners in this world and the next. Religious duties, you understand, are of two sorts: those imposed by God, and those imposed by His Prophet, such as the free-will prayers. Those imposed by the Prophet comprise three acts of devotion: after late evening, two at daybreak, two in the afternoon and two after sunset. He who omits any of these shall lose his reward; and he who omits them for days is open to correction and must make good the omission. Further imposed are seventeen acts of devotion covering the whole day: two at dawn, four at noon, four in the afternoon, three at sunset and four at the late evening — "Atamah" it was called, but the Prophet of God forbade that name, and called it rather "late evening" or "its close."<sup>17</sup>

(L) I summon you further to the fast of the month of Ramadan, the sacred month when the Qur'an was sent down.<sup>18</sup> The month of which

God bears witness that it brought in the Night of Doom better than any thousand months. You may fast all day from food and drink and sexual intercourse till the sun's disk touch the horizon and the night begins. Then you may eat and drink and have intercourse all the night, till you can distinguish a white thread from a black. This you may do lawfully and without limit, in ease and comfort; it is God's decree. If you observe this Night of Doom with sincerity of purpose, you shall gain thereby in this world and the next. Thus saith God the Most High: "O ye who believe, fasting is imposed on you as on those before you; it may be ye will fear God. Appointed days ye shall fast; and if any of you be sick or on a journey, ye shall fast the same number of other days; and for those who could, and would not fast, the ransom shall be the maintenance of a poor man. If you obey freely, it shall be well with you; and if ye fast, it shall be well with you, if ye know it. Ye shall fast during the month of Ramadan, on which the Qur'an came down to you with guidance for life and clear proof and decision; he who is at home, let him fast; and if one is sick or on a journey, let him fast the same number of other days. God requires of you what is easy, and not what is hard; therefore ye shall fulfil the number, and glorify God who has given you guidance; it may be ye will be thankful. Should any of my servants inquire of Me — I am here; I hear the prayers of him who directs his prayer to Me. Let them respond to Me and believe; it may be they will be rightly guided. During the night of the fast ye may have intimacy with your wives; they are a covering to you, and ye to them; God knows how in this ye deny yourselves. He will turn to you and pardon you. Now, have free intercourse with them, and desire what God hath decreed for you. Eat and drink till you can discern a white thread from a black in the dawn; then continue your fast until the night comes, and abstain from them. Be diligent in attendance at the mosque; this is God's decree; come not near them. Thus God makes manifest His signs to men; it may be that they will fear Him." (Qur'an 2:179-183) The Prophet of God, on whom Heaven's blessing rest, advanced the hour for breaking the fast, and delayed the hour for resuming it as far as he could.

(M) Then I summon you to the Pilgrimage to the House of God, the Sanctuary in Mecca, and to visit the shrine of the Apostle of God,

where he stepped, and where he stood; to fling the pebbles in Mina, and to cry “Labbaik, Labbaik,” and to wear the pilgrim’s dress and to kiss the black stone.<sup>19</sup>

(N) Then I summon you to wage war in the ways of God, i.e., to raid the hypocrites and to slay the unbelievers and idolater with the edge of the sword; to capture and plunder till they embrace the faith and witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is His servant and Apostle, or else pay the tribute and accept humiliation. “Slay those who do not believe in God or in the Day of Judgment, who consider not as unlawful what God and his Apostle have forbidden, nor do they hold the true faith; slay, till they pay tax and are humbled.”<sup>20</sup> And I summon you to confess that God quickens the dead and is the righteous Judge who rewards good with good and evil with evil. All His saints and faithful people, who confess the one God, and that Muhammad is His servant and Apostle, and believe in the inspiration of the Qur’an, He will lead into Paradise where all good awaits them. So He promised them: “Behold, God will lead those who believe and do what is right into Paradise with its flowing rivers. They shall be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and they shall be dressed in silk.” (Qur’an 22:23)

(O) And they said: “Praise be God who hath removed sorrow from us; He is our Lord who pardons and repays. He hath given us, by His grace, everlasting abodes to dwell in, where we shall know no weariness nor fatigue.” (Qur’an 35: 31,32)

(P) “There sure provision shall be made for them; even fruits. And they shall be held in honor, amid gardens of delight. They shall face each other seated on couches. Cups shall be handed round, filled from the well; a pure delight to those who drink. In them shall lurk no intoxication nor madness. Languishing<sup>21</sup> eyes shall be turned on them, gleaming like the white of an egg.” (Qur’an 37:40-47)

(Q) “For those who fear the Lord, they shall be builded hall above hall, with rivers flowing beneath. God has promised, who never changes His word.” (Qur’an 39:21)

(R) "Oh my servants, fear not that day; be not anxious, those who believe in our signs, they are Muslims. Enter into Paradise ye and your husbands with whom ye were so happy. They shall hand you golden goblets and cups full of what your hearts and souls desire and your eyes delight in, and ye shall dwell there forever." (Qur'an 43:68-71)

(S) "See, they who fear God have an enduring habitation, even Paradise with its fountains. They shall be clothed with linen and brocade, and shall face each other; and We shall wed them to black-eyed beauties. They shall call for all kinds of fruits without fear. They shall not taste death, save the first death; for the punishment of Hell shall not come to them. By the favor of their Lord this shall be their great gain." (Qur'an 44:51-57)

(T) And the Glorious and Great One has said: "Like Paradise, which is promised those who fear Him. In it are rivers of sweet water and rivers of milk never sour; rivers of wine, delicious to drink. Rivers of pure honey and all kinds of fruits shall be theirs with pardon from their Lord; while he who is in Hell fire shall drink hot water which rends the bowels." (Qur'an 47:16, 17)

(U) The Glorious and Great One has said: "This is the record; and those who fear God shall have a happy return, a garden of delights with open gates. Seated there, they shall call for fruits of many kinds and for drink, surrounded by languishing eyes of dear ones of their own age. This is what is promised them in the day of reckoning. Lo, this provision is made for us; it has no end." (Qur'an 38:49-54)

(V) Said the Glorious and Great in the description of Paradise: to him who fears the Judgment of his Lord shall be: "Two gardens; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Planted with shady trees; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Through each of them flow two fountains; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? In them are all kinds of fruits, in pairs; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? All sit on couches lined with brocade, and

with the fruits of two gardens near at hand; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? In them are languishing eyes of pure virgins whom man nor Jinn hath known; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Gleaming as if they were sapphires or pearls; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? The reward of the good is good; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? And besides these there shall be two other gardens; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Darkened with leafy shrubs; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? In them are fountains bubbling over; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? In them are fruits, dates and pomegranates; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? In them are choice and beautiful ones; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Black eyes languishing in pavilions; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Man hath not profaned them, nor Jinn; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Seated on the ground with pillows of akbar,<sup>22</sup> beautiful; which then of the signs of your Lord will ye deny? Blessed be the Name of our Lord; the Glorious and Great.” (Qur’an 55:46-78)

(W) Said the Glorious and Great: “Those who fear their Lord shall be driven to Paradise in troops, till they reach it and the gates thereof shall be thrown open to them, and the porter shall say: ‘Peace be to you, ye have done well, enter and dwell forever.’ ” (Qur’an 40:73)

(X) “They shall be met by happiness and joy. For their patience they shall inherit Paradise with silk garments. They shall be stretched on couches where the sun shall not smite them, nor the winter’s wind. Low lie the shadows round them, branches shall drop over their heads. Vessels of silver shall be handed round and cups and goblets made to hold as much as they please; and they shall drink cups of wine mixed with ginger from the well that is called Selsabil.” (Qur’an 76:11-18)

(Y) “Those who fear God shall have the better part; they shall have gardens with clusters of grapes and swelling bosoms of dear companions of their own age; and cups filled to the brim. No idle talk nor false alarm shall break their repose. Their reward from their Lord shall be beautiful gifts.” (Qur’an 78:31-36) “Those who fear God shall

live in delightful gardens; they shall enjoy what their Lord hath given them, and their Lord shall deliver them from the punishment of Hell, Eat and drink in comfort the reward of your labors, seated on couches arranged in rows. We shall wed them to black-eyed beauties. They who believed and their children who followed them, We shall re-unite; nor shall We deprive them of their reward in aught. Every man shall be pledged for that which he hath done.<sup>23</sup> We shall spread out fruits sufficient such as they love. They shall hand round cups in which no idle talk nor evil is lurking. And youths shall serve them in order, whose beauty gleams like pearls, and they shall face each other and pledge each other. They shall say: 'See, we were formerly of the people who obtained mercy. God was gracious to us and delivered us from the torment of the fireblast. See, we formerly called on Him; He is righteous and merciful.' " (Qur'an 52:17-28)

(Z) Those who went before and have precedence, they shall be near in the Paradise of delight. Troops of the former,<sup>24</sup> but only a few of the latter. They shall lie on couches, stretched out with cups, flagons and glasses of spring water. Nothing shall molest their perfect repose. With fruits such as they choose and flesh of birds and what they desire with black-eyed beauties like gleaming pearls their reward shall be according to their deeds. No idle talk nor false alarm shall break their repose. It shall be said, 'Hail! Hail!' And ah! What companions on the right hand among the lotus trees stripped of their thorns and the acacia with fruits piled up on it; shady alleys and flowing streams, various kinds of fruit, no end, no restraint, couches heaped up, see, We create them a new type of womanhood, dear and of meet age to their master at their right hand. Troops of the former and troops of the latter. (Qur'an 56:10-39)

(AA) This, God bless you, is the description of Paradise as prepared by God for those who fear Him and His Apostle. For them He has prepared its delights; eating and drinking, all sorts of fruits and scents and charms of black-eyed beauties like gleaming pearls. There is no end to it, no limit. All they wish, they have; all their eye delights in. Honor shall be shown them there, and life. They shall sit on couches, resting in verandas with soft silk robes, behind curtains strewn with

pearls. On their faces shall be written the radiance of their day. Youths too, shall move in graceful circles; young men and maids who, in their own way, are like gleaming pearls. They shall hand them cups from which to drink, full of wine mixed with water from the well Taenim. Those who are near to God drink of it. In it they shall pledge each other to all that is kind and good. It shall be said to them: "Eat and drink and enjoy yourselves; have comfort in the fruit of your labors." No idle talk shall disturb, nor hunger gnaw, nor fatigue, and they shall dwell in all this comfort without fear, in confidence and perpetuity. But the unbelievers who worshipped other than the true God, and set up rivals to Him and did not believe His messenger and denied His signs, forbidding what He allowed and fighting against Him, they shall be condemned to the fire. The fire that cannot be quenched shall blow up in their faces and all the whirlwinds of Hell. There they shall dwell forever. The skin shall be flayed from off them only to grow again. Hell shall be their home; they shall drink of the slime and feed on the deadly tree. The Devil and his angels shall be their companions and everlasting misery their doom. "See, those who did not believe in God's signs, who slew His prophets without right, murdered those who taught them the truth and preached the judgment to come, these are they whose works perish in this world and in the next. These have no helper." (Qur'an 3:20,21)

(AB) "Behold, these who denied God and His Apostle, they said: 'Some of these things we will believe, but not others, and they tried to pick and choose their way; these in very deed are unbelievers. We have prepared for them punishment and disgrace.'" (Qur'an 4:149,150) "Those who do not believe, Hell fire is reserved for them; to it, no end, to them no death, nor shall their torment be lightened; such shall be the reward of all unbelievers." (Qur'an 35:33)

(AC) "The tree of Zakum we have planted as a curse to the evildoers, a tree that springs up from the roots of Hell and rises high as the Devil's head. They shall eat of it, and fill their bellies with its food. Not water shall be poured over for them. Ever their way leads back to Hell." (Qur'an 37:60-66)

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(AD) "Alas for those who disbelieve in Hell; if they persist, evil shall be their latter end. They shall be flayed in the fire; foul shall be their bed. They shall taste of hot water with putrid stuff." (Qur'an 38:56,57)

(AE) "Over them fire shall spread like a canopy, and under their feet, darkness." (Qur'an 39:18)

(AF) "On the day of Resurrection, thou shalt see those who denied God; their faces shall be blackness, is not the abode of the proud in Hell?" (Qur'an 39: 61)

(AG) "Those who believed not in the signs of God, are they to suffer loss." (Qur'an 39:63)

(AH) "Unbelievers shall be driven into Hell in troops; when they reach the gates, these shall be thrown open to them, and the wardens shall say to them: 'Did no messenger come to you and recite to you the signs of your Lord?' They shall answer: 'Yea, but the sentence of doom is justly pronounced on unbelievers.' " (Qur'an 39:71)

(AI) "These in the fire said to the wardens of Hell, 'Pray for your Lord that He may lighten our day of torment.' They replied: 'Did He not warn you of this by His messengers?' They answer: 'Yea,' They said: 'Pray then.' But the prayers of the unbelievers are themselves errors." (Qur'an 40:52,53)

(AJ) "Do you not see that they who oppose the signs of God have no way to turn? They deny the scripture and the message we sent by our messengers; verily they shall know. Behold, collars shall be on their necks, and they shall be dragged in chains through the pitch; thus they shall be flayed in the fire." (Qur'an 40:71-73)

(AK) "To the unbeliever painful torment is appointed. You shall see evildoers when they face the torment that awaits them, saying: 'Is there no way of return?' You shall see how they meet it, crouching low, casting furtive glances at it." (Qur'an 42:42-44)



(AL) “Those who do wickedly shall be forever in the pain of Hell. No respite is theirs but blank despair. We have not wronged them; they have wronged themselves. They cry: ‘Oh Angel, pray thy Lord that He put an end to our miseries.’ But he shall say: ‘Abide where you are.’ ”  
(Qur’an 43:74-77)

(AM) “This tree Zakum shall be the sinner’s meat; like boiling pitch in their bellies; like boiling hot water. It will be said to the tormentors: ‘Take him and drag him through the midst of Hell, then pour boiling hot water over his head to torment him.’ saying: ‘Drink of it, thou mighty and honorable one. See, once you did not believe in this.’ ”  
(Qur’an 44:43-50)

(AN) “They shall be ever in the fire and drink hot water till their bellies split. And this is because they loathed what God had given. They said: ‘This we might accept, but not that.’ God knows their secret and how shall it be when the Angel takes them, beating them on the face and back? And this because they followed what displeased God and loathed what He liked; therefore their works come to nothing. Do they whose words are not right suppose that God will not bring to light their hate?” (Qur’an 47:17-19)

(AO) “Alas! On that day for those who accused the prophets of lying! Have We not made the earth sufficient for the living and the dead? We have placed in it the stable and lofty hills and given them sweet water to drink. Alas! On that day for those who accused the prophets of lying. Go ye, to prove what ye denied! Go ye into the gloom branching out into three directions, where there is no shelter nor relief from the flames. They shall be pelted with sparks like castles for size, murky like the camel’s hide. Alas, in that day for the unbelievers. On that day they shall say nothing, no excuse shall be permitted them. Alas! On that day for the unbelievers, this is the day of decision. We have gathered you and those who went before.”  
(Qur’an 77:24-38)

(AP) Now God save you, my friend! Heard you ever a description more wonderful than that? So we tempt you and solemnly charge you

and woo you as with a lover's kiss.<sup>25</sup> Here are hopes and fears, promises and threats for the stouthearted and obstinate; nay, for all, whether they will hear or forbear, whether they believe or disbelieve, whether they affirm or deny. If only thus, by what I have said, you are moved to fear, great will be the gain; and if only thus, by the fires and torments of Hell, you are moved to fear, it were cruel to spare your pain. God, most High and ever Blessed, hath said: "Warn them, for warning profits the faithful." (Qur'an 87:10)

(AQ) "If thou shalt see them rush in where angels fear to tread, turn thou from them until they turn in some other direction, and if Satan cause thee to forget, sit not with evildoers, when thou art admonished." (Qur'an 6:67) "Shall We warn them, whom the faithful messenger hath already warned?" (Qur'an 44:12)

(AR) "Let him remember and the admonition shall profit." (Qur'an 80:4)

(AS) "Warn them, and the warning shall profit." (Qur'an 87:9)

(AT) "On that day Hell shall be brought nigh, and men shall remember, but how shall memory profit them?" (Qur'an 89:24)

(AU) Thus we have warned you, and if you believe and receive the testimony of our book, you shall profit by the admonition we have written. And if nothing will content you but to abide in your unbelief and error, opposing the truth, we at least are sure of our reward; we have done His behest. But, if God wills, the truth shall come into its own with you. May God enlighten your mind as to the actual facts of the true religion, its precepts and signs and maxims. When you have embraced it and confessed it and borne witness, when you have embraced the law of light, these convincing signs and wholesome maxims to which we summon you, then you will be one of us. High indeed shall be your station in this world and in the next. For see, our Prophet, on whom Heaven's Blessing rest, has said: "On the day of Resurrection everyone, Prophet and angel alike shall be absorbed in himself; but he shall say: 'My house! My tribe!' and he shall receive an answer,

first for his house, and then for his tribe. The Merciful One shall say to the angels: 'I am ashamed to refuse the intercession of Mine elect, My friend.' ”<sup>26</sup> Then, of course, we shall require of you what is due. You shall pray toward the qibla, which God has given us, and offer the five prayers after due ablutions. If you are well, standing on your feet, but, if you are weak or sickly, sitting; if you are on a journey, half of the number of what you offer when at home. “Offer thy prayers and give alms. Those to whom we have given the earth, offer prayers and give alms. Those to whom we have given the earth, offer prayers and give alms and practice benevolence and desist from what is forbidden. God rewards what men do.”<sup>27</sup> Now alms are the fourth of the tithe, when you come to divide the spoil, and it shall be in the hands of its owner, a single unit, for a division. The tithe shall be given to the poor members of the community and the indigent among them. You may marry whom you please; it is no crime. For is there blame or offence or reproach, if you marry them in (the) presence of his magistrate and with witnesses, and give us a dowry what seems good to you and them out of your abundance? In the same way, if you have four wives and divorce them, because you dislike them, or you are tired and have (had) enough of them, it shall not be held as a crime to take back anyone of them you please, after you have given her to another. If you still like her and your soul cleave to her. “If ye divorce, it is not unlawful to have her till she have intercourse with another; if he have divorced her, it is no crime to them if they come together again, if they think they can do God’s will, This is God’s decree; may He make it plain to the people who have understanding.” (Qur’an 2:230)<sup>28</sup> But abstain from captive maids when ye get possession of them. Circumcise them according to the rite of Abraham our father, the friend of God, who is merciful, and of Ishmael our father and yours;<sup>29</sup> let them purify themselves from defilement. Then, if you can, you will fast in the month of Ramadan; but, if not, if you break the fast for any reason, sickness or a journey, afterwards you shall make a point of fulfilling it.

(AV) God wills not for His servants what is burdensome, but what is light. If you break an oath which you have made according to the command of God, God will not punish you for a slip of the tongue; but

God will punish you for the evil you treasure up in your hearts. He is forgiving and kind. Among us Muslims the expiation of an oath which has been broken is the maintenance of ten poor men of your own tribe; or else (to) clothe them, or, if they be slaves, (to) ransom them. He who cannot do any of these, let him fast three days. This is the expiation for the breach of an oath; when you have sworn, guard your oath. Thus God makes plain to you His signs; perhaps ye will be thankful. You will, of course, make the pilgrimage. "In it are manifest signs; here stood the feet of our father Abraham, and he who enters there is safe." This is the duty which a man owes to God; whoever is fit for the road, let him make the pilgrimage. If you are not in debt, you can easily meet the expense of a camel and ride. Then you will go forth to fight: here is immediate profit in this world, and great interest reserved for the world to come. God has given easy terms to His faithful people; yet will He have us put our whole heart into His service. If there were nothing else in Islam but comfort and safety in submission to the Word of God, and quiet confidence in the promise He has freely given, that He will enrich us in the next world with a great reward, and will lead us into that delightsome Paradise where we shall abide forever; even so, great were the gain.

(AW) Thus now I have spoken to you the Word of God. His is a voice of truth, who never breaks His promise, nor belies His Word, what has been briefly stated may suffice. Away then with your present unbelief, which means error and misery and calamity. Will you any longer cleave to what you must admit is a mere medley? I mean your doctrine of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and the worship of the cross? I have grave doubts on your behalf. What has one of your knowledge and reputation to do with so mean a conception of the divine? I find God saying: "God will not pardon those who worship more Gods than one; any other offences He may pardon, but he who worships more Gods than one lies against God with a grievous sin." (Qur'an 4:51) Again He says: "He is an unbeliever who says that Jesus the son of Mary, the Messiah, is God. The Messiah himself said: 'O children of Israel, serve God and my Lord, He who worships other gods, God has shut on him gates of heaven;' his dwelling place is the fire; the evildoers have no helpers. They are unbelievers who say that God is the

third of three, whereas there is no God but one; if they do not desist from what they say, terrible punishment shall overtake those who do not believe. Or will ye not return to God and plead for pardon? God is forgiving and merciful. The son of Mary, the Messiah, is only a messenger. There were others before him, and his mother is a true woman; both lived by bread. See how we have made plain our signs; then see how they turn aside to lying." (Qur'an 5:76-79)

(AX) Away then with this error, this misplaced and wearing seal, this practice of an ascetic life, this infliction on yourself of continuous privations and protracted penances in which you spend your life. There is no profit in all this, but only a weariness of the flesh and vexation of the spirit. Come, enter the true fold; strike out into the easy way; embrace the faith that brings assurance. Here is the good law, the law of liberty which God has graciously granted to His servants. Thus I have spoken my mind to you, my friend, in the spirit of goodwill and sincere affection. Fain would I breathe into you my very soul, that we might be of one mind in this matter. Thus saith my Lord in His faithful Word: "They who are unbelievers, whether they be People of the Book or idolaters, shall be consigned to everlasting fire; they are reprobates. But they who believe and do rightly, they are the elect people; their reward shall be with their Lord in the delightful Paradise, where flows forever the river of life. God is well pleased with them and they with Him, this is their lot who fear their Lord." (Qur'an 98:5-7) And again: "Ye are the elect people sent forth among men to teach the practice of kindness and to desist from evil and to believe in God; and, if the People of the Book believe us, it shall be well with them. Some of them believed, but the majority of them are evildoers." (Qur'an 3:106) Now, may God save you, for I yearn over you; fearful lest you be of the reprobates and doomed to hell fire. I trust by the good hand of God on you, you may yet be among the faithful, in whom God delights as they delight in Him; these are the elect people. I trust you may yet be among those who are sent forth among men. But if you have no mind save stubbornly adhere to your ignorance, persisting in your present defiant unbelief; if you reject our appeal and will have none of the truth we have laid before you, so that your efforts prove thankless and barren; at least let me hear what

are your views on this great question. What do you hold as Truth, and by what argument do you establish it? Write to me without fear and restraint, and do not hold back anything that is in your heart, as if you were afraid of me. I only wish to hear what you have to say. I shall be patient, submissive, responsive, as the case may require; ready to yield without dispute or demur. I have no fear. Only let us compare what you have to say with what I have already advanced. I shall leave you free to make what comments you like upon it. But do not blame us, as if fear of us had made you dumb. Do not plead in defence of a bad cause, that you held your tongue and had no freedom to state your case! Perfect freedom you shall have; only you must not blame us as if we were overbearing or accuse us of injustice or undue pressure. That is not in our line. But do you, as God may help you, make the best of your case. Say what you will, and say it as you will; let us have whatever you think may tend in the direction of a final settlement.

(AY) Come, let us appoint an imperial umpire, one who shall decide the case between us without partiality or undue pressure, and will not swerve from the truth, whichever way the wind may blow. Reason shall be the umpire between us. Reason, the attribute of God Himself, the arbiter of human actions. For ourselves, we have sought to deal fairly with you; we have given you every possible security. We shall be satisfied with the decision of reason, for or against us. Let no man's conscience suffer constraint. If we summon you thus, it is in all submission and in the name of the Truth which we hold; but we know that you are in the gall of iniquity. Peace be with you and mercy from God and blessing.

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Notes:

[1] "Eternal" - Samad: "The person to whom one repairs or has recourse in an exigency; or, a Lord whose Lordship has attained to its utmost point or degree, i.e., a being who continues forever." (Lane)

[2] "Hashimite": Hashim was the great grandfather of the Prophet.

'Abbas, his uncle, was ancestor of the family who, in the person of Abul 'Abbas, attained to the caliphate (749-754 A.D.) and retained it to the close (1258 A.D.). The Hashimites include both 'Abbasids and 'Alids, and are opposed to the Umayyads (Tien refers the reader to his introduction, which has been deleted here - ed.).

[3] "His own people and strangers": The former (Ahl-Az-Zumamah) are the free non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim government who pay tribute and are entitled to protection. The Ummi is one - "in the natural state of his people" (Ummah) i.e., uneducated (so applied to the Prophet himself); or, without a revealed religion, i.e., a Gentile or a heathen, or one with no relation to the Muslim rule. "Idolaters" are those who associate another with God as the subject of their worship, i. e., Polytheists. In the majority of cases we may render as above.

[4] "Imams": The imam is one who stands in front of the people, facing the qibla at prayer. After the Prophet's death the office descended to his successors. The civil and religious power is thus united in the caliph. When necessary the caliph could depute another to hold office as imam, e.g., on the field of battle.

[5] "Recording Angel": According to Islam two angels are told of to act the part of Minos and try the dead. One is called Nakir, the other Munkar. The process as described in the Qur'an is rough, but presumably effective. (See Qur'an 7:35 and 47:29.)

[6] "The Amir of the Faithful": Literally "the leader." The name was first given in 623 A.D. (2 A.H.) to 'Abdullah b. Jahsh who was deputed with seven of the refugees to lead against the Meccan caravan. The name was assumed in after days by the caliphs.

[7] "Resurrection - Future Life": Two words are used (Ma'ad and Ma'ab), both meaning "Return"; as at the close of a long journey. The latter word is used of the place which camels come for watering at evening. It is a primitive conception of the future life, which recalls the beautiful Scotch proverb "E'enen brings a' home." "When the heavens

shall be cloven in sunder and when the stars shall be scattered, and when the seas shall be suffered to join their waters, and when the graves shall be turned upside down, every soul shall know what he hath committed and what he hath omitted." (Qur'an 82:1-5)

[8] "Orthodox Faith": The point of the quotations which follow is this: Abraham stands as the representative of the earlier revelation which finds its further development in Christianity and Islam. The Christians are therefore bound, like him, to accept Islam. (For the original use of the word, see Introduction [deleted]). One may compare with this passage the use St. Paul makes in his epistles of the person and religious experiences of Abraham to widen out the scope of revelation so as to include the Gentile world. The word I have translated "Orthodox" is "Hanifite." It comes from the verb meaning to turn or bend and was used of one who inclines from a false to a true religion. "According to Akh, it was applied in the times ignorance to one who performed the pilgrimage to the Sacred House and was circumcised, because that was all they knew of the religion of Abraham." (Lane) Margoliouth thinks it may originally have been a tribal name. By Muslim writers it is regarded as a term of honor synonymous with orthodoxy. The Christian writer, as we shall see, regards it, from his standpoint, as synonymous with idolatry.

[9] "Apostolic Band": The word used "Hawariyy" means "the one who washes clothes," a Fuller. The disciples may have been so called (a) because that was supposed to be their trade, or (b) figuratively, as men cleansed from vice, or (c) as men who had stood the test and been found trusty (from "Har": "to return"). See Lane.

[10] "Primacy": The word is the Greek *Katholikos* as indicating the highest, i.e., universal authority in the church. Under the *Katholikos* came the Patriarch, then the Metropolitan and then the diocesan Bishops.

[11] The 5th, 6th and 7th centuries were marked by a succession of keen controversies in the church, the central point of which was the Person of Christ. The ancient Ebionite heresy, which denied the deity



of Jesus, and the Gnostic heresy, which denied His humanity, had been outgrown. A further stage in the discussion had been reached. What was the relation of the two elements (the human and divine) in the Person of our Lord? Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, affirmed the reality of the two natures, but in such a way as seemed to some to impugn the unity of the Person. At the Council of Ephesus (431 A. D.), summoned by the Emperor Marcianus, and presided over by Cyril the Alexandrian, he (Nestorius) was (condemned) as a heretic. Some twenty years later Eutyches went to the opposite extreme, affirming the unity of Christ in such a way as seemed to some to deny the reality of the two natures. They were condemned by the Council of Chalcedon (451 A. D.). Still a third possibility remained. A branch of the Syrian church in Lebanon, known as Maronites, taught that while the Nature of our Lord was dual, His will was single. This monothelite heresy was condemned by the Council of Constantinople (680 A.D.). Nestorius particularly objected to the use of the term *Theotokos* (Mother of God) as applied to the virgin. On his deposition he withdrew into private life. His followers founded a seat of learning at Nisibis, not far from the ancient Nineveh, and their missionaries carried the knowledge of letters into Central Asia and spread to the north, to India, Ceylon and Malabar. A branch of the Nestorian Church was found in China in 636 A. D. Naturally the Muslim writer gives the preference to the theological views of Nestorius. The Melkites were so called because they accepted the creed of Marcianus, the Roman Emperor or King (*Melek*) who favored the party of Cyril. The credit of maintaining the influence of the Monophysite party in Syria is due to Jacob, a man distinguished by indefatigable zeal. With great rapidity, and often amid many dangers, he traversed the Syrian province in the guise of a beggar; hence he was called "Baradaeus," "the man in rags" (*Neander*, vol. 4). Severus, another of the Monophysite leaders, played an important part in these disputes, and secured for himself the See of Antioch.

[12] For the relation in which Muhammad stood to the Christian monks, see Introduction [deleted]; - see Appendix A - ed.

[13] "Meccān": Two words are used - "al-Abtahy" and "at-Tahamy."

The former comes from Batha, the open field in which Mecca lies. Tahama is the old name of Mecca. (According to Sir Muir "a broad margin of low land between the coast of Arabia and the receding mountains.")

[14] "Master of the Rod, the Pool and the Camel": The Prophet seems usually to have carried a staff. On one occasion in (a) token of special gratification with 'Abdullah b. Umayys, who had assassinated the chief of the Lahyan, he presented him with this staff. This, said he, shall be a token between me and thee on the day of Resurrection. The Pool is Cawther which God created for the Prophet and his followers in Paradise. " 'While I was looking about', said the Prophet, 'I came all of a sudden on a river; on both banks are domes, each consisting of a hollow pearl.' I asked Gabriel, 'What is this?' He said, 'This is Cawther which God hath given thee.' Then I perceived that the ground was of pure musk and of a piercing fragrance. The pond is square and one month's journey in circumference, being as long as Arabia. The water is as white as milk and sweeter than honey; he who drinks of it thirsts no more." (Sprenger, English version). The stories about the Prophet's camel, "Al-Caswa," on which he escaped from Mecca and which he rode ever after, are known to all.

[15] "Jinns": Often rendered "genii"; familiar to all readers; beings of supernatural order. A whole sura of the Qur'an is devoted to them. Before the coming of the Prophet, we are told, it was their custom to eavesdrop at the gate of heaven and even to occupy a vacant chair there. But afterwards, "We found the gate guarded by a strong body of angels, and whoever listens now finds a flame of fire in ambush for him." (Qur'an 72:8,9)

[16] This question of the shahada being written on the throne of God has often been used as an argument for a 10th century dating for al-Kindi's Apology. Mingana responds to this issue in his introduction to the dialogue of the Patriarch Timothy and the Caliph Mahdi, see his notes 16 and 17 (p. 171) and note 25 (p. 522) to al-Kindi's letter below - ed.

[17] The prayers of Muslims are of two parts, (a) those imposed by the Qur'an, i.e., by divine authority, known as Fard and (b) those imposed by authority of the Prophet, known as Sunna. The latter are enumerated first in the text. "An act of devotion" consists of the utterance of certain words, accompanied by prostrations ("rak'ahs") in which the head is bowed so that the palms of the hands touch the knees, while the back is bent so that a glass of water, if placed on it, is not spilled. In addition to the Fard and Sunna there are the free-will prayers alluded to in the text, known as "al-Witr," i.e., "the prayers," with an odd number of rak'ahs. The Muslims following as they believe the practice of Allah, attach special importance to the odd number; "Verily, God is one only, He loveth the odd number, therefore perform ye the prayer (an) odd number, ye people of the Qur'an." (*Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam* [p. 634] shows this saying to be based on tradition and gives Ahmad b. Hanbal, i, 110 as a reference - ed. This particular act of devotion is optional and is performed at night; the later the better.

[18] After the Prophet left Mecca for Medina and saw the Jews there holding their annual fast on the Day of Atonement, he adapted the custom and imposed it on his people. At the same time he turned in prayer to the Temple at Jerusalem, as his qibla. But, after the breach with the Jews, he turned in prayer to Mecca and instituted a Muslim fast in the month of Ramadan. The original fast was held in the winter and entailed no great suffering; but, after the change of the calendar and the introduction of a lunar year, the season for the fast gradually shifted till it fell in the heat of summer, when, of course, the days are long and the heat is great and the suffering involved correspondingly greater. It is said that the fast is observed with absolute fidelity all over the Muslim world. - Liberal Muslim groups (e.g., the Bektashis) do not keep Ramadan at all - ed.

[19] Once at least in his lifetime the Muslim must make the pilgrimage to Mecca. The pilgrims meet near the city during the months of Shawal and Dhu'l Ka'ada and are obliged to be there by the beginning of Dhul Hajja, which is the sacred month. They put on the Ihram, or

sacred dress, consisting of two woolen wrappers, one thrown over the shoulder, the other wrapped about the loins; heads are bare, the feet shod with a slipper that covers neither the heel nor the instep. Great prominence is given to the prayer of invocation which precedes these rites, known as Labbaik. The origin of the word is doubtful; it may come from the word "Lubb" (the heart) and signify devotion. Here is the cry:

Labbaik, oh Lord, Labbaik, Labbaik.

There is no other God but Thee; Labbaik.

Praise, blessing and dominion be to Thee, Labbaik.

No one therein may share with Thee; Labbaik, Labbaik.

The sacred House or Ka'ba is surrounded seven times, the first three times with a quick short step, then with slow measured paces. This sevenfold circle, no doubt; points back to the original worship of the seven planets in pre-Islamic Arabia. Each time he passes the Rakan, or corner of the House, the pilgrim kisses, or at least touches the black stone which, originally white, fell from heaven when Adam fell, and has grown black with the world's sin. Close to the Ka'ba is the Stone, or Station of Abraham, on which he is said to have stood when he built the Ka'ba.; also the well of Zamzam from which Hagar is said to have given Ishmael drink. He then proceeds to Safa and Marwa, two hills near the city, and runs from one to the other seven times, in imitation of Hagar asking water for her child. He then moves on to the Valley of Mina. On the morning of the 9th Dhul Hajja he goes to Mount Arafat, where Adam is said to have been introduced to Eve, and spends a day in devotion there. The next day he returns to the Valley of Mina and throws stones at the devil in imitation of Abraham who was tempted to disobedience there by the evil one. Then come the sacrifices and the feast. Heads are shaved and nails pared; and the solemnities are at an end.

[20] For a criticism on this passage the reader is referred to the Christian's reply. In Qur'an 2:186,187 it is written: "Fight for the religion of God against those who fight against you; but transgress not, for God loveth not the transgressor; and kill them wheresoever you

find them, and turn them out of that whereof they have dispossessed you. War is enjoined.”

[21] Most writers render the word “averted” as if expressive of modesty. It seems to me more true to the word, as well as more satisfactory to the Muslim bridegrooms to render it as above, i.e., expressive of passion. Compare the Biblical phrase, “Eyes that fail for longing.”

[22] A town in Yemen where cloths, garments and carpets of variegated stuffs were made. It is also a place of which the Arab says, “It is in the land of the Twns.” A pillow of akbar is therefore one made of fabulous stuff, i.e., of incredible beauty.

[23] i.e., “Every man is pledged unto God for his behavior; if he does well, he redeems the pledge; if ill, he forfeits it.” (Sale)

[24] “The Former”: i.e., “...either the first converts to Islam or the prophets who were the respective leaders of their peoples.” (Sale)

[25] A characteristic Arabic expression. The verb means to sip or suck, and is used of a lover who seems to suck the sweetness from the lips of her whom he kisses.

[26] This reference is non-Qur’anic, but is similar to some hadith, see: *Sahih Muslim*, The Book of Faith, chap. 83, hadith 378, vol. 1, p. 131 - ed.

[27] The idea is difficult to grasp, unless we have an echo of St. Paul’s great saying: “Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another; for every man shall bear his own burden.” (Gal. 6:4,5) Muhammad claims to be an exception to the rule.

[28] The other is known as Mustahil. Sir W. Muir quotes from Burckhardt the proverb: “A thousand lovers rather than one Mustahil.”

According to the Muslim Law a person who thrice divorces his wife cannot remarry her till she has been married to another man who becomes her legitimate husband, cohabits with her for the night and divorces her the next morning; afterwards the first husband may again possess her.

[29] Islamic sources attempt to show the rite of circumcising women as a practice instituted by Sarah, see al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 2, p. 72; see also Leo, parag. AQ; al-Jahiz, parag. T - ed.

## THE CHRISTIAN'S REPLY

(AZ) In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

(BA) May my Lord help and not hinder; may He perfect what is good.

(BB) To - son of - , from - son of - , least of the servants of Christ, peace, pity and goodwill! Every blessing be yours in particular and in general, with all mankind through the abundance of His grace. Amen.

(BC) To proceed. I have read your letter, and give thanks to God for the favor He has granted me with our master, the Amir of the Faithful. I pray God, who disappoints none who call upon Him with a true heart, to lengthen the days of our master, to satisfy him with His favor, and to continue to him His grace. May He encompass him with salvation, according to His goodness and mercy. I am very grateful to you for his goodwill and consideration you have shown, for your graceful courtesy and for the kindly interest you have displayed to me personally. The friendship which has existed between us from the first has been confirmed, I think I may say, intensified, by the spontaneous expression on your part of so much solicitude for my spiritual welfare. I cannot thank you as I ought; and you have not exceeded what one might expect from your natural kindness and splendid antecedents! I pray God, whose Name is Glorious, in whose Hand is all good, to recompense you on my behalf, as it is well in His power to do. Nothing is impossible to Him, may He handsomely reward you for your good intentions. In good sooth you have spared yourself no pains on my behalf, nor have you been lacking in any single point. I should indeed be grateful to you, for I am sure you have acted from the purest motives of friendship, your one incentive has been the warmth and kindness of your heart. I know (may God give you to know all good, and guide you into the way of uprightness!), I say I know all you have set forth in your letter. You have gone into the matter very fully, you

have set before me your own religious convictions, and summoned me to embrace them with a great deal of persuasive power. And of course I know, God bless you, that you have been impelled to the discharge of these friendly offices by the fact that I enjoy the friendship of my master, your cousin, the Amir of the Faithful. For all this I cannot thank you enough. I can only look to God, whose help most humbly I invoke, praying to Him to recompense you on my behalf, as He is well able to do, for He has all power.

(BD) Now in regard to this question which you raise as to the religion you profess, "the orthodox faith"<sup>1</sup> as you are pleased to call it; you protest that you are of the faith of our father Abraham, and affirm that he was an orthodox Muslim. Here let me invoke the aid of Christ my Master, the Savior of the world, who has given us His word of promise, and pledged Himself when he says: "When they bring you unto synagogues and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing you shall answer, or what ye shall say, For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." (Luke 12:11)

(BE) I have perfect confidence in what Christ has said in His Holy Gospel as to the fulfilment of His promise; and therefore I enter on this discussion with you, imploring His divine aid and dependent on Him alone. And though I am not sufficient for anything of myself, yet I do not hesitate. The entrance of His word gives light; His service brings its own reward. I begin this discussion in dependence on Him whose wont it is to inspire His servants with sound speech and wholesome doctrine. By His help I trust to prove victorious.

#### I : Doctrine of God

(BF) And, first of all, you tell me that you have read the scriptures and studied the sacred canon, particularly the Law, as revealed to Moses by God Most High, who imparted to him those mysteries which are contained in the first book, of Genesis. You know then that Abraham dwelt with his father in Haran; it was their home; but when he was 90 years old, God Most High revealed Himself to him. "And Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness."



Now we know, God be gracious to you, that Abraham dwelt in Haran for 75 years, worshipping the idol called al-'Uzza, known in Haran as the moon god, according to the custom of the people there. The cult survives among them to this day, with no pretensions of concealment or disguise except in one point. Human sacrifices are no longer legal; they are therefore offered, not in public, but on the sly and secretly. This idol was worshipped with Abraham along with his father and forefathers and the people of the land. Yet you, an orthodox believer, claim that he was orthodox in so doing, and cite in evidence the following passages: "And he believed the Lord and it was accounted to him for righteousness." (Gen. 15:6). "For what saith the scripture, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness." (Romans 4:3). "... and the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness." (James 2:2). That is to say, he abandoned an "orthodoxy" which meant the worship of idols, and became a worshipper of the one God, and a true believer. For we find what you call "orthodoxy" is described by the Word of God as idolatry.

(BG) The doctrine of the unity of God was bequeathed by Abraham as a precious legacy to Isaac, the child of promise, who had been offered to God on Mount Moriah and redeemed with a ram caught in a thicket. "It came to pass after these things that God did prove Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham,' and he said, 'Behold, here am I.' And He said, 'Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell thee of.' " (Gen. 22:1,2). From this Isaac, child of Sarah the free woman, sprang Christ, the Savior of the world. Under such circumstances the doctrine of the unity of God was revealed to man. Isaac bequeathed it to his son Jacob, God's Israel, and he in turn bequeathed it to the 10 tribes; and so the sacred legacy was handed down by the children of Israel, till they entered Egypt on the invitation of Joseph. There, very slowly, through successive generations, it died down till it disappeared; as it had disappeared once before in the days of Noah. For, first of all, the unity of God had been revealed to Adam, and by him bequeathed to Seth, and so to Enos, who was the first to publish it and summon men

to the faith. Thus Noah bequeathed it to his son, and his son begat a son; so as the true faith disappeared from among men till the time of Abraham, when it revived and continued with renewed power till the birth of Jacob. A second time it disappeared from among men, once more to be revived by the mission of Moses. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire from the heart of the bush. And "Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring out the children of Israel from Egypt?' And God said, 'I will be with thee... when thou hast brought the people out of Egypt ye shall worship God in this mountain.' And Moses said to God, 'If I go to the children of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers hath sent me to you," they will say to me, "What is His name?" What shall I say to them?' And God said to Moses, 'I AM THAT I AM,' And He said, 'Thus shalt thou speak to the children of Israel, The God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God Isaac, the God of Jacob hath sent me to you. This is My Name forever and this is my memorial to all generations.' " (Exodus 3: 11-15). Now, in this passage He republishes the doctrine of unity, but at the same time suggests the mystery of the Trinity; for He says, "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." By the repetition of the phrase, He indicates a three-fold personality, while He maintains the essential unity as at the first; the one in three persons, without a doubt. In the phrase, "The God of your fathers," He proclaims the unity, and then proceeds to repeat the glorious name three times. Do you suppose there are three gods? Or one three times affirmed? If we should say there are three gods, we should be polytheists, using pernicious (?) and misleading language; whereas if we say there is one God thrice affirmed, we do justice to the truth as it is written. For He might well enough have said, "I am the God of your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," but He repeats the word "God" so as to indicate that in this passage there lies a mystery. And what is it if not the one God in three persons? How can the point be proved more plainly? It is clear as daylight to anyone who is not determined to resist the truth and eager to deceive himself, who is not blind and deaf. God enshrined this mystery in the scriptures as written by the prophets, which are still, God be gracious to you, in the hands of those who read the Law. Yet what was the result? It was not understood till Christ our Lord came, Master of all

mysteries, and discovered it to us. Well then, we have learned that Abraham for 75 years from his youth was what you call "orthodox," but really a worshipper of idols, and that afterwards he attained to the true faith of God. And now you summon me to the religious faith of Abraham, I should like to know, to which of these two phases of his religious experience you summon me, and by which of them you would have me abide. Shall I follow him in his "orthodoxy" when he worshipped the idol al-'Uzza, or shall I worship (as he) who abandoned this so called "orthodoxy" and professed the unity of God and obeyed Him as when He bade him leave his home, and he turned his back on home and Haran, that city of destruction? I do not suppose you will think it reasonable or consistent with that knowledge of the scriptures of which you boast, to summon me to follow Abraham as an idolater. But if you summon me to follow in that later phase, when faith was reckoned to him for righteousness, and when he worshipped the one true God, I must point out to you that the Jews, who are Abraham's children, were before you in this. They are the true heirs of Isaac who inherited the doctrine of the unity of God. He certainly takes precedence (before) you in this. And if so, why all this bluster, this vehemence and exaggeration? Why do you make a claim which you cannot substantiate, while at the same time you base your whole case on justice and brand it with that sacred name? Why your own master, of his own accord, put it thus: "Say, I am commissioned to be the first professor of Islam, and be ye not idolaters." (Qur'an 6:14)

(BH) Do you not see? If he first publishes Islam, then Abraham and others like him, who lived centuries before were not Muslims. And your master affirms it; he is the first professor of Islam. I think I have sufficiently answered you on this point; and have said enough to satisfy any sensible person. But if nothing will content you but to pose as the champion of the Jews and to plead for them; then you must understand what is required of you in this discussion with us. We shall suppose that the Jews accept you as their champion, so that that point is settled; while we, too facile and indulgent perhaps, accept your assurance that you are definitely and deliberately committed to the Jews in this controversy. I do not myself see how, having regard to your dignity and reputation, I could impose on you such a task, or place you in such

a position. But if you have imposed it upon yourself, then I must ask you, in regard to this One, whose unity you now summon me to acknowledge, how do you understand He is one and in how many senses may it be said of one that He is one? Tell us that and we shall judge of your sincerity when you summon us to the worship of the One. If you are found ignorant on this point, where is your penetration? Do you not know that one cannot be said to be one except in one of three senses, either generically, specifically or numerically. I have not met anybody who could instance or conceive any other than these three; that is to say, if he was a person of sense and understood what he said. I write to you in this way and put this to you as a man of reason with profound insight into the inwardness of things. You know and understand what you say and are not, in my judgment, one of the people who, when you confront them with a question on some obscure point, making it easy for them, because they are dull and boorish in mind, are yet unable to comprehend you, and break off without giving you any answer. How can they? They have nothing to say but, "God be praised." And, no doubt, God shall be praised, and that forever, in this world and in the next; praised by every tongue that wags and every lip that breathes.

(BI) Well then, when you say of God, the Glorious and Great, that He is the One, in which of the various senses we have mentioned is He One? Generically, specifically or numerically? If you say He is generically one, then, as one genus, He includes various species; for the category of generic unity is that which includes an indefinite number of various species. But such reasoning is inapplicable to God, most High. If you say He is specifically one, then He is the one species which includes various individuals; for the category of the species includes within it a plurality of individuals. But, if you say He is numerically one, you contradict your own affirmation that He is one, sole, eternal. I do not doubt, if I were to ask you of yourself, and to inquire how many you are, you would not say that you are one, sole. And how can you reasonably accept a definition of the Deity which gives Him no preference over the rest of His creatures? I should like to know why, if you are going to describe Him numerically, you do not proceed to divide Him and subtract from Him as well. Do you not see, with all of

your literary attainments, your wide reading, your intercourse with people of various faiths and the knowledge you have thus acquired; do you not see, that the single unit is only part of Number as a whole? For the perfect number is that which includes all the various powers of Number, of which the unit is but one. Here then you are guilty of a contradiction in terms. And, if you affirm He is specifically one, to the species belong various individuals, not a single unit.

(BJ) If, on the other hand, you suggest that He is one in essence, we must further interrogate you. In your judgment does specific unity exclude numeric unity; or do you hold that the specifically one is numerically one as well, in as much as He is all-inclusive? If you say that they exclude each other, we must remind you that in the judgment of all who are versed in the laws of language and the rules of logic, the category of specific unity is regarded as including various individuals, whereas, taken one by one, each stands for itself. Do you then affirm that God is one in essence as including various persons, or do you affirm Him a single personality? If you mean that the specifically one is numerically one, then I insist that you have not yet told us what specific unity is, or how it is constituted. So we return to your original statement that God is numerically one, a description applicable to His creatures, as we have pointed out. And if you ask, How could you possibly describe the Deity as numerically one, when, according to your own showing, such numerical unity implied plurality and excludes the idea of perfection, then we reply that we describe Him as One, perfect in essence, threefold in His personality. The definition of God is only complete when both aspects are included. In regard to essence, we affirm His unity, i.e., His exaltation, Glorious and Great, above all His creatures, over all things sensuous and non-sensuous. No one resembles Him, nor is He involved in other than His own, whether simple or complex. He is the Father of all existence in virtue of His essence, without mingling, merging or composition. So then, as to His number, because He is the Universal, including all the powers of Number, for His number cannot be reckoned. And since numbers are of two kinds, odd and even, both kinds enter into each of the three Persons. And whichever way we describe God, as one or three, we do not detract from what is due to His perfection in any way, as indeed is fitting. But

we make it plain that when we predicate the unity of God, it is not in your sense of the phrase, and we hope that this may satisfy you and anyone who may look into what we have written, provided only that he examine it, as God grant he may, with an impartial eye.<sup>2</sup>

(BK) You must understand that we might have made our statement under this heading much more involved, in such a connection that were easy enough. But we are anxious that what we have to say may be easily apprehended by all who read it, and that the hearing of it may not be overweighted, lest the mind recoil. You must understand that our contention on this point is the contention of brethren, sharers in a common estate left them by their Father, each having an equal interest in it, neither having preference over the other. So, in our discussion you and I are on equal terms. If any bitterness has been introduced into our reply, under compulsion of the truth, you must bear with it patiently. We have no other alternative but to push our argument to the uttermost in refutation of those who make our plea and our cause void, thereby doing us grievous hurt.

(BL) Of course when you protest that God never took Him a wife,<sup>3</sup> gat a son, or had a peer, you say what is absolutely true. Such candor becomes you; it is worthy of you. You protest solemnly, and indeed you speak truly and argue logically when you affirm that he who imposes on God the necessity for friend or fellow, blasphemes Him and virtually imposes on Him the necessity of taking a wife, begetting a son and having a peer. But, God bless you, we do not say that God has a wife, or has gotten a son; we do not impute to the Deity such puerilities and vanities, predicating of God what is true of man. You credit us with these gross anthropomorphisms on the authority of the Jews, who sought to deceive you in this way, patching up idle tales which they tell at the corners of the streets and in the market places. They speak loosely and profanely. Whereas you, who have read the scriptures, know that such things are never named in them. They are not imposed on our reason; nothing of the sort is hinted at. It is in the Qur'an that these profanities are multiplied against us. Now, in prayer and intercourse with Christ my Lord, the Savior of the world, I have no need of reserve, but I am unwilling to burden our correspondence with

such matters as these. I do not wish to give currency to a story by contradicting it. I will not trace it back to its source in the cunning of Wahb son of Manba, 'Abdullah son of Salam and Ka'b, the notorious Jewish doctor, cunning and crafty fellows every one of them. These men insinuated these and other blasphemies of the same sort against us and against you. If you have really examined your own book on this point, you must know the truth about it. Certainly we have never said, nor will ever say, that God, ever Blessed and most High, took a wife or gat a son. We do not even say that He "has" that Son, who is rather the creative Word breathing through men even when they utter such follies as these. And you also know how much profanity and contradiction is implied in such a phrase, and how entirely they misrepresent God, His Word and His Spirit. What we say is that His Word is eternal, (and) never ceases to be kind and patient. We attribute to Him, ever Blessed and most High, mercy and kindness, the Kingdom, the Glory and the Power, Sovereignty and Dominion with whatever attributes may resemble these by which He reveals Himself in His divine activities. In regard to these, reason instructs us to trace them back to their source in Him as their Author. The are rightfully referred to Him, as the sum of reality, and so is all else by which He is known, in so far as He is author of it. As to that which touches His essence, we believe that, co-essential and co-eternal with Him are His Word and Spirit, alike transcendent, exalted above all attribute and predicate.

(BM) At this point perhaps we should consider whether the attributes of wisdom and knowledge are to be regarded as proper and positive<sup>4</sup> terms, or as relative terms which indicate the relationship of one thing to another. And first of all, it is useful to make quite clear the difference between positive and relative terms. As to positive terms they are such as one uses when he speaks of earth or heaven, light or water, or anything of that sort which may be named, no one of which involves anything else than itself. Relative terms involve such a connection, e.g., we speak of knowledge and the knower, of wisdom and the wise, and so forth. It is clear that he who knows, knows in virtue of his knowledge, and knowledge must be known. So too, wisdom involves the wise man. The subject in each case corresponds to the predicate, and is

strictly confined to it lest the term be unduly extended. Now, having explained the difference between proper and relative terms, we must ask whether, when we speak of God as living and knowing, the predicate inheres in the subject necessarily and eternally, or whether it is voluntarily assumed and belongs to Him only from some given point, as you may say of Him that He had a world after the world had been made, and so on with a great many other forms which I shall not enumerate, standing for attributes by which the agent reveals Himself in His actions. Now if it is said that God existed without any world until such time as He chose to create one, it might appear reasonable to say of Him in the same way, that He was without life, knowledge and wisdom till life, knowledge and wisdom came to birth within the Godhead, and were found in Him. But that were an abuse of terms. How could God for a single second be lacking in life or knowledge? If you retract your previous statement, nothing hinders you from arriving at the blasphemous conclusion, that the world existed for God before He had made it. We, on the contrary, affirm that there are just two ways of it; either God is alone eternal, creating all else about Him, or else the world and the creature were also eternal and were not made. Of course you would contradict anyone who used such terms of the creature. So then it follows, and there is no way out of it, that God was when there was no creature existing along with Him. How can we ascribe a world to the Deity when He had not yet created one, and/or till such a time as it pleased Him to create it? Perhaps you think that, on the ground that He always had power to create when He chose, we should affirm in an eternal act of creation; but then, why not affirm a similar eternal act by which He raised and quickened the dead, and summoned those who were in their graves and caused the righteous to enter into Paradise and filled hell with those who deserved it? No man of common sense will say such things; we must return to a more reasonable conclusion. We now see that the attributes of God are of two different sorts, those which are natural and essential and therefore inalienable in Him, and those which are spontaneous and describe His activities. These last are such as mercy and grace; the former such as life and knowledge. God does not cease to be the living and the knowing; nay rather, by your leave, life and knowledge are eternal in Him, without doubt.



(BN) As a result of what has been promised, we assert that God with His Word and Spirit, is one; three persons in the one substance or essence. This is the definition of the One we worship. He is the definition He has been pleased to give of Himself, indicating to us the mystery of the Trinity in the canonical books by the mouth of the prophets and apostles. First of all He communicated it to Moses, when He told him how He made man. "In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) This passage points to the trinity of persons in the unity of nature. For he says God (Elohim) using the plural number, hinting thus at the trinity of divine persons, while he adds "made" in the singular number, indicating the unity of the nature and essence in which they inhere. Again He says: "Let us make man in Our likeness and image." (Gen. 1:26a) He does not say: "I will make man in My image." Again in the second chapter, when He proposed to make Eve: "It is not good for man to be alone, let Us make him a help-meet like himself." (Gen. 2:18) He did not say: "I will make." Again: "Man has become like one of Us," (Gen. 3:22a) when He rebuked him because of his sin in eating the fruit of the tree of which God had said: "Thou shalt not eat of it." (Gen. 2:17, paraphrase). He did not say: "Like Me." Again: "Come, let Us go down and confound their tongues, that they may not understand each other's speech." (Gen. 11:7) This was because they had conspired to build a tower whose top should reach heaven. God saw the weakness of their folly and purpose when they thought to build a tower high enough to be a shelter and a refuge for them should a second deluge overtake them. He knew that He had pledged Himself to Noah that the deluge should not return. How idle then, and silly, to talk of building a tower! So He confounded their speech, that they might fail to achieve their purpose, meaningless as it was. He did not say: "I will go down and confound their speech."

(BO) Now then consider the mystery of the three persons in the Godhead as imparted by God. Moses first confirmed it by signs and wonders, clear and convincing, beyond the power of man to achieve and then publish it among us as God had made it known to him. Do you suppose that we will surrender it, and accept in its place the words of your master, without reasons annexed or signs or wonders to con-

vince or illuminate? Why, first of all he says that God is sole, eternal, and then he turns and contradicts himself, speaking of God and "His Word and Spirit," and thus he preaches the unity and the trinity without knowing it. I do not think you will consider that as compatible with the fairness which you affect toward us. In the same way the prophet Daniel tells us in his book how God, speaking to Nebuchadnezzar, said: "O Nebuchadnezzar, to thee We have spoken."<sup>5</sup> He did not say: "To thee have I spoken." In your own book are phrases like these which we have quoted from the lips of Moses and Daniel concerning God most High; e.g., "We have done..."; "We have created..."; "We have revealed..."; and others of the same kind. Now can you doubt that in such language we hear the voice of the many, not of the one? Possibly you argue that the Arabs allow such language and use it in conversation, merely as a matter of courtesy. You are certainly very ingenious, but here is our reply. If the Arabs alone had originated such a usage, your remark might have had some relevancy; but, as a matter of fact, the Hebrews, Syrians and Greeks were before them in this; nor is it possible in such cases to think of collusion, so that your argument from custom proves nothing. Then I ask you, under what conditions do the Arabs allow this usage? You will tell us, of course, it is allowed when a man, being one, yet uses such a phrase as "we order" or "we say," etc. Precisely, and that means that such language is allowed in regard to beings composed of various unlike parts. For example, man, being one, is yet many: soul, spirit and body; and the body is built up of many parts; and so it is customary to use the language we have described, though, as pointed out, the man is one. Yet you affirm that such language is used of God by way of honoring Him who is Glorious and Great, to whom belongs the majesty and the power, as when it is said: "We said..."; "We inspired..."; I reply, on my faith, what you say might pass if such language were never used except by those who are worthy of honor!

(BP) Let us rather say that God, in order to teach us that He, being one, is yet many persons, uses both forms of speech; e.g., "I have made" and "We have made." The former of these is clear proof of the unity of essence and the second of the plurality of persons. Proof of this may be found in what prophet Moses records of God in the Law,

as revealed to him; how God appeared to Abraham at a place called the Oak of Mamre when he was seated at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and saw three men standing over against him, hastened to meet them and said: "My Lord, if I have found grace in Thy sight, pass not from Thy servant." (Gen. 18:3) You see that Abraham saw three men, yet talked with one. He addressed Him as "My Lord," in the singular, while he humbled himself and invited Him to turn in. The number three insinuates the threefold personality; while the welcome given, "My Lord," suggests the single essence, so that we have here the one and three, just as we put it. So also Moses tells us that God said to him: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord Thy God is one God." (Deut. 6:4) The meaning of this is that God, revealed in His threefold personality, is yet one Lord. David the prophet says of God in Psalm 33 (v. 6): "By the Word of God the heavens were made, and all the hosts of them by the breath (i.e., Spirit) of His mouth." Here, clearly and explicitly David speaks of the three persons when he mentions God, the Word and the Spirit. Have we said anything in advance of this? In another Psalm he solemnly affirms that the Word of God is God Himself: "I will praise the Word of God." (Ps. 56:10, Peshitta, paraphrase) Do you suppose that David praised what was not God? I am sure you believe nothing of the sort. In another Psalm he says: "Blessed be God, even our God, who daily beareth our burdens." (Ps. 68:19, paraphrase) Did David desire that the one God should be praised by him, or three gods? Does he not rather in his Psalms hint at the three persons who yet are one God? Isaiah the prophet praised God most High in chapter 61 of his prophecy, saying: "From the beginning I spake not in secret, and from the former time I was there; and now the Lord has sent me and His Spirit." (Is. 48:16)<sup>6</sup> This is just as we have said, there are three persons yet one God and one Lord. We have not gone beyond God's own word, nor have we added to or taken from it, nor have we altered or falsified it, though you say we have done so. We do not mean to end our discussion with you by tampering with the sacred text. Anyone with a grain of sense if he look at what we have written, will see that in this you have wronged us and accused us of that which we are innocent. This we shall maintain in your teeth and to the end, if God most High so will.

(BQ) So now we return to the matter in hand; for we are unwilling to leave it until we have exhausted it, and put you before the witness of the scriptures and the sacred canon as to the accuracy of our statement. The truth of what we hold and the integrity of our dealings with you; in which high task heaven be our help! Notice then that Isaiah the prophet describes how God appeared to him surrounded by the cherubim who cried saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts." (Is. 6:3) The fact that the cherubim do this three times over, ascribing holiness to Him, and yet confining themselves to the number three, neither exceeding it or falling short of it, is surely meant to suggest that they praise three Persons, one God, one Lord. This is their very being; for this end they were created, nor shall they fail or cease so to do to all eternity. How easily, if I chose, I might rain proofs on you from the holy scriptures to affirm and enforce my statement, that in the one God there are three persons. But I am unwilling to lengthen my discourse. You tell me in your letter that you have searched the scriptures; if so, the little I have written you may indicate how much there is in our sacred books concerning the mystery of the Trinity in unity.

(BR) And now having, by the help of God, put my case before you in such a way as must confirm it in your memory and, I trust, demonstrate it to your reason, I summon you to the worship of this one God whom I have thus declared to you; one yet three; three yet one. I do not follow your example, nothing here has been slurred over, nothing is ambiguous, obscure or contrary to reason. And now, as God may give you light, fulfill the solemn pledges which you gave me; apply your reason and your mind, as before God. It is necessary that you understand what I have said, and see what it implies; you must not pervert my meaning. I summon you to the worship of the one God in three persons, perfect in His Word and Spirit — one in three; three in one. You must on no account think of Him as if He were the third of three. So indeed your master misrepresents us as saying: "They are unbelievers who say that God is the third of three; and if they do not cease from what they say, sore punishment will overtake the unbelievers; or will they return to God and seek His pardon? He is merciful and forgiving." (Qur'an 5:77,78) So says your master; but, God be gracious to you, I should like to know who they are who teach that God is a

third of three. Are they the Christians, or not? You claim some knowledge of the three Christian sects, and indeed they are the most prominent sects. Do you know any who say that God is the third of three? I am sure you do not, unless you mean the sect known as Marcionites, who speak of three substances which they term divine yet distinct, one of which represents justice, the other mercy and the other for an evil principle. But these Marcionites are not Christians, nor are they known by that name. The Christian community, on the other hand, are innocent of this heresy; nay they reject and disown it. They teach the one God in whom is the Word and the Spirit, and that without any distinction. Your master himself confessed this. Did he not commend you to the faith of Christ, Lord of the universe and the Savior of mankind, and enjoin it on you, saying: "O People of the Book, do not go beyond the mark in your religion, say not of God save what is true. Jesus the Messiah, the son of Mary, is a prophet of God and His Word whom He sent to Mary, from Him is the Spirit, believe in God and the prophets and say not there are three gods. Cease from this that it might be well with you; verily God is one." (Qur'an 4:169) You see how he imposes on you the faith of God as one with the Word and Spirit; and declares that Christ, the Word of God, took flesh and became man. Need we add proof or exposition to this? Then he sets a seal to his own word; saying, "Nor must you say there are three gods." How can such a thing be imagined of God, the Glorious and great? Cease from it, and then it shall be well with you, as long as you do not follow the lead of that cur, Marcion, an ignorant fellow who says there are three gods. I have expounded to you what is our way of it, and what we mean when we say that in the one God are the Word and Spirit; one yet three. All this I have made abundantly clear to you. God grant you the willing heart and the discrimination that you may profit thereby.

## II. The Life and Claims of Muhammad Examined

(BT) And now we pass to the second part of our letter which also must be dealt with. I think that I may say I understand the claim you make, and the witness you bear to your master. You affirm that he is the Apostle and Prophet of God and that you hold him high in honor.

That you honor him and maintain his cause I do not deny; nor have I any right to object. So far as that goes I have no choice but silently to accept the fact (that) you ought best know those who are so nearly related to you. But we join issue with you when you summon us to admit his prophetic office as genuine and binding on all men. If it is genuine and binding on all, then, of course, we have no right to reject it or to take umbrage at it. No one will reject the truth unless he is headstrong, pugnacious and utterly ignorant of its real value. On the other hand, if it is not genuine, then you have no right to assert it, and why should you invite us to accept it? If you do so, you wrong yourselves first of all, and certainly you prove yourself no friend to those whom you invite to embrace a lie. Let us lay aside all prejudice and begin by examining the history of your master. Let us review it from first to last; let us subject it to a searching scrutiny. Let us be fair, and guard against that partiality which looks at truth with an eye of infatuation and passion. We cannot overrate the importance of the undertaking. Great are the issues at stake; high is the enterprise on which we enter. May the argument and the inquiry be worthy of it, patient and thorough.

(BU) Well then, you know that this man was an orphan in the care of his uncle, Abu Talib, who took him in charge at the death of his father, brought him up and befriended him; and that he worshipped the idols al-Lat and al-'Uzza as did his father's kindred and family in Mecca. He tells us this in the Qur'an: "Did He not find thee an orphan and took thee in? Did He not find thee in error and lead thee to the truth? Poor and enrich thee?" (Qur'an 93:6,7) You see how in this passage he admits that he was a homeless orphan, that he was in error and (was) guided into truth, that he was poor and made rich. So he grew up till he entered the service of Khadija as a camel driver, working for her as an hireling and travelling in her interests to and from Syria and other places till that happened which you know. He married Khadija. Backed by her fortune he conceived the idea of claiming power and headship over his tribesmen, but they were not well disposed to him, nor did they follow him except a little handful of men whom he swept off their feet by his artifices.<sup>7</sup> You know the bitter feeling of the Quraysh and the hostility with which they resented any

assumption of authority. And when he despaired of what he really desired, then he claimed to be a prophet and an apostle. The first step in this direction was taken so warily that men scarcely saw what he was aiming at. They did not know how to test an adventurer like him; nor did they realize the calamities he was bringing on them. They were Arabs, men of the desert, and did not know the conditions of apostleship or the signs of a prophet. How should they, to whom a prophet was never sent? In taking these initial steps, he was prompted by one who constituted himself his director, one whose name and story I will relate further on. His next step was to hire a crew of idle fellows, raiders who infested the roads according to the custom of the country still current among them. This band joined him and sent out scouts to choke up the wells. They anticipated the arrival of the caravans from Syria, laden with merchandise, at the various stations along the route. They took possession of these stations, and then, sweeping down upon the trains, spoiled the baggage and killed the men. The first suggestion of this course of action was given when he went out one day and saw a camel train coming from Medina to Mecca, the property of Abu Jahl. This was called a raid, after the fashion of the Arabs of the desert when they go out to plunder travellers and infest the roads. For this reason he had to leave Mecca for Medina<sup>8</sup> when he was 53 years of age, 13 years after he first made claim to be a prophet. Before this he had met with every form of opposition and insult from the people of Mecca. They knew him well, and gave out that he was banished because he claimed to be a prophet. But their purpose was confirmed when it was made certain to them that he was thus infesting the roads. He went with his companions to Medina, then a desolate place with no inhabitants but feeble folk, mostly Jews, wholly without spirit. When there, by way of inaugurating his prophetic claim and demonstrating the justice of it, he took possession of a stable which belonged to two young orphans of the Banu Najjar and turned it into a mosque.<sup>9</sup> Then he sent out his first mission, Hamza the son of 'Abdul Muttalib, with 30 raiders to el-'Is, in the country of Juhayna to intercept the train of the Quraysh as it returned from Syria. Abu Jahl, son of Hisham, with 300 men from Mecca met him, but Hamza gave him the slip, because he had only 30 men and feared to meet Abu Jahl. He fled, and on this occasion there was no fighting.<sup>10</sup> Now, in God's name, is there any

indication here of what God said in the Law, when He promised to lead the children of Israel, whom He had brought out of the land of Egypt, into the land of the Amorites, that is Syria, saying: "One of them shall chase 100, and two of them shall chase 10,000; for I have put the fear of you and the dread of you in their hearts." (composite paraphrase of Deut. 2:25 and 32:30, with "100" for "1000"). This He did by the hand of Joshua, who led the children of Israel, and brought them into the land of promise and defeated the Philistines. And is not this the standard by which we must test the evidence of your master's prophetic office? As you have nothing to reply to this, but by your silence admit that we have the better of you, we shall proceed. Either it was true that Hamza was the messenger of a prophet, and his cousin too, and sent by him, and that he went out, with 30 riders in his name and convinced of the justice of his cause, yet broke up camp and gave Abu Jahl the slip, though he was an unbeliever and a heathen, because he had 300 men with him, who also were unbelievers and heathen, preferring peace to war with these idolaters. Or we have here a confutation of your statement that Muhammad was a prophet, sent by God, and that the angels helped him and fought for him as they fought for Joshua the son of Nun.<sup>11</sup> "Joshua said to him, 'Art thou of our friends or of our foes?' And the angel said to him, 'As the captain of the Lord's hosts, am I come.' And Joshua fell on his face on the earth and worshipped him and said, 'What saith my Lord to His servant?' And the captain of the Lord's hosts said: 'Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground;' and Joshua did so." (Josh. 5:13-15) In this word of the angel to Joshua there is a mystery which he did not yet understand. At that time Joshua was besieging Jericho, and seven days after(ward), took it without terms or conditions and slew all who were in it, both male and female, as the angel had bidden him. I am afraid you will find very little to help you here; for indeed you are wholly without a case. Let us then proceed to the second of your master's raids; possibly you may find something in it to help you. On this occasion he sent 'Ubayda, son of Harith, with sixty riders, doubling their strength so as to put more courage into them, to Batn Rabi', between Abwa and Jahafa, and Abu Sufyan, son of Harb, met him. Abu Sufyan had 200 riders and blood was shed between them as you know; so they returned.<sup>12</sup> Still I do not find that



a single angel came to help them in their need; whereas you know that Gabriel in human shape rode on an ashen gray camel wearing a green mantle while Pharaoh and his host of 4000 horses pursued after Israel. And when the children of Israel were in the midst of the sea, Gabriel rushed in at their heels on his camel crying: "On then my braves," and the horse on which Pharaoh and his people rode followed in his wake. So Israel were saved and Pharaoh and his men drowned. You are a witness of this and confirm one of the signs wrought by Moses.<sup>13</sup> But your master has no such witness to bring. Again there is no help for it; we must proceed to the third raid. You must endure as best you can, with good grace or bad. Your master's next move was to send Sa'd, son of Waqqas, to Harrar outside of Jahafa with 20 men; and they came to the place. But the caravan got there before them by a day. Once more they were disappointed, and returned balked of their desire.<sup>14</sup> This is the very opposite of the sign of a prophet as given by Samuel to Saul. You know the story, as you have studied our scriptures carefully. You remember how Kish had lost his asses and sent Saul to find them. And Saul came to Samuel and said to him (it was a mere aside, and before he had told him the object of his visit): "As for the asses, they have returned to thy father's house, and he hath left caring for them and careth only for thee." (I Sam. 10:2) That was truly the sign of a prophet, with insight to see things both past and future, one who can publish them, predicting them before they can come to pass, and heralding them before their advent, as the Holy Ghost may teach and inspire. Christ our Lord in His Holy Gospel says that a true and faithful witness is that borne by two or three faithful men; such witness must be received. Now we have adduced three witnesses, surely this is sufficient for you.

(BV) After the three raids which went out at the command of your master, in which they turned and fled, let us look at those in which he himself took part. First of all he went out aiming at the camel train of the Quraysh and reached Waddam, where he was met by Majshiy, the son of 'Umar, but on this occasion he returned without any booty.<sup>15</sup> A second time he went out to Buwat on the road to Syria in pursuit of the train of the Quraysh in charge of Umayya, son of Khalf, and again returned without achieving anything.<sup>16</sup> A third time he went out, this

time also in pursuit of the train of the Quraysh going to Syria. This was the train on whose account on their return journey was fought the battle of Badr.<sup>17</sup> But for the third time he returned empty handed, achieving nothing. Now judge of these instances and say honestly, is it on such grounds you hold your master to have been a prophet? What has a prophet to do with plunder and raids, infesting of roads, intercepting and taking the property of men? What has your master left for thieves and highwaymen to do? What is the difference between him and Atabek?<sup>18</sup> You know the stories that have reached us as to the crimes committed by this fellow. Answer me if you have any answer to give; but I know well enough you have none, nor are you worse off in this than your neighbors. And thus your master continued up to the end. If he went out against a tribe and found them weak and defenceless, he drove away their trains, took their merchandise and killed as many as he could of their people. If he found them in considerable numbers or entrenched in a strong position, they very soon saw the last of him; he turned and fled. So on it was till his death. Sixty-six in number were the raids in which he personally took part, besides Saraya or night forays and columns sent out by day, as well as expeditions, in nine of which he spread death about, while with the rest he sent out his friends.<sup>19</sup>

(BW) And certainly I wonder at the baseness of his conduct, the impudence and barbarity of the man who could send his messengers again and again to assassinate his victims; as when he sent 'Abdullah b. Rawaha to kill Usayr the Jew at Khaybar, and he assassinated him.<sup>20</sup> So he sent Salim to Abu Afak the Jew,<sup>21</sup> an old and quite harmless man, and killed him treacherously, while he was asleep in his bed, secure and comfortable, giving as his reason that the man had slandered him. But in God's name, tell me in what book you have ever read such a thing; by what judgment did he condemn the man to death because of slander? It was in his power to punish the old man if he had done wrong without slaying him treacherously by night, when sleeping in his bed. He is said to have slandered him; but, if he spoke the truth, it surely was not necessary to slay him because he spoke the truth, and, if he had trumped up a lie about the prophet, well, it was not necessary to slay him because of a lie. Why not afflict some chas-

tisement upon him, so that he should not do it again? By heaven, do you not know that it is not lawful to hurt even a bird while in its nest by night; and what of an old man whom he sent to slay while in his bed, simply because he had slandered him? Might he not have done something else than (have) killed him? Such deeds are nowhere allowed, either by the Law of God or by the judgment of reason and nature. By my faith, so did the Devil from of old, aiming at man and his seed ever since the fall. What now of your statement that the Prophet was sent to all men in mercy and goodwill? Did he not send 'Abdullah, the son of Jahsh, the lion-hearted, to Nakhla, i.e., the garden of Abu Amar, with 20 of his companions, that they might bring him news of the Quraysh? There they met Amr the Hadhramite, with the train of the Quraysh and their merchandise which they were just bringing from Yemen, and they slew Amr and drove the train to Medina.<sup>22</sup> And when they arrived there, 'Abdullah and his companions brought 1/5 of the spoil and handed it over to the Prophet. I do not decide whether that was lawful or not; let every fairminded man judge for himself. Then there was the affair with the Banu Qaynuqa',<sup>23</sup> whom he attacked, though there was no fault on their part, nor any motive for such action except greed of gain. He shut them up within their lines till they surrendered at discretion. Only on the intercession of 'Abdullah, the son of Ubayy, did he consent to spare their lives and banish them to Adzraat, confiscating their property which he divided among his companions. But the 5th part of it he kept for himself, saying, "This is what God has allowed to His Prophet." I should like to know how he justified such conduct. With what sanction did he confiscate the property of men who had done him no wrong, with whom he had no quarrel, only judging them to be defenceless as, certainly, they were very rich. Not so does the true prophet of God, nor anyone who believes in God and the day of Judgment. There are other matters which I will not enumerate here lest I unduly extend my letter. The reader would only turn from them in weariness and disgust. We content with thus sampling of the deeds of your Prophet.

(BX) Let me linger over the battle of Uhud with its memorable incidents. The Prophet's front tooth, right side lower jaw, was broken, his lip slit, his cheek and forehead gashed by the hand of 'Utba. Ibn

Qami'a struck at him with his sword while Talha, son of 'Ubaydullah, defending him on his right side had his finger broken.<sup>24</sup> How different is all this from that of our Lord, the Savior of the world. When one drew sword in His presence against another and smote his ear and cut it off, Christ replaced the ear and made it whole as the other. Now, when the hand of Talha was injured while he defended his master at the risk of his own life, if the Prophet had prayed God and restored the hand whole as before, that would have been a sign that he was a prophet. Why was his front tooth broken, his lip slit and his cheek gashed? Where was the angel to help and protect him, the friend and messenger of God? Earlier prophets were protected. Was not Elijah protected from the minions of King Ahab, and Daniel from the lions of Darius, and Abin Hananiah and his brethren from the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar and others of the prophets and saints of God in the same way? Yet you say that God made man in your master's account and that his name is written on the folds of the Throne; such is your claim!<sup>25</sup>

(BY) Let us have done with this and insist on another point. We assert that this action of your master proves the opposite of what you say, that he was sent in goodwill to all men. Indeed he was a man who had no thought or caring save for beautiful women whom he might marry, or men whom he might plunder, shedding their blood, taking their property and marrying their wives. He himself says that God gave him two passions: one for perfume and one for women.<sup>26</sup> Are we to hold him as a prophet because God gave him strength of loin to deal with as many women as forty ordinary men?<sup>27</sup> By my life, this is a proof of the prophetic character quite peculiar to himself. And what of that affair between him and Zaynab?<sup>28</sup> I have no wish to dwell on it here. I have too much respect for the paper on which I write to mention it; were it not for a matter which he has himself noticed and which he asserts was told him from above. Here it is: "Remember when thou didst say to him when God favored and thou too hast favored him (i.e., Zayd), keep thy wife for thyself and fear thou God; and thou didst guard as a secret what God had done for thee. If thou fearest man, God is worthier that thou should fear Him. So, when Zayd severed his connection with Zaynab we married her to thee, lest it should be

regarded as a crime in the faithful if they take the wives of their adopted sons, when they have been divorced. God's command must be fulfilled. It is no crime in the Prophet that God gave him license beyond those who had been before him. God's will is doom and fate." (Qur'an 33:37) Every man of sense must judge for himself as to this affair; it will not deceive anyone with understanding. Similar to this is the affair of 'Aisha and what took place between her and Safwan when they were returning from raiding the Banu Mustaliq. She, you will remember, was left behind the army and arrived with him the next day about noon, (she was) riding on his camel while he led her. On this account she was slandered by 'Abdullah, son of Ubayy, and Hasan, son of Thabit, and Musta, son of Ataba, and Sa'id, son of Rafea, and Hamna, sister of Zaynab. 'Ali retailed to the Prophet what these gossips were saying and how they were blaming her, and how the story was going and growing.<sup>29</sup> And after nibbling and hinting at the facts so as to practically publish the whole story, he wound up by saying: "O Prophet of God, God hath laid no restrictions on thee; there are plenty of women as good as she." But he did not incline to this view of the matter, because of his passionate love for 'Aisha, (for) she alone of all the wives he married was a virgin, and she was the youngest of them all. She had a warm place in his heart and had quite captivated him. This was the occasion of a life-long feud between 'Ali and 'Aisha. Yet the Prophet proclaimed her innocence in the notorious sura Nur with these words: "See, they come to thee with lies conspiring against thee." (Qur'an 24:11)<sup>30</sup> You know the story well enough, the tale is widely told and freely commented on, so that I do not need to enlarge.

(BZ) According to report, the Prophet's wives were 15 in number with two concubines.<sup>31</sup> Let me enumerate them: first Khadija the daughter of Khuwaylid, next 'Aisha (the) daughter of Abu Bakr, next Sawda, then Hafsa daughter of 'Umar, between whom and 'Aisha that wonderful affair took place, then Umm Salma, whose name was Hind, whom he deceived. When she refused his offer and excused herself on the ground that she was naturally jealous,<sup>32</sup> he said he would take from her all ground of jealousy. When she pleaded that she was already a mother, and that her people might not approve of the new connection, he promised to bring up her children. He pledged himself to her that

he would stand by her in this, so that she consented; and then he did not keep his word. He sent her as a marriage gift two stone jars, a hand mill and a leathern cushion stuffed with palm fiber. These and doubtless other advantages she obtained in this world and in the next through her connection with him. And then Zaynab, the wife of Zayd, to whom he sent a portion of flesh three times over, and she flung it in his face, so that he shunned not her only, but all his wives on her account, and swore that he would not go near them for a month. Alas! he could not contain, in 29 days he was back.<sup>33</sup> And Zaynab (the) daughter of Khuzayma and Umm Habiba whose name was Ramlah (the) daughter of Abu Sufyan (the) sister of Muswiya, and Maymuna (the) daughter of al-Narat, and Tuwayra the Mustalkite, and Safiya (the) daughter of ibn Hayy, the Jewess, whom he taught to boast over his other wives when they reviled her birth, saying that she was (a) daughter of Aaron, niece of Moses and wife of Muhammad. And Fatima (the) daughter of Abu Dahak, of whom it is reported that she was the daughter of Yazid Umra, and Anna (the) daughter of Dhil-Haiyya, and the daughter of Numan, who was disgusted with him when he said to her: "Give yourself to me." and replied: "Do queens marry traders?"<sup>34</sup> and Muleika (the) daughter of Ka'b, of whom so many stories are told, and Mary the mother of Ibrahim, his son, and Rayhana the Jewess. These were the wives whom he married and his two concubines. Now St. Paul, a true apostle, has said: "If a man have a wife, his utmost efforts are directed to please her, but if he have no wife he aims at pleasing his Lord." (I Cor. 7:32,33, paraphrase) A true word and well said! For a man must contrive to please his wife, and as the Lord has said: "A man cannot please two masters." (Matt. 6:24a) There is no help for it, he must cling to the one and despise the other. Now if a man cannot serve one wife and please her without forgetting his Maker, how much less can he bend all his energies to please 15 wives and two concubines? Besides he was, as you know, absorbed in other pursuits; I mean the management of war, plans for taking the lives of his enemies, the capture of women, plunder of property and the dispatch of scouts. There were troops to be handled, roads (to be) infested and raiding parties (to be) sent out. Now, while he gave due attention to such constant claims, how could he find time to fast and pray, to collect his thoughts and to turn himself to other matters which

were involved in his sacred duties? Certainly we have here a novel and original conception of the prophetic office.

(CA) But, leaving this count, let us consider next those credentials of a true prophet which compel us to recognize the claims of those who produce them, and then consider those of your master, and ask how far these correspond with those, and whether we are bound to admit his claims, or rather reject them. To begin with, the word "prophet" means "one who prophesies," i.e., tells us of things which no one else had told us, and that before they come to pass; or else one who tells us things which have already been, but whose origin is wrapped in mystery. In doing this he wins our confidence for the truth of his statements by signs which confirm his words and bear witness to their truth. So it was with Moses, who taught us in the book of Genesis how the earth was created, how God made Adam and Eve, the story of Cain and Abel, the people of Noah, the deluge and the story of Abraham and Isaac; a continuous narrative down to his own time when God appeared to him in the bush. Then follows the story of Israel and Pharaoh, and so we are brought down to the death of Moses. Mixed with all this, which deals with actual facts, there is also much concerning the divine purpose concerning Israel and the land of promise. Thus history and predictions are intertwined. First of all what he told them of the past was confirmed by signs and wonders, which he wrought among them. Thus he convinced them of the truth of what he taught and that he was a prophet sent by God. Here was a guarantee that he could teach men of things that were yet to come. But again, the truth of what he taught as to things still future was put beyond question by the plain and complete fulfilment of earlier prophecies, when the children of Israel entered the land of Canaan led by God's strong hand. In this way the certainty of things to come was guaranteed. Now, having this two-fold guarantee, we are compelled to acknowledge Moses as a prophet in very deed. But when one predicts events before they come to pass, such predictions may be fulfilled in either of two ways: either speedily in the prophet's lifetime, or after an interval and length of days. In such a case the proof and certification of the prophet are to be found in the signs and wonders of his mission. Thus Isaiah prophesied to Hezekiah the King when Sennacherib King

of Nineveh went against him with an army, besieged him and wrote him an outrageous letter, full of threats and wild boasting. Hezekiah made his complaint to the Lord and God said to Isaiah: "I have heard the prayer of Hezekiah, and now go and say to him, Thus saith the Lord, one night's provision shall suffice for Sennacherib." (Isaiah 37:33-35, extreme paraphrase) That night God sent an angel and slew the army of Sennacherib, 185,000 men, and when he arose in the morning and saw what had befallen his people, he turned and fled. And then, there is the word which Isaiah spoke to Hezekiah when he was ill. "In those days Hezekiah was sick unto death and Isaiah came to him and said, Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order for thou shalt die. And he turned his face to the wall saying, O my Lord remember how I have walked before you Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done right in Thy sight, and Hezekiah wept bitterly. And before Isaiah had come into the city, the word of the Lord came unto him saying, Return and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the Lord, God of David thy father; I have heard thy prayer and seen thy tears, behold I have healed thee. On the third day thou shalt go up to the House of the Lord, and I will add to thy days 15 years, and will save thee from the King of Assyria and will defend this city for David's sake. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs, and they took it and put it upon the boil and it was healed. And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, What is the sign to thee from the Lord, Shall the shadow advance 10 degrees or return 10 degrees? And he said, It is a little thing that the shadow be lengthened 10 degrees, let it rather return 10 degrees. And the prophet prayed, and the shadow went back 10 degrees on the dial of Ahaz." (Isaiah 38:1-8) And Hezekiah recovered from his sickness and did not die till the 15 years were completed. Now here you have the fulfilment coinciding with the sign and proof. On the other hand, you have the Isaiah's prediction of the coming of our Lord the Christ, how He should be born of a virgin and how they should call His name Immanuel, that is, God with us. Many other things were seen and foretold by him as to the future dispensation and the days to come after the destruction of Jerusalem; all of which came to pass as he had foretold. So we have the words of Jeremiah the prophet concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the advance of Nebuchadnezzar, the captivity of Israel and their removal to Babylon where they remained as exiles 70



years. In part this prediction was fulfilled in the prophet's own life-time; and when the 70 years were over it was fully realized, and men knew that he had spoken to them in the name of the Lord. So too Daniel prophesied of the return of the children of Israel to Jerusalem. "Then was sent forth the finger of a hand, and this writing was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UFARSIN; and this is the interpretation of it; God hath numbered thy kingdom, thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting, thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." (Dan. 5:25-28, paraphrase). In the same way he predicted the death of the Messiah, and how, after His death, there should be no continuance to the Jews. He told how they should be utterly scattered, and their kingdom brought to an end; and all this came about as stated. And so spake all the prophets and those who deserved the prophet's name. And so it was that kings and peoples dealt with those who claimed prophetic honors, they never recognized any of them, except after rigorous test and prolonged investigation as to the ground on which they based their claims. Those who had good and sufficient proof to give were recognized, but those who had no such evidence were treated as impostors and made examples of. If any other course had been adopted, any man who talked nonsense or spread gossip, any sorcerer or augur or soothsayer might have been enrolled among the prophets. Kings took this matter in hand and carried it through by the help of God. And so we come to the Messiah, the Savior of the world, exalted above all the prophets, as His rank is higher than theirs. He takes precedence of them all inasmuch as they were servants of God, but He is the beloved Son, the all-creating Word. It was He who sent the prophets of God with their message, and sent the apostles, and finally as the incarnate Word set His seal to their ministry. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory." He prophesied to the Jews and to His disciples during His ministry. He proved to them with indisputable clearness that He could read their secrets and knew what lay buried in their hearts. He could interpret providence, and knew what was to be before it came to pass. Thus when the disciples gathered round Him showing Him the temple buildings and admiring their perfect beauty and strength, He said to them: "Verily I unto you, not one stone of these buildings shall be left upon another." (Matt. 24:2b) He told them of the destruction coming

upon them, forty years after His glorious ascension. And then He told the Jews what was in their minds when they sought to slay Him. Again He said to His disciples: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." (John 11:11) The disciples, who knew that Lazarus had been sick, said unto them: "Lord, if he sleeps, he shall do well." (John 11:12b) For when a man falls into a deep sleep after the violence of a fever, it is a sign that he is recovering. But, when they could not understand what He meant, He said frankly to them: "Lazarus is dead." (John 11:14b) Once more, He spake to Simon on the last night of His sojourn, when He said: "All ye shall forsake Me this night." (Matt. 26:31a, Diatessaron), Simon said to him: "Though all men forsake Thee, I will never forsake Thee." (Matt. 26:33, Diatessaron) But Christ replied: "Verily I say unto thee, This night, before the cock crow, thou shalt three times deny that thou knowest Me." (Luke 22:34, Diatessaron) Simon was exceedingly sorrowful, and yet the cock did not crow once that night before three times in three different places, he had denied his Lord, swearing a great oath. And the Lord looked on him, and Simon remembered his word and went out and repented.

(CB) Such are the conditions and proofs of a true prophet. And now as to what you have found of your master, tell us, when did he ever prophesy? How does he prove himself to you and others like you to deserve a prophet's name? Have you any evidence to give in support of his claims? If you say that he gives us information about the prophets who were before him, e.g., Noah, Abraham, Moses and Christ; all I have to say is this, (and I do not think that you can dispute or deny my statement) that he told us what we already know. Our young people, even our children learn it at school. If you instance the story of the Aad, the Thamud and the camel, the masters of the elephant<sup>35</sup> and such like, we can only describe it as poor stuff, idle tales of bearded dotards with which they while away their days and nights. To maintain these is no proof that he was a prophet. Thus one of the guarantees which might compel our consent to his claim is found lacking. If, on the other hand, you tell us that he told us of things to come, we must hold you bound to substantiate this statement. Two hundred years and more have passed since his day, and if he made any such prediction it should have been confirmed and fulfilled among you, long ere now.

But you know he came not by this gate to his goal. He never claimed to have this faculty of foreknowledge, and thus the second of the guarantees of his prophetic office is gone. He has taught us nothing either of the past or of the future, while the signs and wonders by which a true prophet is verified were denied him.

(CC) As to this point, on which I must dwell, let us inquire if he really produced any signs. We affirm that in the Qur'an he asserts that it was said to him: "What prevents us from sending signs, except that those of earlier days denied them?" (Qur'an 17:61a) Now what is that but to say: We might have furnished you with these signs, but your contemporaries would deny them! On my honor, no one who knows what it is to argue would give such an answer. You know, we all know that your master disowns all claims to be a worker of miracles, simply because he had no such power. Fair-minded men like yourself cannot shirk the truth.<sup>36</sup>

(CD) It may be you advance, as evidence of the prophetic office of your master, the conquests which he achieved, and the fact that his companions, whilst still few in number and with no resources, overthrew the Persian Empire with all its power and prestige, its well-ordered allies, its stable government and all its stores of arms and men.<sup>37</sup> If so, we answer you in the words spoken by God to the children of Israel: "It is not because God loved you more than other nations that He has given you power over the Amorites and Perizzites to slay them, but because of the transgression of these nations, has God given them into your hands." (Deut. 9:4,5; extreme paraphrase) And so He did to Jerusalem, which He had chosen from the rest of the earth and set His name there and established it with signs and wonders. He caused His chosen prophets to dwell there, there Psalms and hymns were sung day and night in His honor, and prayer, offered toward that Holy Place received their answer because it was the place of blessing. Yet when this people proved refractory, when they brought their idols into His temple, despising His grace and disowning His signs, then He gave them over into the hands of the ill-starred Nebuchadnezzar, himself an idolater. This man brought them low, he slew the sons of God, His elect, the choice of His creation. Do you call Nebuchadnezzar a

prophet because he conquered Jerusalem and wreaked his rage on it and its people? Did not this rather happen for the reason already assigned? It was not otherwise with the history of your master, and the conquest of the Persians by his companions. The Persians were Magians, unclean and defiled, they were the off-scouring of the nations and the most ignorant of men. They worshipped the sun and fire, they married their own daughters, sisters and mothers. They knew no bounds, but opposed the truth and boasted of their ignorance. They claimed a supremacy which God had never granted them; they abused His grace denying and opposing it. They roved through the earth in wantonness and violence, they behaved themselves haughtily as though they had established an empire by their own prestige and power. So God took His favor from them and set over them those who sacked their cities, slew them and carried their children captive. There was not left a woman who was not ravished, nor a child who was not enslaved. Thus they perished by the anger of God and His wrath.

(CE) But to return to mention these signs which secure for all who can display them, the admission of their prophetic claims. On this point we must institute a searching inquiry. We say that in the Qur'an no mention is made of such signs, rather as we have already shown, he asserts that because of the unbelief of earlier ages God was unwilling to furnish him with signs merely to provoke men to denial. Is this a satisfactory reason or valid reply? Can it pass with sensible people or win the (consent) of the learned and philosophic of men who are fastidious as to what they say and critical as to the origin and authority of what they believe? Yet this is the witness borne by the Qur'an. No doubt the Jews denied the signs of their prophets and rejected them; but what Arab could deny the signs of a prophet, when no prophet was ever sent to them? If he had furnished them with signs, perhaps after all they would have believed them. We see that many responded to his call even without a sign. But you know that this excess is trumped up and quite unfit to pass muster. As to the apocryphal legends to which you appeal, they are idle tales and old wives' fables. For example, they say that one of his marvelous signs was that a wolf stood by him howling, and that he turned to his companions and said to them: This is an ambassador from the lions; if you wish to lay any command on

him, he will not disobey, but if you prefer, let be and stand off from him. They said: We do not wish to have anything to do with him; whereas the Prophet signed to the beast with his three fingers to make off, and it fled and disappeared.<sup>38</sup> Now by my life, this was a wonderful sign! No one ever heard the like of this or saw anything so wonderful. Here is something to mislead the intelligence of a philosopher and wise man, to perplex the learned, cunning and the subtle. Your master understood the howling of a wolf, he knew that it was an ambassador from the lions of the field. But tell me this, supposing he had told them that the wolf was a messenger from the Lord of all, could they have refuted his statement? My dear friend, it is clear as noon day; he was imposing on a simple and credulous people, who were not accustomed to testing the truth of such statements. They say that the wolf spoke to Aban the son of Aus, and that at once he professed the true faith.<sup>39</sup> Now if he had said that Aban had reported that a lion had spoken to him, that would have been, in my judgment, more remarkable, besides making things equal between them both; but he gave him the preference over himself. And so when the wolf howled, he claimed to understand its meaning; whereas in Aban's case, the wolf spoke articulately and, no doubt, in good Arabic! But what is not surprising of all this is that two such miracles both occurred in connection with the wolf, which is known as the robber beast. So help you God, stories of that sort are not going to take in a sensible fellow like you. Is there need any further to enlarge on it? Similar to this is the story of the ox creeping along; of which they say that it talked to him in its leisurely way when he struck it.<sup>40</sup> But the Qur'an is witness that the Arabs are impious and irreligious. And then there was the sheep of Umm Ma'bad whose udder he stroked.<sup>41</sup> Along side of these are many other wonderful tales, as when he called a tree and it hastened to meet him, ploughing up the soil.<sup>42</sup> We do not linger over that as there is some doubt about it, and many Muslims, whose opinion has weight, do not accept it, but reject it as inauthentic. Then there is the story of the poison which Zaynab daughter of al-Harith, the Jewess, the wife of Sallam put into the shoulder of boiled or grilled mutton. The shoulder of mutton, we are told, spoke up, yet ibn al-Bishr ate of it at the Prophet's table and died.<sup>43</sup> No doubt the poison, which did not cease to work in the Prophet himself, was ultimately the cause of his

death.<sup>44</sup> Now I should like to know, did he alone hear the shoulder of mutton when it spoke, or did the whole company hear it? If he alone heard it, why did he not forbid ibn al-Bishr to eat of the poisoned food so that he, who remember was one of his own friends and an invited guest at his table, should not die? How could it be lawful to conceal from others this confession of the shoulder of mutton, that it was poisoned? If, on the other hand, the whole company heard the remark, how comes in that ibn al-Bishr did not refrain from eating, if he really heard the shoulder say: "Let no man eat of me for I am poisoned?" Why did the Prophet himself refrain from eating and allow this poor wretch to eat of the poisoned food? Was he not practically his murderer? There is but one alternative, either he alone heard it, and concealed the fact, or the whole company heard it, and yet ibn al-Bishr did not refrain from the food. The one heard and did not die, the other ate of the poisoned food and died. Ah! perhaps he ate of it, feeling secure as the guest of the Prophet, one whose prayers were certain to be answered, the messenger of the Lord, who was heard by his Lord in every petition he offered! Then why did not the Prophet call on the Lord, that he might grant his request, as was often the case with prophets whose intercession availed even to raising the dead to life? Elias (Elijah) raised the son of the widow Sarepta (Zarephath), and Elisha raised the son of the Shunammite. Many times did the prophets work such wonders; and even after death there was virtue in their bones so that when they placed a dead man over the bones of Elisha, he lived. You know that the story is true; you have read it in the book of Kings. There is no variance in this point between Jew and Christian, however otherwise they differ. Why did not your Prophet eat of himself, and yet take no harm? That would have been a sign worthy of a prophet. For we hold that all the prophets were protected by the providence of God, Glorious and Great. He protected them from the injuries which unbelievers sought to inflict on them and on the saints of God. So Christ has said: "If ye drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt you." (Mark 16:18, paraphrase) That is just what happened, they tested this word again and again, and the truth of their message was confirmed by experiment and proof. Therefore it was said that Gentile kings accepted their teachings while wise men and philosophers, men of learning, skill and judgment followed suit. They

were not driven by the rod or scourge, nor by sword or dart, nor by force of numbers, nor by worldly sanction, nor by the charm of eloquent speech, nor by skill, nor by reasoning, nor by any inducement in the way of concessions offered them. But, when they saw these men in the light of day working such wonders, they laid aside their royal state and pomp, and they abstained from the science and wisdom of the world abandoning a life of ease with all its claims to precedence, that they might follow those who, in outward appearance were only fishermen and tax gatherers, men with neither rank nor distinction to boast of, save only that they were the first to follow Christ who gave them power and authority to work such wonders. And that, God bless you, was the seal of their prophetic rank and dignity. These men could prove that they were sent by God most High. In this respect they differed from your master, who presses a claim which is destitute of support. As for the vessel, of which they say that when he thrust his hand into it the water overflowed till all had drunk;<sup>45</sup> this is a tale told by Muhammad b. Ishaq, but it has no authority with historians;<sup>46</sup> your own friends are not sure of its truth. Whatever you think, none of these stories about your master will go down. They have no probability and cannot authenticate themselves in any single case. Indeed your master is before hand with us; he has cut the ground from under your feet. He himself makes no claim to have wrought such signs, so that those who press the claim in his interest have no ground to stand on. Rather, he was sent with the sword, enforcing his pretensions and those who did not confess that he was a prophet were slain or paid a heavy fine.

(CF) Now, may God be your guide, can you wish clearer or more conclusive evidence than you have here, or a more complete refutation of your master's claims? You yourself affirm that he said: "There has never been a prophet about whom his own people did not invent lies, and how should I escape the general lot? What is told about me, you must test by the written word which I have left you with... If there is anything like it or any mention of it, there you must believe that I said it and did it; otherwise, I am not responsible for it. It is a lie handed down about me."<sup>47</sup> Now, looking at the tales we have cited from the memoirs of your friends, can you find any authority for them in the

Qur'an? If they are ever mentioned there, then on my honor, they are true; so did the Prophet, so said he. But if he is not responsible for them, they are idle tales attributed to him. Still worse is yet to come. They say that during his lifetime he told them not to bury him when he died. He said that God would raise him to heaven, as Christ our Lord was raised, and that he was too dear to God to be left on earth more than three days. They cherished this hope, and when he died on the Monday, the 12th night of the first Spring month in the 63rd year of his age, after an illness of 14 days, they laid him out, believing that he would be raised to heaven as he had said. But when the third day had come, corruption had already set in, and their hope failed. They despaired of his vain assurance, and buried him in the earth on the 4th day.<sup>48</sup> Some said that when he had been ill 7 days with pleurisy and was wandering in his mind, he spoke confusedly and uttered impious words. 'Ali was wroth at this and flatly contradicted them. When the Prophet recovered he told him what had happened and in consequence he gave orders that no one should be left in the house with him save Abbas his uncle.<sup>49</sup> When the 7th day of his sickness came, he died, and his body swelled and the little finger of his left hand bent. Damram says that during his illness he lay on a red mat and that when he died, he was wrapped in it and rotted in the ground unwashed and unshrouded. But according to Amram, the son of Qadir, he was washed and wrapped in three sheets of white Sahuli<sup>50</sup> cloth from Yemen. After his death the charge of affairs was committed to 'Ali and Fadal son of Abbas, his uncle. But all his adherents revolted and forsook the faith, except a little handful of personal friends, members of his own family who were desirous of sharing in the empire he had built up.<sup>51</sup> Abu Bakr, originally known as the ibn Abu Kuhafa, had such remarkable powers of organization and was so gentle in his ways and so conciliatory that after his master's death he was invested with the sovereignty. 'Ali was greatly offended at this. He felt as one would naturally feel who had confidently expected that the power would pass into his hands, whereas it was entirely taken from him, (in) spite of his ambition. Abu Bakr on the other hand, maintained his kindly and courteous demeanor, handling those who had revolted with such tact and kindness, such fair speeches and tempting offers and playing so skillfully on their various passions, that one and all were won back. Sometimes this end



was accomplished by terror and fear of the sword, sometimes by inducement to worldly power and possessions, or might be by license allowed in carnal lusts. But those who returned did so apparently, not really.

(CG) I do not doubt that you remember what happened quite lately at the council table of the Amir of the faithful. It was told of one of his most distinguished courtiers that he had professed Islam, but was really a Magian. You remember his reply. "By God, I know that this one and that one (here he enumerated a long list of his courtiers) professed a faith of which they are destitute, meaning to impose on me. I know that they are really the opposite of what they seem. The reason is that they have embraced Islam with no appreciation of its religious worth, simply because they wish to be connected with us to share in the prosperity of our empire. They have no insight into the truth which they have professed; it is with them according to the proverb: 'A Jew is never more a Jew, than when he professes to be a Muslim.' So with these Magians. I know that this one and that one (again he enumerated a long list of his courtiers) is a Christian at heart and became a Muslim under compulsion. That is to say, he is neither Muslim nor Christian, but a deceiver. Now can I help it? What can I do? God's curses be upon them all! Of course when they left their faith, whether it was the Magian, horrid and dreadful as it is, or whether it was the Christian, which is nearest to the light and leading of Islam, they ought heartily to have embraced the new faith which they have adopted; whereas they only professed to believe and pretended conversion. But here as always I take the Prophet as my example, Heaven's blessing rest upon him. The majority of his companions, even his most intimate friends, professed to be his followers and allies, yet he knew that they were hypocrites.<sup>52</sup> This was quite evident to him. They did not cease from their efforts to compass his ruin; they plotted evil against him and planned his fall. They backed the heathen party openly against him. A company of them lay in ambush in a mountain pass, hoping to frighten his mule, that she might throw him and kill him, but God preserved him from their wiles.<sup>53</sup> So he continued till God took him, maintaining the most perfect courtesy toward those who were his enemies, yet ever on his guard. Shall I not follow in his

steps? During his lifetime he had a numerous following, but after his death they revolted. No one maintained his allegiance.<sup>54</sup> They raised the standard of revolt, hoping to break up the State and so end it. With this aim, spoken or unspoken, in public or private, they continued to work against him. But he, with the help of God, drew the hearts of men to himself and inspired them with the ideal of a great earthly empire. Thus in time the constitution was established, faction was conciliated and a union consummated by his tact. Thus God accomplished His purpose with him, for all of which the praise and thanks are due, not to him, but to God alone. I too decline to repeat what I have seen and heard about my people. God visit them in His anger! I will not cherish any feeling toward them but that of courtesy and patience till God shall decide between me and them. Is not He the best judge?"

(CH) Now unless my lord the Amir had chosen to speak thus frankly in open court and in (the) presence of his great councilors, who naturally repeated the story to those who were not present, I certainly could not have related it here. You are a witness that I have not exaggerated but simply stated what took place, and not so very long ago. I have dwelt on the incident only to impress on you the fact of the general apostasy, and of the half-hearted way in which the people returned at last to their allegiance, moved rather by the desire to establish the Empire than by loyalty to the Prophet. I think these who read what I have written with any degree of intelligence will admit that I have fairly answered you. God grant it be so.

(CI) To return to the point from which we started, we have said that the life of the prophet lasted 63 years, of which 40 had passed before he claimed prophetic dignity, while 13 were spent in Mecca and 10 in Medina.<sup>55</sup> I do not think this statement is open to question. The whole narrative as I have given it to you, from first to last, is borrowed from the principal authority on these matters, one in whom you have implicit confidence.<sup>56</sup>

(CJ) But perhaps you reply, it may be said of Moses and Joshua that they too fought against the Philistines and smote them with the sword,

burned their villages and plundered their goods doing in this way just as we have denied that our Lord did or taught. Let me then reply. Moses and Joshua acted under special directions from God, that He might establish his purpose and fulfill the warnings directed against those who had rebelled and transgressed. In so doing He meant to chastise them as a fond father chastises his children. You will say what proofs have we that Moses and Joshua could plead the command of heaven in what they did, while your master had no such authority? Here is our reply. We know that Moses was a prophet by the signs and wonders which he wrought in Egypt in the presence of Pharaoh, Israel's oppressor. He brought the children of Israel out with a high hand, dividing the sea and leading them through its depths. He smote the senseless rock, and twelve streams of water gushed out, from which he made them to drink. He brought down manna from heaven and fed them with quails. Such things as these he did, beyond the reach of man, impossible save to one whom God had given supernatural powers. These are the arguments and proofs we offer, surely sufficient to convince us that he acted by the authority of heaven. We have no doubt then, that the slaughter of the Canaanites, the burning of their houses and the plundering of their property was decreed by God. So with Joshua, who made the sun stand still in mid heaven, till he had exterminated the nations. Scripture is witness that there was "no such day before or since" (Joshua 10:14a); a sign and a seal set to his mission, of Joshua that it might be a witness and a glory to him to the end of time. There are other events like these which I have not time to enumerate; besides, you have said that you have read the book of Joshua and studied it carefully. We Christians and the Jews, differing as we do on many points, are agreed as to the truth of these narratives, and that without any collusion on the testimony of Holy Scripture. Now will you kindly furnish us with any, even the smallest sign of proof, or any remarkable suggestion that your master acted under such authority. Let us have the witness of his own writings that we may acknowledge his prophetic dignity and rank, then we shall feel sure that when he slew men, carried them captive and plundered their goods, that he was acting by command of God, as those old heroes did. But we know in good sooth you have no answer to give, you can adduce nothing such as we require. Therefore you must not inveigh against us

if we reject your statement and repudiate the claim you make, if we affirm that God never sent your master and never gave him a commission to wage such inexpiable war against any. We affirm on the contrary that he was a despot pressing his claims in his own interest and backed by his friends and family. No blame or penalty attaches to those who protest against your view and reject it. You have yourself justified their objections, you have credited them with a lofty temper, far removed from those headstrong and inconsistent utterances which have no witness but themselves, and thereby are proved untrustworthy. You know that reason and justice forbid the use of lies. They are, happily, not natural to you. They are the weapons of those ignorant and unbelieving Jews. Lies are their stock in trade, the sum and substance of their arguments; the keystone of the arch they build.<sup>57</sup> In this they resemble their father, who is a liar and the inventor of lies, as Christ our Lord witnessed against Him in His Holy Gospel. And so to resume, and let us, by God's help, come to the point once more. What am I to say? How shall I put my case most reasonably before you? Do you suppose that I can receive your statement without reason of proof? I am sure you agree with me, the thing is out of the question. Christ our Lord has said: "All the prophets prophesied till the time of My coming, and at My coming prophecy ceased, and no prophet shall arise after Me."<sup>58</sup> Those who come after Me and claim to be prophets are thieves and robbers; ye shall not hear them."<sup>59</sup> Alas, my friend, can I prove false to the command of my Lord, the Savior of the world, and receive any falsehood you may trump up, any affirmation you may make, any inducements you may offer, specially as though they center in this present passing world; and that without proof or reason? I do not believe a man of understanding would approve a course of conduct so gross; certainly I am not prepared to adopt it, nor does it commend itself to me. Do justice to my point, try to think clearly, be done with this assumption of superiority, this affectation of a little brief authority. Let me advise you with all tenderness, let me remind you of what you have read in the Gospel whereof our Lord says to His disciples: "Many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and saw not; and to hear what you hear, and heard not." (Luke 10:24) After all your reading and research must you swerve from the truth and give your heart to the world, although you know that it must fail and soon pass

away? At least you now understand that we acknowledge the prophets and receive their testimony, because they bring with them the credentials of a prophet. They do not impose their authority by force, with partiality or passion, nor with overpowering pretensions, nor with overwhelming prestige, nor with overflowing wealth. Certainly they did not offer any concessions, or allow any license in the way of sensual pleasures. But they confront us with wonderful signs, far beyond the power of men to reach, evidently the finger of God, as are the signs of a true prophet and the miracles of our Lord and of His first apostles, before which the philosopher's reason and all the wisdom of the wise must bow. And because they furnish us with such indisputable witness, therefore we accept their teaching and confess in their honor that they are from God. Documentary evidence for this is still in our hands. We can follow their steps; they have left unmistakable marks of their presence, such as none can deny who are not willfully opposed to the truth, embracing falsehood and blinding their own eyes.

(CK) What we have just written makes it necessary that we inquire somewhat minutely into the laws and judgments imposed on you by your master, whom you honor as a prophet. Now we say that all laws and judgments are of three sorts; by no ingenuity can you add to them or take from them. First there is the law which is divine, the Law par excellence, and therefore beyond reason and nature. It pertains to God, Glorious is His name, and to none but Him; nor is there any like it. Then there is the law of nature, based on reason, innate in man's mind so that it appeals to the understanding with a certain convincing power not to be understood. This is the law of justice. And then there is the law of Satan; I mean the law of violence, opposed alike to the law of God and contrary to those of nature. Now the divine law, which transcends any other and is par excellence the law, was revealed by Christ, the Savior of the world, of whom your master affirmed: "We sent in their steps Jesus (the) son of Mary testifying to what was before him of the Law, and We gave him the Gospel, in which is light and leading, testifying to what was before of the Law, with leading and direction for the devout." (Qur'an 5:50) And so said Christ of Himself: "Verily I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully

use you and persecute you. So shall ye be children of your Father which is in heaven, for He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust." (Matt. 5:44,45; Diatessaron with slight paraphrase) This Law is divine, above nature, higher than reason. Here are mercy and forgiveness and all that corresponds to the divine nature. The second law is that of nature, based on reason, making itself felt in the instincts of fallen man. This is the law of which Moses wrote when he said: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life, and a wound for a wound." (Lev. 24:20, Peshitta, paraphrase) This law of nature which is enshrined in the dictates of reason, is the law of justice and equity. "Thou shalt do to another as he hath done to thee. Treat him as he hath treated thee; well if well, but if ill then ill." Of course this does not agree with the divine law, nor with that prescribed by our Lord who was merciful and pitiful toward His creatures. The third law is that of Satan, the reign of violence and wrong, pure and simple.

(CL) Now you must not blame me if I enforce my argument at this point. You know ever since we entered on this discussion I have not shirked the issue, nor will I cease to press as far as the spiritual weapons at my command enable me, in defence of the faith of God to which we look for help and victory over our enemies. If you blame me for this, you do me wrong, and I do not regard your blame in this matter. So as to return to the point at issue, I pray God that He may inspire you with the love of justice and the voice of truth showing you which of these three laws just enumerated and which of these precepts your master imposed. If you say that we owe to him the Law of God; I reply that Christ was 600 years before him in so doing, if we go back to His glorious ascension. And ever since and up to the present time, His followers have been applying and enforcing it as they will continue to do till the end of time. I have not seen any of your coreligionists who seemed to have an inkling of it, or a flavor of it, even if we go back to your master's lifetime. If you affirm (though I hardly think you will) that we owe to him the law of nature, with its precepts of justice and maxims of equity, we reply that Moses was before him in so doing, for he instructed us and established us therein and taught it plainly as from God in the Law. No one else can claim to be the author of it;

for he speaks always for himself alone, and bears witness in his book. By heaven, he who makes any such claim is manifestly a boaster, high-handed and false-hearted, dealing with what is, as clear as daylight, God's truth in the hands, heads and hearts of men, trying to wrest it and desiring by falsehood to claim it for his own. So far we know to whom we owe our knowledge, and we confess our duty and obligation to them. There is left the third, i.e., the law of Satan with its precepts of violence. Now consider, as God may help you, carefully and with an open mind such as neither bias nor prejudice can affect, and tell us who represents this third law, who backs it up, and embraces and practices its precepts? Or to put it otherwise, what was the law your master brought, and what precepts did he enforce, if not those of the third law as we have expounded it to you? Let us have the truth, if truth you have to tell, that we may accept it at your hands, and we will follow your lead. We would not fight against the truth nor reject from whatever quarter it may come. But perhaps you are prepared to affirm that your Prophet imposed both these laws, i.e., that of Christ and that of Moses, and enforced them in his book. You may appeal to the passage: "A life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a nose for a nose" (Qur'an 5:49a), evidently based, you say, on the Mosaic Law, followed by words which just as clearly breathe the spirit of Christ: "If ye forgive, it is nigher unto piety." But you can see for yourself that the passage is self-contradictory; as if we should say of a friend, "He is sitting and standing, is blind and can see, is well and yet ails," at one and the same time. I do not suppose that you desire that such a style of speech should be generally used. It is absurd; nor can anyone who follows the argument so escape the conclusion that we have here phrases filched from different quarters; I mean, of course, the Law and the Gospel. If you were to confess both these laws and to claim them for your master, the adherents of each in turn, both Jews and Christians, would disown you; because it is their faith which they eagerly embrace and jealously guard to the rejection of your claims. Have they not inherited it? Do they not hold it fast, devoted to it as to the truth? They will say to you: "You are no friend of ours. Off! Hands off! Will you rob us of that inheritance which you yourself acknowledge to be ours, even while you are scheming to take it from us?" Give us some substantial proof that we may know that you are

sincere in your claim. Are you not forced back on the third law, of which it is so abundantly proved that it has been practiced and supported by you? How can you deny what you affirm, maintaining it, defending it, and pleading for it as the law by which you live? Your whole system is built on it; yet, whenever it suits you, you turn round and disown it. You can hardly be content to claim for your master that he was a humble follower of Moses and Christ, whereas you place him far above both. You rank him with the Lord of All, and protest as if you were in the secrets of the Almighty, that, but for your master the world had never been created nor man made. Surely, my friend, it is incredible folly to press such a claim, and at the same time admit as you do, that he had no power to work miracles. We have made no provision for this in our plan of history; nor was it any part of his role to adorn his cause with miracles. Consider then Moses and Christ anticipated your master in promulgating the first and second laws; only the third is left, for we know of no fourth. Does not it follow that we must identify his name with the third, i.e., the law of Satan? Which of these two views suggested by you am I to take? I do not know. To which of them must I reply? Make up your minds and do not allow things to slip. That be far from you. In religious questions, beyond all others, slackness or hesitancy are forbidden. An earnest and thoughtful soul will recognize the duty to press the quest to the uttermost.

### III. Origin and History of the Qur'an

(CM) I take it then that as your final ground and proof, you are forced to appeal to the Qur'an. This book you hold in your hand and the proof that it is divinely inspired is that it contains old-world stories about Moses, the prophets and our Lord the Christ. You urge that your master was an illiterate person,<sup>60</sup> not in any way conversant in such matters, and you ask how could he have composed such a book if he had not been inspired? You allege that such a book was never before written by man or jinn: "Say, if all men and all jinns should inspire to produce anything of the kind, they could not succeed, though they stood shoulder to shoulder." (Qur'an 17:90) You quote the passage: "If you are in doubt as to what we have brought down to our servants, produce something as good; summon your witness other than



God, if you are true men.” (Qur’an 2:21) You quote that other passage: “If we had brought the Qur’an down to a mountain, you should have seen it cleave in twain and confess the truth, for fear of God. We use such figures in dealing with men so as, if possible, to make them think.” (Qur’an 59:21) In your judgment trifles such as these constitute the strongest proof and clearest evidence of the prophetic office of your master. It seems to you that in such proofs of inspiration you may find a parallel to the wonders wrought by the earlier prophets, as when Moses clave the sea, Joshua stayed the sun and Christ raised the dead to life again. Is this the sort of thing which has misled multitudes? On my honor, you are content to rest your case on very frail foundation, a crazy substructure, a rotten bottom. We have not far to seek for an answer, nor will you have long to wait for it. It appears, however, that I must open up this whole question. If in the process we occasion pain, if festering wounds must be reopened, the patient must brace himself to bear it like a man. When the iron has probed the wound, he will quickly find relief, comfort and healing. The truth will then be made plain to you, and the meaning of this figure as it applies to yourself.

(CN) First of all, then I must put before you the origin of the Qur’an; afterwards you may press your claim if you can — a false claim which cannot abide the truth or stand examination. Well then, there was a certain Christian monk named Sergius<sup>61</sup> who had perpetrated some offence for which his companions disowned him and excommunicated him, refusing him as was their wont, access to their churches and intercourse with themselves. Repenting of what he had done and anxious to expiate the offence and conciliate his Christian brethren, this man travelled to the country of Tehama, and reached Mecca. There he found a prosperous city divided between two religious sects. The majority were of the Jewish faith, the rest were idolaters. So kindly and skillfully did he handle your master that he quite won his heart. Among his new friends he was known as Nestorius, hoping by this change of name to strengthen the Nestorian heresy<sup>62</sup> which he had embraced. He continued imparting instruction to your master, in repeated conferences he insinuated point after point of the new doctrine, till at length his pupil ceased to worship idols. So he drew him

to confess the religion of Nestorius.<sup>63</sup> When the Jews perceived this, they revived an ancient feud and poured abuse upon him, as was the custom between them and the Christians. Still his influence grew stronger, with the result familiar to you. This is the explanation of the fact that Muhammad mentions the Messiah and the Christian faith in the Qur'an, defending them and protesting that Christians are "friendly disposed" (Qur'an 5:85b) and "that they are not under ecclesiastical rule and are not proud." (Qur'an 5:85b) When the Christian cause was strong and this Nestorius on the point of death, 'Abdullah (the) son of Salam and Ka'b, well known among the Jewish doctors, two crafty fellows, arose and gave your master to understand that they agreed with his views and accepted his teaching. They persisted in this artful and dishonorable course, bearing themselves so as to conceal from him what was all the time in their hearts, till after his death they found their opportunity. Then your master was no more, the people revolted, and the power came into the hands of Abu Bakr. 'Ali, meantime, was doing his best to seduce the people from their allegiance. Here at last was the opportunity they had waited for so long and aimed at from the first. They insinuated themselves into the confidence of 'Ali and suggested that he should claim the prophetic office, undertaking to see him through, just as Muhammad had been coached by Nestorius the Christian. Why should he accept a lower role than that of a prophet? 'Ali was aware of the influence wielded by Nestorius the monk, though he was only a youth during his master's lifetime. They recommended him not to divulge the situation or give a hint of it to any of the people. He, a mere youth, consented, inclining to their doctrines in the simplicity of his heart, as was natural to his tender years and inexperience. But God did not prosper their plans or permit of their realization. A hint of what they were after was confirmed to Abu Bakr, who at once sent for 'Ali and reminded him of their relationship. 'Ali perceived how entirely Abu Bakr had the upper hand, and abjured the treasonable designs on which he had entered. But already the Jews had tampered with the book, based on the teaching of the Gospel, which his master had committed to 'Ali's hands. They had introduced passages from their own Law and material from the literature of their own country. In this way they corrupted the whole, taking from it and adding to it as they chose, insinuating their own blasphemies into it.

Take the passages the Jews say that Christianity is built up on nothing, and the Christians say that Judaism is built on nothing, and yet they read the book. Those who were ignorant spake just like them, but God will be the judge between them in the last day on this point in which they differ (Qur'an 2:107). Many are the wonderful tales as to which no one can fail to see that they are the utterances of rival sects, each contradicts the teaching of the other. Let me mention the sura 16 (The Bee); 27 (The Ant) and 29 (The Spider) and other(s) of the same sort.

(CO) Well then, when he despaired of the caliphate, 'Ali went to Abu Bakr after forty days (though some say after 6 months), and gave him his allegiance. Abu Bakr said to him: "Ah, my friend Abul Hasan,<sup>64</sup> what kept you back from joining us?" 'Ali replied: "I was busy collecting the sacred writings as the Prophet charged me."<sup>65</sup> Now my dear Sir, you are a fair-minded man, just think what that means. "He was collecting the sacred writings." And you know that Hajjaj (the) son of Yusuf<sup>66</sup> also collected the sacred writings, but omitted many of them. My friend, be not deceived, God's word is not made up in that way, nor can you drop parts of it. I am simply narrating the facts, there is no denying them. We have them on the best authority, from sources the veracity of which it is impossible to dispute.

(CP) From the same authorities we learn that the original copy of the Qur'an was that which was held by the Quraysh. At a later period during his Caliphate, 'Ali took possession of it lest it should be tampered with. There you have the Qur'an in its purity, modelled after the precepts of the gospel as taught by Nestorius, who by the way was known among his friends sometimes as Gabriel and sometimes as "the faithful spirit."<sup>67</sup> But to return, when 'Ali, still paying homage to Abu Bakr, confessed that he was collecting the sacred writings, they replied: "You have some passages, we have others, why should not the sacred book be compiled?" So they united their efforts and put together the fragments which had been preserved in various quarters, e.g., the Sura Barat, which they wrote down from the Arabs of the desert, and other portions gathered from scattered tribes, as well as what they found written on white stones and the leaves of palm trees, on shoulder

bones and so forth. They did not combine these in a single volume, but wrote them on loose leaves and rolls, after the manner and at the instigation of the Jews. Thus it came about that different texts were in use. Some read the text of 'Ali, and to this day they swear by him. Others read the version whose origin we have just described.<sup>68</sup> Others read according to the text of the Arabs who came from the desert saying: "We to have a verse more or less, and someone wrote it down, without inquiry as to its history or authority. A select circle read the Qur'an of Ibn Mas'ud."<sup>69</sup> You remember your master's words: "If you wish to read the Qur'an pure and undefiled, as it came from heaven, read the Qur'an of Ibn Umm Mahad."<sup>70</sup> He himself perused it every year and in the year of his death he read it over twice. Some read the Qur'an of Ubayy b. Ka'b, as it is said: "Ubayy is the best reader<sup>71</sup> of you all." The Qur'an of Ubayy and that of Ibn Mas'ud very nearly correspond. The result was that in the Caliphate of 'Uthman it was discovered that there was no consent as to the true text. Meantime 'Ali was conspiring against 'Uthman and aiming at his overthrow. Undoubtedly it was his purpose to kill him. One man, then, read one version of the Qur'an, his neighbor another, and differed. One man said to his neighbor: "My text is better than yours," while his neighbor defended his own. So additions and losses came about and falsification of the text. 'Uthman was told that various versions were in use, that the text was being tampered with, and that strife, with all the mischief of party spirit, was being engendered. They said: "We do not believe that matters can continue as they are, it is an affair of urgency; they are slaying one another, the sacred book is corrupted, a second apostasy is imminent."<sup>72</sup> So 'Uthman sent and gathered all the leaves he could secure and the various scraps, as well as the original text. They did not interfere with the manuscript in the hands of 'Ali, nor with those who adhered to him. The new rescension did not affect them. Ubayy (the) son of Ka'b was dead before it was made, while Ibn Mas'ud refused to give up his copy of the Qur'an, so they drove him from his post in Kufa, and appointed Abu Musa as governor in his place.<sup>73</sup> The next step was to commission Zayd (the) son of Thabit, one of the Helpers, and 'Abdullah (the) son of Abbas (but some say Muhammad, son of Abu Bakr) to carry through the enterprise, compiling the Qur'an and rejecting what was corrupt in the text. These two

men were both young, but they were told that if they disagreed on any point as to a letter of a word, they must render it according to the dialect of the Quraysh.<sup>74</sup> Naturally they differed on quite a number of points, e.g., the word "tabut" which Zayd pronounced "tabuh," while the son of Abbas pronounced it "tabut"; so they adopted the form in use among the Quraysh, and so on other occasions. When the revision had been completed according to the various manuscripts, four copies were made in large text, one of which was sent to Mecca, a second remained in Medina, a third was sent to Syria and is today in Malatya. The copy in Mecca remained there to the days of Abu Saraya when in the year 200 A.H. occurred the last siege of Mecca.<sup>75</sup> Rumor says that Abu Saraya did not carry it away from the siege, but that it perished in the fire. The copy at Medina was lost during the reign of terror in the days of Yazid. A fourth copy was placed at Kufa, which was then the capital of Islam and the center of the Refugees and friends of the Prophet. This copy is said to be still in existence, but that is not so; it was lost in the days of Mukhtar.<sup>76</sup> Next 'Uthman gave directions that the leaves and sheets of the Qur'an should be gathered in from the provinces. He ordered his agents to collect all that they could lay their hands on and destroy them<sup>77</sup> till it should be certain that not a sheet remained in the possession of any private individual. Heavy penalties were threatened against the disobedient. All the leaves they could secure were shredded and boiled in vinegar till they were sodden, nothing remained, not even the smallest fragment that could be deciphered. It is said that the Sura Nur was originally longer than the Sura Baqara, and that the Sura Ahzab in its present form is curtailed<sup>78</sup> and incomplete. In the same way they say that the Sura Barat was not originally separated from the Sura Anfal, that they were not distinguished from each other by so much as the usual heading: IN THE NAME OF GOD: THE MERCIFUL. So of the two final suras which were included in his revision,<sup>79</sup> Ibn Mas'ud said: "Add not to it what is not in it."<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, 'Umar speaking from the pulpit said: "Let no man say that the verse about stoning is not in the sacred book, for I have myself read it. The man and woman who have committed adultery, stone them both. And if it were not that men would say that 'Umar had added to the Qur'an what was not in it, I would restore it with my own hands"<sup>81</sup> In another address he said: "I do not know how

anyone can say that the ordinance of al-Mut'a is not in God's word; we have ourselves read it there, but it dropped out.<sup>82</sup> God will not reward with blessing him who has omitted it. It was committed to him as a charge, but he was not faithful to the trust nor loyal to God and His Prophet." Much that had been added to the Qur'an was dropped,<sup>83</sup> and so again 'Umar says: "God deals kindly with man and has sent Muhammad with an easy religion."<sup>84</sup> Ubai b. Ka'ab said that there are two suras which they used to recite (he was speaking of the first recension and did not refer to the latter) these were al-Kanut and al-Witr, beginning with the words: "O God we ask Thy help, we invoke Thy pardon and guidance, we trust in Thee and commit ourselves to Thee."<sup>85</sup> — and so on to the end of al-Witr. And so with al-Mut'a, which 'Ali caused to be dropped.<sup>86</sup> It is said that when he heard a man reciting it in his time, he had him scourged with whips and commanded men not to read it. This was one of the things for which 'Aisha reproached him on the Day of the Camel. Among other things she said that 'Ali scourged men and beat them because of it, and altered and falsified it.<sup>87</sup>

(CQ) The copy of 'Abdullah (the) son of Mas'ud remained in his own hands and was bequeathed as a heirloom to the present day.<sup>88</sup> In the same way the copy of 'Ali remains among his own people.<sup>89</sup> Then followed the affair of Hajjaj who would not give up his material but put it together, omitting many things among which they say were verses concerning the sons of Umayya and the sons Abbas with names mentioned. Five copies were made of the version approved by Hajjaj, one of which was sent to Egypt, one to Syria, one to Medina, one to Mecca, one the Kufa and one to Basra. All copies of earlier additions on which he laid his hands he boiled in oil till they were sodden, and so made an end of them, following the example of 'Uthman. You are yourself witness to the truth of this. You have read the Qur'an and know how the material has been put together and the text corrupted, a sure sign that many hands had been busy on it, and that it has suffered additions and losses. Indeed each one wrote and read as he chose, omitting what he did not like. Now by the grace of God, are these what you consider the marks of an inspired book?

(CR) Besides, your master was an Arab by descent, dwelling in the desert, thinking his own thoughts and then throwing them in to verse. With these he betook to the desert-folk and established relations with them, of whom it is witnessed in their own book that "they are an impious and irreligious people."<sup>90</sup> Now then shall we receive the mysteries of God, His the sacred word and the faith as revealed to the Prophet at the hands of such people? You know what happened between 'Ali, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman, how they hated each other and quarrelled and corrupted the text; how each one tried to oppose his neighbor and to refute what he (had) said. Pray, how are we to know which is the true text, and how shall we distinguish it from the false (one)? Hajjaj too tampered with it; you know his methods and how he went to work. How can you appeal to him or cite him as an authority? Why, in every possible way he associated with the Umayyads! And still further the lying Jews had their hand in the pie. Some of them pretended to embrace the faith; but they did so with an intent to corrupt it. They tried to get control of the new movement, simply to wreck it. All this, God help you, must be clear enough, unless ignorance has blinded your mind and darkened your heart. How could it be put more forcibly or stated more frankly? Were it not that you read our sacred books and study them, and that I know the soul of justice that is in you, I would not have put the matter thus before you, perhaps causing you momentary pain, but, as I trust, for your comfort in (the) days to come. For this reason we have allowed ourselves this license. Bear patiently, I beseech you, the little pain inflicted by the physician, that you may enjoy your reward to the full in the relief he brings. We have said nothing more than your own writings allow. We have confirmed nothing on our authority which is not confirmed by the traditions of your own scholars, men of weight among you. We have kept to what is generally accepted and held as a matter of faith on this and other points on their authority. You do not suppose that they favored any particular sect. We have asserted only what they have well established, when we affirm that the Qur'an is loosely put together often without any meaning, and that again and again it contradicts itself. It is well known that those to whose authority we appeal, believed what they had handed down and, were it not that we are unwilling to prolong this discussion, we might enlarge still further

on the contradictions and the divergent readings of the Qur'an and the story of the origin of this strange farrago.

(CS) What ignorance could be more dense than his who appeals to such a book as evidence and proof that its author was a prophet sent by God!<sup>91</sup> Is there anything here parallel to the cleaving of the sea by Moses; the raising of the dead and the cleansing of the lepers by Christ our Lord? This can approve itself only to the incurably ignorant who have never learned to collate and compare. I do not think that anyone of penetration or discrimination could venture to think it, much less defend it. Scarcely could he dream of it unless he were beside himself, out of his senses or weak in intellect. Or will you, in God's name I ask it, make an attempt to defend such a book by force of reason, by subtlety of thought and weight of learning, knowing what you do of its origin and how the authority of its text has been broken down before the inquiry we have instituted? I am accustomed to such studies, versed in textual criticism, and such fictitious narratives and "cooked-up" stories will not pass with me.

(CT) Now tell me about that utterance of your master: "If man or jinn should conspire to produce a book like this, they could not, though they stood shoulder to shoulder." (Qur'an 17:90) Do you affirm that the vocabulary of the Qur'an is specially rich? Our reply is that the Greek language is also rich and so is Zand in Persia and Syria among the people of Edessa and the Syrians, and Hebrew in Jerusalem among the Jews. In fact any language seems richer to than any other to those who can use it only.<sup>92</sup> They have a large vocabulary on which they draw. You may count them as barbarians, but remember, your Arabic rich as it seems to you, is barbarious enough in their ears. So we dismiss your assertion as to the rich vocabulary of the Qur'an. As a matter of fact, he has a rich vocabulary whatever language he uses, who does not need to borrow from other sources in conversation or discourse. But we see that your master had to borrow from other languages, and this though the book claims to be inspired: "We sent him down the Qur'an; it may be he will take heed." (Qur'an 12:2) Others, who were masters of the purest Arabic, eloquent orators and models of style have used it too. Yet he borrows such words as "istab-



rik" (brocade), "sindas" (linen), "abarik" (jars), "namarik" (saddle-cloths), which are all of Persian origin, and "mishkat," an Abyssinian word for "window." There are others of the same kind in his book. Was the Arabic lexicon too confined for his purposes? Was there not wealth in it to make him independent of other languages? Yet you say in was "sent down" from the Lord of the Universe by the hand of Gabriel. Clearly you must impute the defect either to the message or the messenger. If it lay with your master, it must be because he did not know the Arabic equivalent for these words, and therefore could not use them. Yet such words are used by Amru-l Qays, and others of the poets, eloquent orators and writers of former and later days, more in number than I can reckon. They occur in the vocabulary of orators and eloquent men before the coming of your master, more eloquent and refined, more subtle in thought than himself; as he confessed when after an argument he wound up by saying: "They are a disputatious lot." (Qur'an 43:58b) Disputatious they were, but at the same time with a greater power of reasoning and more eloquence than his own. So that at times he attributes their argument to nothing less than sorcery. Well then, if he is responsible for the Qur'an and the barbarous words it contains, there is only one alternative, either Arabic proved too poor for your master's use (though we know that it is the richest of all languages) or these additions must have been imported into the Qur'an by other hands. This is precisely what happened, as we have proved in our review of its history, where we have seen the many different hands at work. But which of these alternative do you prefer? Tell us, for there is no escape from one or the other of them, and you know what is implied in your choice when you have made it.

(CU) If you say there is nothing like the Qur'an in point of style and ornamentation, we reply that the style of our great poets is genuinely poetical, their rhythm is so perfect that, however difficult and subtle the thought, it is never broken at any point. Their diction is pure and chaste and from the choicest Arabic; while the most beautiful ideas are woven together in a way not only perfect in conception but equally perfect in execution. The Qur'an on the other hand, is broken in its style; hybrid in its diction and, while high-sounding, often destitute of meaning. If you protest that it has a very good meaning; we ask you

what far-fetched meaning you have found? Let us have it; expound it to us, gladly will we learn of you. What interpretation have you discovered which fills you with admiration of the new light it brings? Let us see it; educate us into it. What have you to tell us that we do not already know; which we have not already read in some old book from which you are content to borrow? Do we not understand it without your help and claim such a knowledge of it as belongs only to the expert few? Is there in it any wonder or sign transcending human understanding, compelling us to admit your master's claim and accept his teaching as inspired? If there is, point it out.

(CV) Such was the origin of your sacred book, passing current with all of its falsifications and misrepresentations, its eloquent periods, its exquisite style, its choice Arabic. Forsooth: "Nor jinn could produce the like," but then it came to an illiterate race, Nabateans,<sup>93</sup> the off-scouring of the people, great in their own eyes, proud in their own esteem. If I misrepresent the matter, inquire for yourself, you can easily verify the story from its beginning. Thus were others who did as your master did, Musaylima the Manifite, Alswad and Tahayla. When I read the Qur'an of Musaylima I have to admit that, if he had your master's backing, his revolt might have proved much more serious than it did. But these men lacked the support at your master's command.<sup>94</sup>

(CW) So far as I can judge, you are driven to stake your case on this argument from style. You boast of it, and treat it as if it were private property; an ambush behind which you may safely shelter. As a matter of fact, it is common rather than private property. We share and share alike here. You have nothing to advance which we cannot advance you, nor can your knowledge stand you in stead against us. You are good enough to confess that we belong to an Arab tribe which can trace its descent by its language to Yored (the) son of Ishab, (the) son of Nabat, (the) son of Ishmael, our great ancestor, but the argument is futile, the claim is not valid. The Nabateans might claim the same, yet they are the off-scouring of all the people, barbarians, indolent and imbecile, without knowledge of the Arabic language, which is still a foreign tongue to them. When they meet anything in it they did not understand, they credit it at once and accept it in their barbarous

simplicity. The pure Arabs of the desert have a common tongue, their dialect is one and they all understand each other. As for the townsfolk, who grow up in the streets and mix with alien races, on my honor, they do little else but corrupt each other by intercourse and interchange of customs. To mention language then, is no argument, nor is there anything there to which you can appeal. If you say that the Quraysh are the most eloquent of the Arabs, the knights errant of eloquence, we oppose to you a fact, the truth of which you can scarcely deny or dispute, viz. that Muleika (the) daughter of Naaman, the Kindi, when Muhammad asked for her hand, and she married him, she said: "Shall Muleika marry a trader?"<sup>95</sup> We both know that the Quraysh are the merchants and traders of the Arabs, while the Kindi were a royal race, who ruled the rest of the Arabs. I do not mention this fact to boast of the nobility of my own birth, or to establish my descent from a pure Arab stock, but to remind you that the Kindi were the most powerful and literary tribe in the kingdom, distinguished for their eloquence and poetry, leaders of armies, owners of cattle, distinguished for their virtue, ever the barbarians of Rome and Persia sought relationship with them, and boasted that their daughters were at our service; a boast such as only the brutish could make. No doubt the Quraysh also excelled in point of influence and natural gifts, particularly the Hashimites, as no one can deny who is not blinded by envy. And so, in my judgment, are all the Arabs and the rest of the nomads; high spirited, excelling in point of virtue and natural gifts, as God has endowed them beyond other barbarians.

(CX) If you argue that the Arabic language is enshrined in its poetry, and its vocabulary limited thereby, so that such a word as "namarik" (saddle cloth) is not found in it, we grant you that it is so. But the argument hardly bears on the matter in hand. It cannot escape the notice of a student that that word is foreign, and so the argument based on it, is refuted and fails to win the sanction of a thoughtful man. The passionate is seldom pure and what is irregular and foreign in origin usually affects the poetic form. When we compare such poetry to other poetry in pure Arabic of the desert, we do not find any great differences between them. It follows the same lines and pursues the same course. And as this is so, we conclude that the poetic form

of Arabic literature, and the necessary limitations it involves, are not arguments in connection with the sacred books, at least if we have any desire to argue reasonably. It does not follow that a passage was originally poetic in form, because it resembles old Arabic poetry. Corruptions and alterations have taken place, additions and losses; and the poetic form is never an argument with a man of insight. It is not a matter on which one may dogmatize; indeed, by the erudite and philosophic, it is regarded as a trifle which pleases the foolish. And though (we) as Arabs by descent give preference without hesitation to the poetic form and affirm its superior beauty and celebrate its praises, knowing well the refining influence, exquisite art, the thrilling interest of our Arabic literature, still, taking everything into consideration, we cannot doubt that it is often corrupt. Much has entered into it which does not belong to it. It is a kind of speech that is not to be taken seriously! Widely circulated, its concepts are those of shallow minds, the common property of all. If it suits you, there it is! It is used by those who desire to cultivate the society of the great, and aspire, in this way to establish relationships with them.<sup>96</sup> In this way it is possible that corruptions entered, alterations, additions and losses. And, in fine, poetry is no argument at all in dealing with the divine mysteries, unless it be contrary to reason and defective in composition. In God's name, do not wrong your reason and rob it of its rightful sway over party feeling. That is too much the way with the herd, people wanting in intellect, who are not educated to read books, or versed in the history of earlier times.

(CY) Of this type were some of the rudest of the Arabs, who used to eat lizards and chameleons, reared in stint and wretchedness among the desert tribes. The hot wind beat on them and the desert blasts. They were in the extreme of hunger, thirst and nakedness. Sometimes a great longing seized them when they heard of rivers of wine and milk and all kinds of fruits, supplies of flesh and other dainties, of couches of satin, silk and brocade, free intercourse with women whose eyes gleamed like pearls, while boys and girls served them and they drank spring water and sheltered beneath trees.<sup>97</sup> The vision of such happiness stirred their hearts. Some of them had glimpses of it when, in their march, they passed through Persia. It winged their feet with joy;

they deemed that already they saw realized before them the dream of former years. Their spirits rose. To obtain all this, they fought the Persians and beat them too. You remember how, in the course of a long battle, when they obtained possession of stores and confections from the Persian larders, they said to one another: "By God, if there were no heaven to fight for, we might well fight for this."<sup>98</sup> But the people they fought with were corrupt and abominable; stubborn rebels against the Most High, therefore He, who is Great and Glorious, set over them a people of whom they had never heard. They were slain or driven into exile, because they had shed innocent blood; the judgment of heaven lay on them. Thus it fared with the race of evildoers, the one scourged the other for his sins.

(CZ) Such too were the Nabatean, a people of no resources, reared in wretchedness, growing up like cattle in herds; such too the peasants with no education or refinement. Sometimes they speak Arabic and talk with the utmost freedom; but at heart they are mongrel still. They lord it over their fellows; some of them profess Islam by word of mouth, but in heart they are heretics; either Jews or Magians. They do not know who made them; if you put before them the difference between themselves and their Maker, they cannot understand, nor have they any moral standards so as to distinguish (them). They are like cattle, like the beasts that creep on their faces; they are moved by every breath of wind. They do not apprehend the truth which they have embraced, as distinguished from that which they abjure. And so with the idolaters, the Magians and the Jews, with their meanness and profanity. Their ambition is to establish an empire; to lord it both in word and deed over races that were born to rule, the children of the free-born, better men than themselves, ennobled by religion, education and humanity. They are restrained from the commission of crime and the indulgence of lust which God has forbidden only by the principles of the Christian religion. These men will believe and embrace your faith for the sake of the license it offers them. So too those who allowed themselves liberty in low and sensual pleasures, inclining to the world with its deceptions and delights, seeking a little short-lived glory, grasped only to be lost, while they trust from them a great and abiding prize, that good part which shall never be taken from them. These

also are to be reckoned with among the converts to your faith; which they are very pleased to accept as a rope or ladder by which they may lift themselves within the reach of objects which they desire. For indeed I know of no more subtle master under heaven than is religion's self,<sup>99</sup> whether it be to turn from the world or to it. No doubt to rule the world is to possess it, an open way to the commission of many and daring crimes. Finally, among your converts you may reckon those who make merchandise of religion, seeking thereby to gain an adequate livelihood and coveting that freedom from earthly cares which it insures.

(DA) In God's name, do you not see, has it not been told you? No man with religious instincts, no man of science, knowledge or administrative power, no one who has read the books, mastered the facts or grasped truths, no man who loves closely reasoned philosophic statements, was ever led to embrace any other religion but Christianity. With that exception, no man ever left his own religion, except it were for worldly reasons and under pressure of necessity, as e.g., that within the fold and empire of Islam, he may safely indulge in these crimes and sordid passions on which his heart is set. From these the Christian religion debar him; it denies him all liberty in that direction. Those who were denied the powers and practice they desired, embraced a religion which made it easy to do as they pleased, and offered under aegis of your empire, perfect security in return for outward profession. And that, God be gracious to you, is the powerful argument, with those whom you see professing your faith and accepting its doctrine. The majority of them believe the opposite to what they outwardly profess. Some of them go the length of slandering your master, questioning the dignity of his descent; some curse him.<sup>100</sup> Some of them assert that another<sup>101</sup> than your master deserved to rule, and that it was by a mistake he came to power. Some say that the Holy Spirit is divided into three parts, one of which rested on Jesus, one on Moses and one on another whom I forbear to mention;<sup>102</sup> your master had no share in it. But these surely are the most ignorant of mankind. They profess Islam and boast of it openly that they may lord it over the Christians, men of true heart who are among them as lambs among wolves. Did not our Lord Christ forewarn them and foretell how it should fare with

these?

(DB) But I must not lengthen out my description of the views of your friends. God forbid they should be our friends; let me rather say, the devil's friends; his company and crew. Nor will I say more of what they say; it is enough to make a mountain blush. They circulate lies, first about God and then about your master whom they slander. God is not responsible for this, your master is blameless of it all. What say you to this? They say that when they desire to establish a point, they invent a story to make it good; or what do you say of those who report such a story as this, that God sent to Abu Bakr saying: "O Abu Bakr, I am well pleased with you, I hope you are with me"?<sup>103</sup> You surely do not need more to refute such follies as this which they invent about God. By my life, your master spoke truly when he said: "There never was a prophet whom his people did not misrepresent, and my people will misrepresent me also."<sup>104</sup> But I never knew any people (who) so misrepresent their own prophets, as the Jews do, nor do I know what to say about their lies.<sup>105</sup>

(DC) In many points their teaching conflicts with the truth, e.g., in regard to the call to prayer, funeral rites, confession and supplication, the fast, the takbhir, divergent texts, postponements,<sup>106</sup> judicial decisions and so forth; the story is too long to tell. Yet unless I knew you were well versed in such matters and in the criticism to which they have given rise (and) able to judge for yourself of their defects, I must have gone carefully into the matter, but I am well aware you understand it already. I draw a veil therefore over such questions as government, outward professions of religion and the name of Islam, the use of it merely as an ornament, the marvels they believe, the falsehoods they circulate and finally the hypocrisy which underlies all this, the professions that they are pure in heart and upright in purpose, while they play fast and loose with God and His prophets. When they say such things, how is it that the whirlwind does not sweep them away and the heavens fall on them in indignation and vengeance? They talk loftily, yet He does not cease to be long-suffering toward them and patient. For indeed God, whose name is Great, fears not the future. If they will only return to Him before the day when all secrets are revealed,

He will be gracious to them. God forbid that we should be among the evildoers.

(DD) Now as to what you say that those words are written upon the Throne: "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His prophet,"<sup>107</sup> I wonder how, with your powers of reasoning and insight, you can allow such an idea to gain possession of your mind. How did you ever conceive it, that you should insinuate it to one like me, knowing as you do the strength of my convictions and the energy of my faith? On this point I reply that you deceive yourself and degrade your intellect. Why, if you believe that you can leave nothing for the anthropomorphism of the Jews. They describe God as seated on the Throne. Not satisfied with seating Him there, you must write His name upon the Throne along with that of a mortal. I should like to know, did He write it there Himself, or was it written for Him? And why did He write it there? For Himself, lest He should forget His own name, or that the angels might know it? But the angels knew it. When He proposed to create the light, when He said: "Let there be light," (Gen. 1:3a) and light was, then the angels praised Him saying: "Blessed be the Author of light."<sup>108</sup> They knew that they were created, and that there was a Creator, and this knowledge in them was constant and unintermittent. He had made them and they had no need that there should be a writing for their eyes to see, something to remind them lest they should forget the name of their Maker. They praised His name saying, "Holy," and that unweariedly; with every breath that is within them they fulfilled His behests. If, on the other hand, it was written for man's learning, they have little profit of it, for they cannot see the Throne, nor read what is written there. You cannot well suppose that it was written there for man that they might read it on the Resurrection Day and that it remains there as proof that evidence quite uncontrovertible, against us; for you know that on the Resurrection Day, all men shall have a perfect knowledge given them of their Maker. All doubts shall be dispelled, mere opinions shall yield to secure convictions. On that day when every man shall have his reward which he has earned and be absorbed in Himself. It is vainly spoken, it is a foolish idea, that these words were written on the Throne of God. As a matter of fact, I do not find any of your own people who



agree with you on this point, They all, and specially those who know most, treat it as a foolish idea. They say that it is absurd, and that no such thing is mentioned in the Qur'an. I should like to know where you get the idea. God be merciful to you, you have taken it from some ugly story of the Jews, and they have much else of the same kind, which they have insinuated amongst you. Such is their skill, their delicate finesse, with such arts do they achieve their evil purpose and sow tares among men. When you have grasped the truth you will see quite clearly that the thing is impossible. God in His providence does not do the absurd or meaningless. Besides, I have found in your gatherings that the man will rise to preach and begin his sermon with an invocation. He seems to think that words can go no further than this. "O Lord, bless Muhammad and his seed, as Thou didst bless Abraham and his seed." So you think you have done your utmost for him, when you pray that he may be blessed like the people of Abraham. But this is sheer profanity that a man, whose name is written on the Throne of God in letters of light conjointly with that of God, who is Great and Glorious, a man, but for whom (at least, so you say!) no man, nor even the world itself had been created, should be associated in your prayers with one of the children of Abraham whose name I cannot bring myself to mention in this place.<sup>109</sup> Yet the Qur'an, which is inspired, confirms this witness saying: "O children of Israel, remember My kindness which I did to you, how I preferred you before all My creatures." (Qur'an 2:44,116) This passage compels you to admit that the children of Israel were favored beyond yourselves and any others you can name in point of virtue. You understand that in dealing with such profanities, I am aiming at those confounded Jews. I do not suppose that a sensible Muslim will be convinced by such things. Our answer to you is what we have already written. So far as it is possible for words to go, we have endeavored to make justice arbiter in our discussion with you. We have avoided any tendency toward arrogance and pride, nor have we made any boast of birth. For surely, when we come to know ourselves, we see that no one has any advantage over another in that respect. Do we not all return to one father and one mother? Are we not all made of common clay? One flesh is not fairer than another, nor is one blood better than another. Any preference or privilege there is must be in point of understanding and knowl-

edge. That, I think, has been well expressed thus: "A man's worth is as he thinks and as he does."<sup>110</sup> I greatly admire that saying, and have embodied it in this passage though perhaps it is not germane to the matter we are discussing. I am anxious that no one who reads what I have written with any care or attention, even if he reads it with that evil eye which is the fruit of prejudice and ignorance, should have a chance, however mentally weak and infirm he may be, to suppose that I do not know what is due to you, the people of the house,<sup>111</sup> or that I do not accept my obligations or realize what they are; for indeed I do. But I apply here the dictum of one of your learned men who said: "If your answer is lacking in the proper place, you stammer and outrage reason."<sup>112</sup> Now I do not wish even to appear to outrage reason. I therefore pay no regard to the criticism of such ill-disposed persons, but put their words behind my back, and do not consider them in light save as my enemies. Much less do I intend to take counsel with them.<sup>113</sup>

#### IV. (Islamic) Customs

(DE) But now, when you summon me to the five prayers, and to the fast of the month of Ramadan, my answer is your own confession; the words you have written as to the prayers which we Christian offer, the fasts we hold and the zeal with which we prosecute them. You have been present and taken part in these sacred offices and now you summon me to what are fictitious and counterfeit offices. Be content with what you have seen, and let this be my answer to you.

(DF) But then you invite me to prostrations, purifications and to circumcision, with a view to establish the ordinances of our father Abraham. Here I answer you in the words of Christ our Lord. When the Jews asked Him why do not Your disciples wash their hands before meat, He replied: "What profit is there to a dark house, if a lamp is burning outside? So it is the inner life of the heart that must be cleansed from impure thoughts and sinful passions. As for the surface of the body, what is the use of laboriously cleansing it? Hypocrites pay attention to the surface which is like a grave with (a) marble front,

enshrining the corruption of death, as ye do when ye wash your bodies while your hearts are defiled by sin.” (Luke 11:38-40, extreme paraphrase) What is the use of washing the hands or feet or standing to pray,<sup>114</sup> while the heart is fixed on slaughter and plunder? See how our Lord replies: “It is needful that man first of all have his heart cleansed; when this is pure and his conscience void of offence, then let him wash his body in water.” (Paraphrase) May God give you understanding of this word, apply your reason to the consideration of it.

(DG) As to circumcision, you must understand its history before you encourage men to the practice of it. If they quote the example of Abraham, then I say that God, when about to bring the children of Israel, Abraham’s seed, into the land of Egypt, knowing well how, in the bitterness of their affliction they might be tempted to uncleanness such as He had forbidden, and to the immoralities of the land, set His seal on them, so that if any of them should incline to commit uncleanness with any of the women of the land, she might see this mark of circumcision on his body, and refuse to gratify him. He sealed them with a sign for this purpose.<sup>115</sup> But why do you summon men to circumcision, when you know that your master was not circumcised? So say your own friends, on the authority of the learned.<sup>116</sup> They say that he was not circumcised at all, and compare him in this respect to Abraham, Seth and Noah. If you affirm that Christ was circumcised, we reply that He was circumcised to confirm the precepts of the Law, lest it should be thought that He despised it or sought to discredit it. Whereas He confirmed it when He said: “I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill.” (Matt. 5:17) So too said the apostle Paul: “If ye are circumcised, it shall profit you nothing, nor shall uncircumcision be any loss, so long as you have true faith in God and a pure heart.” (Gal. 5:6, paraphrase) Were it otherwise, it would be necessary to go the whole length, to offer sacrifices, to keep the Sabbath, to hold the Passover so as to conform to all the precepts of the Law, because forsooth, Christ kept them.<sup>117</sup> But He did this for our relief. He fulfilled the Law perfectly and to the last letter that He might exempt us from the burden of its fulfillment.<sup>118</sup> In place of it He has given us good laws, divine and spiritual precepts, imposing these instead of those of which God said: “I have given you precepts which are not

good, and which ye cannot bear.” (Ezek. 20:25, paraphrase) Now if you do us justice, you must confess that circumcision is not imposed on us by way of necessity, for the Qur’an, to which you appeal as your directory, affirms that it is not binding but rather that “he who approves it with his heart honors it, and he who dislikes it, rejects it.”<sup>119</sup> Those of your own friends who are circumcised and multiply their ablutions do this not because it is imposed as a binding duty, leaving them no choice but to comply, but rather because it is a common custom of their time, and that they may conform to a current usage. Some of our own customs touching personal cleanliness require the same explanation...<sup>120</sup> It is not otherwise if we refuse to eat the flesh of swine or of the ass or of the camel. This is not forbidden, for God has not made anything unclean. He Himself has said: “God saw all that He had made, and behold it was very good.” (Gen. 1:31a) Shall I venture to say of anything He has made, that it is unclean or forbidden? If I did, I should be fighting against God; far be it from me to do so. Anything He has made, I, you, any man may enjoy with perfect freedom, so long as we receive it in faith, and find it agreeable to our nature. There is only one exception, viz., the eating of blood, and of the diseased and all things offered to idols. When anything was forbidden of God, it was by special decree. Now there was a good reason why the children of Israel were forbidden to eat the flesh of swine. Let me point it out. When they dwelt in Egypt, they saw the Egyptians serving idols in the form of birds and oxen. Do you remember what Moses said to Pharaoh: “We may not offer to God in the presence of the Egyptians. If we offer in sacrifice what they worship and hold as divine, what should hinder them from stoning us? Have we not offered their gods, and made sacrifices of them?” (non-Biblical) Here is proof that the Egyptians worshipped birds, oxen and rams. Another passage points in the same direction. When Moses tarried on the mount, the children of Israel came to Aaron saying, “Make us gods that we may serve them, for as for Moses, we know not what has become of him.” (Ex. 32:1b, paraphrase) So he made an idol in the shape of a calf, after the fashion they had seen in Egypt. Well then, the Egyptians worshipped animals after this kind and offered in sacrifice to them others (swine, asses, camels and other animals), which they regarded as a lower order. Therefore it was that God, in giving the Law of sacri-

fice, commanded the people to offer birds, oxen, sheep and nothing else; swine, asses and camels were forbidden, that the people might reckon them as unclean and not eat of them, much less offer them in sacrifice. He taught them, on the other hand, to abstain from the worship of swine, camels and asses and so forth, and to shun them as unclean and impure. These they must not even sacrifice, and on no account must they worship any. They were not forbidden to eat the flesh of birds, oxen, swine, camels or asses, but they were forbidden to worship them, or adopt them as gods instead of Him who made all. So long as we do not worship them, so long as we do not regard them as divine, or associate them with the worship of idols, they are neither taboo nor impure. We may eat of the flesh of birds, oxen, sheep, swine and camels. These are food given of God, and it is good that a man should eat freely, so long as he eats in faith and finds it agreeable to his nature. If you see a brother eat any or all of these, impelled by appetite, do not blame him. Your master, while permitting the use of camel flesh for food, or with that of the ass or horse for sacrifice, makes an exception in the case of swine's flesh. But for that we have to thank 'Abdullah (the) son of Salam and Wahb (the) son of Manba, both Jews, who would have wrecked the world and ruined the whole of the race if they could. Here your master is not to blame.<sup>121</sup>

(DH) We must touch on the circumcision of women,<sup>122</sup> the history of which is follows: Sarah (the) wife of Abraham, when she found that her husband was smitten with the charms of Hagar her maid, gave her to him, and allowed their intercourse. Then jealousy, so natural to woman, came over her and she humbled her maid and did her best to disfigure her and dishonor that of her which she supposed Abraham most admired. She did this to put disgrace on Hagar and to get satisfaction out of her. Then Hagar came to the country of Tehama, and when Ishmael was married, she took his wife in hand and humbled her, lest she should insult her on this account.<sup>123</sup> She made her suppose that this was customary in Abraham's house. Whenever a child was born to Ishmael, he took the male children in hand, and his wife took the females and circumcised them, and this sign remains, so that it corresponds with the circumcision of the males. Proof of this is that the custom is still practiced by the Arabs, though there is no mention

of it in any of the inspired books. Unless, in my judgment, religion had been above such considerations of a physical and temporary nature, I might have been silent on these matters, being myself a son of Ishmael. But I am a Christian, and in that religion I find a precedence which to me is all that pride of birth can be. I am proud of it and boast of it and pray heaven even I may die in it. Indeed all the hope I cherish is that by God's grace and goodness and the abundance of His mercy, I may escape the punishment of hell fire.

(DI) Next you summon me to take the pilgrimage to Mecca, to throw stones at the devil and to cry "Labbaik," and to kiss the Black Stone. I ask you what can you mean? This is mere drivel. You talk like a child, you talk like a fool; you babble when you should reason. Do we not know the whole story of the temple in Mecca, how it originated and grew to its present sanctity? To begin with, the Brahmans and fire-worshippers in India do the same. They call it devotion to the idols, and observe the same rites as the Muslims today. They shave, they strip themselves, they put on the pilgrim dress. Then they go round their temples. You have not improved or altered the ceremony by a jot. Only you do it once in the year at different seasons, while they do it twice in the year at appointed seasons. They do it at first when the sun enters Aries, and again when he enters Libra. That is, they do it at the beginning of summer and winter. They sacrifice early in the morning, just as you do, and perform the same devotions. Such is the origin of your pilgrimage with its stations and all its marvelous rites. You know that the Arabs performed this devotion long ago and ever since the house was built. When your master instituted Islam, he altered nothing, save that because of the toil and the length of the journey, he imposed one pilgrimage in the year<sup>124</sup> and omitted the profanities which were mingled with the prayers of invocation. Otherwise it remained as it was, the same as the devotions paid to their idols by Brahmans and fire worshippers in the cities of India. I quite approve that saying of 'Umar when he fell before the Black Stone and the station<sup>125</sup> of Abraham, "By God," said he, "I know that you are both stones, you cannot help or hurt, yet I have seen the Apostle of God kiss you, and I will do the same."<sup>126</sup> Whether the authorities from whom I quote, and who were no doubt honorable men, coined this

story or not, I do not much care. What they said about the stone is certainly true.<sup>127</sup> If 'Umar said it, he said the truth. If he did not, he might have said it without going beyond the bounds of truth. As to those who are inclined to rebuke their neighbors when they shave their heads and race round, behaving like men demented and as if they were possessed by Satan, we, while allowing such criticism, might excuse you to them on the ground that the thing is done as an act of worship. But they reply that God is not worshipped by His creatures with degrading and immoral rites, revolting to the reason, but by rites which the understanding approves, i.e., according to those simple rites which God has Himself imposed on His servants. They say that men ought to worship Him, and draw near to him thus; otherwise, why do they condemn the Magians as immoral when they marry their mothers and daughters and practice their detestable rites? If these things are horrid in Magian worship, why do you in turn practice shaving and (kissing?). Why do you fling stones and race around?

(DJ) Still more dreadful than all this is the custom that a woman, when divorced, should have intercourse with another man who is known as her *mustahil*. He tastes her sweetness and thereafter she returns to her husband.<sup>128</sup> Not improbably she has children, noble men and fine women with houses of their own. Her husband may be a man of exalted position and highest rank. That such an indignity as I have hinted at should be inflicted on one who is reckoned as refined by her people, a woman of honor and possibly of wealth, surely this is more detestable and immoral than the doing of those abhorred Magians! Do you not see that you summon me to a practice which even beasts abhor? I am quite sure that if they had the power to speak, they would pronounce very strongly on such a practice as immoral and detestable. They would instruct us that by our concession to such practices we should be doing violence to reason and nature. May I never be among the evildoers.

(DK) But then you tell us that you visit the shrine of the Prophet of God, and present yourself at these "wonderful and blessed places." In God's name, you do not err in describing them as wonderful places, for what could be more wonderful to anyone with understanding than a

place where such practices are allowed? But you call them “blessed” as well as wonderful places. Tell us then what you find there in the way of blessing. What sick man has gone there and returned healed of his disease? What palsied man has been carried there, and returned free of his palsy? What leper has visited them and found his leprosy leave him? What blind man have you brought thither and restored to him his sight? What person possessed of the devil has been led there, and been made sound in body and mind? I do not believe that you, even you alone, will venture to say that there is any such power in the place, much less can you point to one who has been thus restored. There is not one who holds your faith and worships the Prophet in whose honor you make this pilgrimage; there is not one man on the face of the globe, roofed in by the encircling dome of heaven, who could make such a claim from his own experience, unless indeed he professes the Christian faith. You cannot dispute the point I make, and what sense is there in talking of blessing and sanctity and associating such ideas with this place? We know that blessing rests where God is really worshipped, in the dwellings of the righteous, of holy men and saints who have devoted themselves to His service day and night, never ceasing from their toils. These men have trampled the world under their feet, and are free from it. They have put from their hearts the desire of it and all anxiety about its affairs. They are worthy that blessing should descend from God on them and on their dwellings, worthy that He should minister healing and help through their hands. What they ask of Him He bestows, when they intercede, He accepts their intercession, and answers their prayers. For His promises never fail, nor does help perish from His hand for those who do well. “The righteous seek and find,” (Luke 11:9a, paraphrase) “The Lord is nigh unto them that call on Him; He fulfills the desire of those who fear Him.” (Ps. 145; 18a, 19a) “Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find.” (Luke 11:9a) Now God has kept His promises. He has made good the light and leading He sent us in His Gospel. There has never been one burdened, afflicted or (of) wounded soul, one sick man or suppliant asking in good faith and with a steadfast mind, in Christ’s name, whose burden of sorrow and grief has not been dispelled. Comfort and healing have come down to him from God, through His saints. Blessing has come in answer to the prayers of His servants, to



those who prayed in Christ's name, and sought help from whence help comes. I refer of course to the shrines maintained in the churches and all places where they celebrate the name of Christ, the Savior of the world, and where the monks find an asylum. These are rich in blessings so as to overflow on all who come about them to pray with a pure mind and a perfect heart. There you may cultivate the acquaintance of these holy men, and receive alms of what they have to give. Freely they give, and ask no equivalent from anyone, nor any regard, no recompense is sought, none is received. For Christ has said: "Freely you have received, freely give." (Matt. 10:8b) These men follow in His steps, and He, our Shepherd, hears their prayers and sends down healing and mercy by their hands on all men. If any are excepted, it is those only who reject the truth. They suffer loss because they turn aside and pervert the fear of God. They suffer loss, yet if they return in, He welcomes them as a father the son whom he loves. So it was with the prodigal son who wandered from his father's house till chiding his own folly he returned as penitent, sorry for his sin and acknowledging the debt too long unpaid. He confessed his follies and purged himself of his guilt. And then all the pity in his father's heart went out to meet him. He welcomed him right heartily and rejoiced to have him back, accepting his apologies and gladly restoring him in his old place at home. He did not chasten him, but rather embraced him,<sup>129</sup> in all the folly and ignorance of his youth. He said, "See thou wert dead, but art alive; thou wert lost, but art found; wert led astray, and hast found the right road." (Luke 15:24, paraphrase)

(DL) Distinguish then, by the help of God, the things which differ. Do not yield to that prejudice which is engendered by the malice of Satan, that foe of our race. Would you have me give up what I have received of this distinguishing grace so great, so glorious that even angels might envy us, much more man, and that grace which the prophets and the holy men of old hoped for, and which their hearts desired? Would you have me accept in its place the offer you have made me? My whole nature revolts from such a course; my understanding rejects it, my reason rebukes it and bids me shun it. If I were to act so, I could no longer reckon myself an honorable man.

(DM) Then you say, "I summon you to the ways of God," by which you mean raiding those who differ from you, smiting the idolaters with the edge of the sword and plundering them, till they accept the true religion and testify that there is no God but one and that Muhammad is His Prophet. I ask you in the name of God, the judge of all, do you not rather mean that you summon me to the ways of Satan, from whom God has taken His mercy, who exhausted his spleen on the race of men, infusing them with his own wrath and filling them with rage and passion? He has made them his weapons; they are his friends moved at his will, by whom he works his pleasures. How am I to reconcile such a summons with your own statements? For the scriptures, which you hold to be inspired, flatly contradict you. You read there: "Given people among you who teach what is good, practice kindness and cease from evil, they shall prosper." (Qur'an 3:100) Then you read: "It is not your business to guide them, God shall guide whom He will." (Qur'an 2:274) "If the Lord had willed it, all men on earth had believed as one man. Will you compel man to believe? What is there to induce them to believe, save the prompting of God?" (Qur'an 10:99,100a) Do you not see how this contradicts the principles you have laid down? Then you read: "Say, O men, the truth is come to you from your Lord; and who led you into it? He that is rightly directed, is rightly directed for himself, and he who strays must bear the consequences. I am not your guardian. Follow what is revealed to you, and wait till God give the decision. He is the best judge." (Qur'an 10:108-109) "If the Lord had willed, He had made all men one people. And they shall not cease to disagree; save those only on whom the Lord had mercy. To this end hath He made them." (Qur'an 11:120a) So it is written, confirming the word of your master that he was sent of God on a mission of mercy to all men,<sup>130</sup> but what mercy is there in killing and plundering? I have often heard the Jews affirm that the Qur'an is self contradictory. I will not use such language of your sacred books, but I must say that three quotations are absolutely at variance with your own statements. First of all you issue this most urgent summons, and then you turn and contradict your own words. Let me put it thus: What are the ways of Satan if they be not slaughter, plunder and thieving? Can you raise any objection to that or dispute it? If you plead that Moses the prophet slew the idolaters of his day,

we reply: Tell us in God's name, what you read in the Law — What of the many wonders and signs Moses wrought that he might convince us that the war he proclaimed was divinely decreed? So with Joshua, who made the sun and moon stand still, that was his sign, a miracle which no one could perform save one of the saints of God. But what sign can your master adduce in proof of the claim he makes? What miracle can you instance wrought by him? How did he undertake to prove the truth of his doctrine or enforce his claim? He plundered the property of man and captured their children; he attacked the saints of God, a people who had no defence except in His name, who kept His laws and humbled their hearts before Him, believing in Christ and truly reverencing Him, men who had been led into the truth so that their faces shone, as they will shine forever and ever in the light of God. Nothing will content you but to describe such conduct as the ways of God. God forbid that such should be His ways, or the ways of His saints. God loves not the deeds of evildoers. And what shall I say of the glaring contradictions when you write: "Let there be no compulsion in religion," (Qur'an 2:257a) and assert that God has said: "Say to those to whom the book has been given, and to the ignorant people: Have ye yet accepted Islam? If they have accepted Islam, they have been rightly guided, but if they turn their backs, it is yours still to deliver the message." (Qur'an 3:19) You say: "If God had willed, those who came after them had not fought among themselves, after proof had come to them. But they differed; some believed, and some rejected. If God had willed it, they had not fought among themselves, but God doth as He pleases." (Qur'an 2:254b) And then again your master, addressing the unbelievers, adds this crowning verse: "You have your own religion, and I have mine." (Qur'an 109:6) Still further he adds: "Do not strive with the People of the Book save in the kindest way." (Qur'an 29:45a) Yet you summon me to smite men with the edge of the sword, to plunder, steal and slay, till they embrace the true faith, whether they will or not. Which of these two statements must I accept, the former or the latter? If I try to compare your utterances, I find that one cancels the other. You have issued a summons, the real nature of which you have not grasped. You do not know which view you yourself hold, and which you repudiate. What you affirm may be what you really deny, and so the whole argument is turned upside down, and that

which you deny becomes that which you really affirm. You do not know what you mean, and of course you cannot maintain it against those who subject you to a rigorous cross examination.

(DN) But enough of this. We have made it plain that you contradict yourself and refute you own statements. You say that your master was sent with a message of mercy and kindness to all men, and that there is no compulsion in matters of religion; and yet you affirm that you will smite men with the sword till they embrace the true faith, willingly or unwillingly. The result is that we cannot feel sure of either of your statements, nor can we assent to either, because we are divided between them, not knowing which of them is inspired and ought to be received. Indeed the conclusion to which we are forced by the argument is, that both alike must be set aside; inasmuch as what you regard as true, by which therefore we ought to be guided, may perchance be untrue and ought to be discredited, as that which is not meant for guidance. In fine, God neither wills or wishes either.

(DO) Have you ever heard or read in any inspired book of anyone but your master who aspired to draw men to his own beliefs against their will, under compulsion, and at the edge of the sword? You know the story of Moses and the signs he wrought. Even the Magians, that abominable lot, tell some idle stories by which they affirm that Zoroaster, when he came to the mount of Silan was inspired of God and summoned Kashtasaf the King and his people, and that they obeyed him when they saw his sorceries, the magic and the conjuring which they took as evidence of supernatural power. They saw that he raised a horse to life after it was dead. Such are the trifles he brought from his book of charms of which they say that it is circulated in every language and contains all that is most choice in human speech! They say that he wrote it in 12,000 volumes on buffalo hides, and called it Kindavesta, that is, the Book of Religion. But, when asked as to the interpretation of it, they say that they do not understand it. So it was that Buddha in India, showed the wonderful Phoenix with a young girl inside who told the people that he was a god, whose word was truth in all that he said to him. These are some the stories they circulate. As a matter of fact, you will not find one with any pretensions to be a

prophet, whether true or false, who has not adduced some argument or evidence of the genuineness of his claims. Where the gold may be mingled with the alloy, we test it in the scales of which alone can sift the true from the false. This is the course followed by every teacher except your master. We do not see him begin his appeal with any argument but the sword. Surely he is the first who, when he thought to win the consent of men, began by proclaiming: "If they will not acknowledge my claims to be the messenger of the Lord of all, I will smite them with the sword, capture and plunder, for this cause and reason alone."<sup>131</sup> How different it was with Christ, the Savior of the world. You recollect the appeal He made, under similar circumstances. You know the whole story well enough. And do you really think that anyone who claims, as you do, to be a man of knowledge and culture, should issue such a summons to me with my experience of men and things? Night and day I read the words of our Lord, which is the robe and raiment I wrap about my soul, and hear Him say: "Be kind to all men, be pitiful, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:44,45a, paraphrase) What must I think, who have been led by Him along such lines as these, who have reared in a kindly and gracious atmosphere, which has subdued and tempered my whole being, and become, so to speak, the blood in my veins and the marrow in my bones. I have grown up in this genial soil till every hair of my head seems somehow rooted in it. God forbid that my heart should grow hard and rebellious: that I should be possessed by the devil and transformed into the image of Iblis<sup>132</sup> that murderer of mankind. So I judge the rather, because God has honored the human race in that His creative Word has taken our flesh and dwelt among us, so sharing with us the glory of His Godhead. Him all the angels worship saying, "Holy is His name." They praise Him as they praise God; indeed there is no distinction between them in this respect. Thus has grace been added to grace. Thus it is given Him to sit on the right hand of the power of God. This honor He shares with the human nature He has assumed. He is like us, as our brother, yet He is our Maker and God, in as much as the creative Word is united to Him. And then, still further to distinguish Him, God has given Him all power in heaven and on earth to rule the world, to quicken the dead, to pronounce the final judgment on men and angels. Ah, my friend, do

you suppose that I will reject the counsel of God and smite with the edge of the sword? That were, surely, to defy God, to frustrate His Word, that were to deny His goodness, poor thanks for all His grace. I pray God that I may not thus forsake and anger Him.

(DP) If you say that even He imposes pains and penalties on men, and if you ask why we should not do as He does, our answer is easy; we do not imitate you, who, when asked as to the nature of the soul, replied: "That is God's affair." (Qur'an 17:87)<sup>133</sup> These who heard you thought they had never heard such an answer given. Our reply is this: God does not afflict His servants with a desire to trouble them, or because He hates them. If He did, why should He ever have made them? But He made them of His goodwill and kindness to them. He drew them from the wide womb of an uncreated night, and called them into being that He might translate them from this transient state, this baseless fabric of an empty unsubstantial vision, to an eternal home where joy reigns immortal and undimmed. Now you would not say of one who transferred his friend from a provincial town to the capital of a great empire and from a humble sphere to a place of great honor and influence, that he wronged him in so doing. You would say that he did well by him; aimed from the first to last at his advancement. So when you say that God afflicts man with sore pains and grievous afflictions, we reply that, in so doing He means to fit us for the recompense and reward. If by the continuance of His favor to us, we finally attain to these and are made worthy of them, may we not claim that God, most Great and Glorious, has dealt well with us in both estates? He is like a wise and kindly doctor, who drugs a sick man with medicines which are distasteful to both taste and smell;<sup>134</sup> sometimes he applies the cautery, sometimes he amputates a limb. He forbids what is pleasing in the way of food and drink, and this he does from solicitude, for the welfare of his patient. Do you say that he is animated by a spirit of hate? On the contrary, he aims at the restoration of the patient to health, and to rid him of his infirmities and disorders. He would have him no longer the victim of a loathsome disease, but sound in limb and full of life. If you retort that God, if anxious to show His favor to men, need not have afflicted them with grievous pains; we reply that in the same way He need not have made the world. He

might have created (only) the world to come, and transported favored mortals thither without probation or discipline. That was possible as an act of sovereignty, but it would have been an administrative blunder, inasmuch as one might have criticized His action and affirmed that He could not create more than the world. Rather He made the world and designed it, transient as it is, to be a place of probation and commerce, sending us wayfarers hither to use it as travellers use an inn, where they alight to pass the night, and then move onwards to their homes, the final goal of all their wanderings, where they are at rest. So in His providence and great goodness, He, the most High, has dealt with man. He afflicts them with infirmities and pains for their good, for a little while during this short-lived mortal existence. His aim is to make them worthy of what He has in store; that He may perfect His goodness to them in that eternal home where we shall have lasting joy, comfort and contentment that shall never fail.

(DQ) Now, God have mercy on you, who summon us so peremptorily to the obedience of your master. If, when he smote with the sword and scourged men with whips, he had meant well to them in so doing, would he not have admonished them and showed them some courtesy, following the divine methods? But his motives were quite different. He had no care of them in his heart, nor ever thought of them. He had no aim but to profit himself and his friends, and to establish his kingdom. In proof of this I cite his own words: "Let them pay my tribute and accept humiliation." (Qur'an 9:29b) Does not your common sense inform you that he had no desire to reclaim them from the state of idolatry and unbelief in which he found them, to what he considered the true faith? He did not think of that at all; he had no eye save for his own ends, but sought to realize his own purposes, and that was the consolidation of his empire. Yet he says: "Say to those who have the book, and to the ignorant ones also, Do ye accept Islam? If they do, they are well guided, if they turn their back, still you have your message to deliver. God hath regard to His servants." (Qur'an 3:19a) Do we not see that he is bidden to speak out his message articulately, that he is forbidden to kill and capture? Be in earnest, get this matter cleared up, and see how absolutely you contradict yourself.

(DR) But, to my amazement, you describe those of your friends who have fallen in battle, as "martyrs." Well, let me appeal to history, (to see) who best deserve to be described by that name; the Christians slain in the days of the Persian kings and others who suffered for Christ's sake, or your friends, who were slain in the pursuit of worldly ambition and in the wars of conquest. We have heard how patiently the Christians suffered, and even hastened to yield their lives, to shed their blood and that of their children, how they turned their backs on the world with all its comforts and how fixed and imperturbable was their temper, how intense their convictions of the truths they held! They hastened to offer themselves, that they might be tortured, slain and put to death as a sacrifice to God. Where one was slain, 100 more or less, at that very time and place professed the faith for which he died. One of the cruel kings of the Romans persisted in killing a great number of them till one of his own people said: "O king, you think you are diminishing the number of Christians, but you are adding to them every day." When he asked, "How is that?" the reply was given: "You killed so many yesterday, and there are twice their number professing Christianity today." When he asked the reason for this, he was told how the people said that one was sent from heaven to encourage them. On this he sheathed his sword and himself became a Christian.<sup>135</sup> Look at those who were the most thoughtful and intelligent, the most sincere and devoted to their religion; they did not weary of their faith though it meant death by the sword. They were content to suffer what came. Instead of holding back, they showed themselves eager, joyous, full of cheer, convinced that when they suffered most, they were still far short of what was in their hearts to render as a debt of honor for the grace brought to them in the Christian faith. Freely they offered themselves. Some were flayed alive, others were dismembered, others were burnt with fire. Some were thrown to the lions. Some were sawn asunder, remaining strong in the faith they had embraced. There has never been an age when some did not give themselves to death, hating their lives and all that the world could offer them, for the sake of Christ.

(DS) Now we appeal to you: where will you find such a lofty spirit, an inspiration to compare with that of these Christians? The torments



they endured were indescribable, yet they went through them with unshrinking faith and overflowing joy. One who was suffering was asked why, while in this state, he kept turning to the right and to the left and then smiling. They said to him: "Is there anything we cannot see, that makes you turn to the right and to the left and smile while you are in such torment?" He answered: "I do not feel any pain, though I am in this torment, and when I turned I saw a young man near me who smiled to me and wiped away the blood from my wounds with a white cloth he held. It seemed to me as if my torments were falling on my tormentors."<sup>136</sup> We have no doubt that he spoke the simple truth, for how else could he have borne his sufferings? All praise to God, you know He has regard to His faithful people and supports them in their time of need. Perhaps you say God might have ordered the angel whom He sent to the martyr's side to wipe the blood from his wounds, rather to avert those were tormenting him. In that case you think the result might have been their conversion, but we reply: God, most High, hallowed be His name, if He had wished to gather all men to the true faith and into the true fold, and to compel them to believe; had the power to do so. Instead of that He chose to implant in them a certain moral sense, leaving them to obey as they choose or not, that He might reward them or punish them, not for what He compelled them to do, but according to their desires. Otherwise it would have not been necessary to supply proof of truths which transcend reason. At the time then, He showed to some man signs and wonders such as He withheld from others, fitted to exercise their faith so as to make it plain whether they were obedient in spirit or not. If they had repented simply because of these signs, no reward would have been due to them, because they repented under constraint and compulsion of the miraculous. But He left them to decide for themselves, meantime supplying more abundant grace to His saints. In this way it was made quite clear that their obedience was free, because it was the result of conviction. Special regard was had to the environment of those primitive Christians, to whom faith was possible only as their response to clear proof and convincing reason. Differing widely in race, temper, and religion, they could never be drawn into a common fold except by the influence of wonders and signs. Still the original force of the supernatural remains an abiding factor in the

religious problem of today. The evidence is still within our mental horizon. We have heard and cherish the story of the miracles wrought among them by monks and teachers who cast out evil spirits and healed the sick in their churches and monasteries and in the shrines which were built in honor of the martyrs whose sufferings we have described — true martyrs, worthy of the name. In some of these churches you will find the tombs of the martyrs, in others bits of their bones, precious relics from which East and West through Rome, Syria, Persia, Abyssinia, distant islands and the great cities of Iraq, and such grace radiates as disappoints none who appeal to them or shelter near them in the spirit of humble faith. Perhaps the only exception is your master's country, a country never hallowed by the presence of a martyr or chosen as a home by any Christian save two, known to you by name: Sergius, called Nestorius, and John, famous in Medina. Such virtue you will seek in vain, for no claim is made to it save within the Christian Church. It is the Christian inheritance and will be while the world lasts. Now what proofs could there be more clear and luminous to those who desire the truth?

(DT) Still come on, let us continue our examination with such candor and penetration as we can command. Let us have reason, impartial and incorruptible reason, as the umpire in our friendly strife. I ask you then, and may God guide your reply, which of these two is more worthy to be called a martyr and honored as one slain in the ways of the Lord? One who offers himself on the altar of religion, to whom they said: "Worship the sun and the moon and these gods of gold and silver," but he refused, preferring rather to pour out his heart's blood, to lose property, life and children; or one who goes forth to seek the plunder and booty, to indulge in unnatural and unlawful intercourse with women, to dispatch raiding parties in what he calls "sacred wars in the ways of the Lord," saying that he who is killed or kills is sure of pardon?

(DU) O my friend, be honest. Suppose we should come to you and appoint you our umpire in a matter; what judgment must you give if you honor the truth? Suppose we should inform you that a thief was breaking into the house of a friend when the wall fell on him (the

thief), or he fell into a pit, or the master of the house surprised him and dealt him a deadly blow, must indemnity be paid to the thief? I am sure that, as umpire, you would not say so. And why do you say that paradise is due to the man who goes among a quiet people dwelling securely in their homes and of whom he knows as little as they know of him, with intent to plunder and to slay, and then boasts of what he has done? Nor are you content with this. You do not return repenting of your sin, asking pardon and suffering remorse because of your crimes, but, on the contrary, you boast that he who kills or is killed in such wars is sure of paradise, and yet you call him "a martyr in the ways of the Lord." If that is the judgment you give, I ask what worse could we have from the hands of Satan, who from the first has been the arch-enemy of mankind? I am certain that reason and honor forbid such a decision. You dare not make it. You see I have not forgotten how you enjoined patience on us, when it was your turn to plead. It was not we who raised this question; you began the discussion, and we have replied. That is how the matter stands. In what we have written, we have studied brevity. We might have enlarged on these lines, following the examples of others; what we have said is our answer, called forth by your initiative. You will see that our reply is like the fire which is latent in stone or iron; when you strike it with your flint, the flame is kindled. So have I sought to reply to you and to any who may come to glance at what I have written. It is all one.

(DV) But now you summon me to the enjoyment of many blessings which you enumerate, all of which are passing and perishing, like any empty dress or like the lightning brand which flashes out for one brief second and then disappears, leaving those who wait for it in unbroken darkness. Even if they were of substantial and abiding value, you could not expect a man of insight and understanding to hanker after them, how much less when they are only fitted for beasts in whom a conscience never wakes, who feed only to die. The world itself has no worth or value in a wise man's eyes; for he knows how quickly it melts away, and leaves not a wrack behind. Swiftly it fades, in a moment of time it has gone forever. Such arguments as these appeal to those only who are who are already a prey to their lower nature. I say it solemnly; I trust I have not shown any inordinate desire for such things. It

surprises me that you should hope to catch me with so gross and earthly a net. He whose nature resembled that of the beast may incline to it and yield to its seductions, but men of discrimination, with anything of the ideal in their composition, are free from such low tastes as these on which you play. Indeed it is their eager desire to rid themselves of all these physical disabilities which existence for the time involves. If it were within their power forcibly to rid themselves of these, how gladly would they do so. Why then do you suppose that they still seek for possessions and scheme for power? Not for such ends did God make two creatures; nor for such ends will He raise them from the dead. Your own scriptures affirm: "I have not made jinn or man save that they may worship," (Qur'an 51:56) I cannot see any consistence in your argument. First you say I have made them to worship, then you contradict yourself and demolish the structure you have reared, saying, "Marry whom you will, two, three or four wives," adding, "and of handmaids what your hands have gotten." (Qur'an 4:3) So you make us eat and drink like beasts which care not for the precepts of reason, and have no law from heaven to guide them.

(DW) As to the section which deals with divorce and the conditions under which your master has made it lawful for a woman to return to her husband, were it not for fear of undue length, I would recall to you how God rebuked His people by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 3:1). But you know that the custom is regarded as a scandal and disgrace by all nations who have any religion in them.<sup>137</sup> They repudiate it. I will spare myself the shame of rehearsing it here. I have too much respect for the paper on which I write, to have more to do with it, hating it as I do and desiring to steer clear of it. That is my answer.

(DX) You are good enough to bid me write you with perfect freedom and entirely at my ease. I am not to be the least afraid. You will not take amiss what I may say. Christ our Lord, when He encouraged me in His holy Gospel said: "Fear not of them that kill the body, but have no power to kill the soul, but rather fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28) And I believe His word. No one hath power over me but He who made soul and body. I am the more

assured of this from the large tolerance extended to me, through the goodness of God and the Amir of the Faithful and by the perfect fairness and kindness he has shown to any weakling like myself who may approach his Excellency and find a place under his protecting shade. His is no narrow grudging justice. Wide in his sympathies he has embraced us all. May God most High reward him for it, may He realize all his hopes for himself and for his children in this world, and graciously grant him an answer to his prayers in peace.

(DY) As to what you say about this true faith which you profess: whoever has a lot and portion with you in this matter, even I, if I embrace it and profess as you do, shall be like you and reign with you and shall share your honors in this world and in the next; it is all familiar to me. With regard to your religion, enough has already been said. As for honors in this world and in the next, God has given you the caliphate. He has committed it to the people of your religion, and we pray Him to continue you in this grace. As for honor in the world to come, that is only to be measured by God. "Good works" as your master is reported to have said: "Ye son of Manaf,<sup>138</sup> I am not the richer for you in any respects in the sight of God; you cannot give me pedigree other than you will give me good works, and before God, this alone has value: your fear."<sup>139</sup> If he said this, truly honor in the world to come must be an empty name unless it is based on good works. We find that the people of God were of no consideration or distinction in this world; and for the world to come, their good works alone gave them honor. You know as well as we do that good works are our only honor and dignity. We do not dare to boast of what comes to us of the past, of the rank we have inherited among the Arabs, or the fame of our forefathers. In former times it was universally recognized. Every educated person knows that the Kindi were of royal rank, distinguished among all Arabs. But we endorse that word of St. Paul: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (I Cor. 1:31) I have no boast but in the faith of Christ by which we attain to good works. Only thus do we truly know God and approach Him in that way which leads to life and saves from the fires of hell. But, when you tell us that your Prophet said: "On the day of judgment everyone will be absorbed in himself, O my people, my people, my family, my family,"<sup>140</sup> and when

you tell us the response given to his intercession, surely you are nodding. In good sooth, such promises are vain, such hopes are deceptive. We do not doubt that our Lord and Savior to whom your own scriptures bear witness that He is the cynosure of every eye in this world and in the next, will reward every man according to his works; if good, then good, and if bad, then bad. There is no partiality with Him nor indulgence for any. Let me give you some good advice; have regard to what I say and do not incline to such vain and foolish hopes. Lay a foundation of good works while you are in this world, supply yourself while you are here with that which shall profit you. There is no profit in that day save in religion. Lay aside this itching after idle pleasures. Soon you must depart. Death is nigh, when you must stand before Christ, the true Judge, and render your account, where no excuse is received, where there is no plea, nor prayer, nor place of repentance. Fear God in your heart, O my friend, and know that the fear of God is the best merchandise, yielding interest even where there is no capital. You have seen the eagerness of the monks and how they offered themselves to God. You too should be reasonable, since God has implanted in your soul the faculty of reason. You have no excuse, for I have given you good advice.

(DZ) As to what you say about concessions and how these are brought about, alas, alas, it cannot be. Christ in His holy Gospel, imposing and confirming the Law of His Kingdom has said: "When ye have done all these things which are commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants." (Luke 17:10) He adds: "Enter by the straight gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many are they who enter by it, for straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:13,14) These are not the terms you offer, but they are (more) in keeping with the solemnities of the world to come than your wide doors and wonderful facilities. You speak of a passion for scents and women. You say: "Have free intercourse with women." By God to whom we pray for help, before whom your heart lies open, you must turn your back on much you thought most sure and safe. I cannot understand how you do not see that all this is fictitious. I pray God,

who leads the wanderer into truth, that He may cause to shine into your darkened soul such light as may guide you safely through the tangled maze of error in which you are enveloped. It is my duty to announce to you and to all men the existence of the Christian society. Surely our prayers are not perfect unless we summon those who wander to the paths of the truth, that God may open their eyes and remove the blindness of error so that they may see their sin and turn to the obedience of the truth and be established in the grace which is given. May He do this for you and all your brethren in the greatness of His power and might.

(EA) But you bid me to lay aside my unbelief, error and faith I profess in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, along with the worship of the cross, all of which you consider "harmful and unprofitable, unbelief and error." I have dealt at large with that question, and it is hardly needful to rehearse. I have furnished an argument against any who may still think it is worth his while to issue such a phrase while he himself persists in unbelief. As to what you are pleased to call a medley; apparently anything you cannot understand is a medley, according to the proverb: "Man is the enemy of whatever he does not understand"! I pray God it be not so with you. There is no sense in what you say; and certainly you do not judge wisely, nor in your own interests when you argue in this way. It is not so that educated and cultivated people argue. That against what you inveigh as a medley is a divine mystery into which the angels of the presence with the prophets and the apostles desire to look, (ever) since the world was made by God. At first only a suggestion of it was given, a passing glimpse. Nothing more than a covert hint or parable of it<sup>141</sup> until the advent of our Lord, the beloved Son who came from the bosom of the Father. By Him it was revealed to the whole body of His faithful people. He gave them His Word plainly declared and bade them call men everywhere to a knowledge of that Word, which is the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. As to what you say of the worship of the cross, that it is "harmful and does not profit,"<sup>142</sup> so far as you can judge from what you have seen of the honors paid to it and the esteem in which it is held by us, we answer you that we are moved to this by what we see depicted there of the majesty of Christ and His sufferings in the

conduct of our redemption. He saved us from sin by His passion and the death He died upon the cross. No words of ours can describe, nor can our thanks repay Him for the grace there revealed. Of this grace the cross is the symbol set before our eyes to stir our hearts that we may give thanks to Him who ministers it and has bestowed it upon us. It is to Him we direct our worship and praise, not to the wood or anything else of which the cross is made. If, as you suppose, we worship the wood of the cross, why should we make it of any other material as we often do, e.g., of gold, silver and precious stones, carving them with our own hands? That surely is proof that we do not direct our worship to the material of which the cross is made, but to Him who is depicted on it.<sup>143</sup> If it is a universal custom to honor all that pertains to the majesty of a king and is connected with his person, particularly his image, so that we do it in reverence, honoring thereby the king and what of his majesty may be represented by it, surely we ought to honor the cross and worship and adore it, for there we see the majesty of Christ our King and the greatness of His grace toward us. There He was crucified for us. Indeed in our age men carry a good custom so far that they kiss the hands and feet of a king, doing homage to him thus; and in this way they enjoy royal favor. This they do from the heart right lovingly and loyally. How then can you deny us the right to worship and adore the cross as I have described? We read in the holy scriptures that the prophets revered the ark which was made by Moses at God's command. They worshipped before it. When it was uplifted Moses said: "Arise O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered," (Num. 10:35) and when it returned he said: "Return O Lord, to the tribes of Israel." (Num. 10:36) In the book of Joshua we are told how the children of Israel fell before the ark and worshipped it, appealing to it against the calamities which befell them. David, when he transferred the ark to Jerusalem, paid it divine honors and offered burnt offerings and sacrifices with his men of arms, singing a hymn of praise beginning with words which recall those of Moses: "Let God arise." (Ps. 68:1a)<sup>144</sup> Thus in honoring the ark they worshipped God, not the wood or anything else about it, and we also worship the cross, following their example. In God's name I ask you, why must oblivion seize you just at this point? It seems as if your prejudice in favor of Islam and your partiality for the Hashimite<sup>145</sup> had completely mastered



you and made you forget the path of truth, so as to believe the testimony you have given and endorsed, as to your own experience of the power inherent in the cross.<sup>146</sup> Did you not invoke that sacred symbol when you fell from your beast and again when you fled and met what you met on the way to Umr Karah, and when the lion met you as you were nearing Sabat'ul-Medina? Did you think that I had forgotten these occurrences? Rather, if you have forgotten them, let me remind you of them. And why then, in God's great name, will you deny the grace that stood you in good stead in your time of trouble? Why thus ignore His goodness? Is this the way of one who has been trained to hold fast to the truth? Why do you say that the worship of the cross is harmful? I should like to know what harm it did to you when you invoked it. Anyway, you know that I am a Christian, and we Christians do not worship the cross, we worship the power that dwells in it, the help that comes from it and the salvation received through it. Did we not argue this matter in the presence of one whose verdict you cannot dispute? You know that judgment went against you in that august presence. Why do you turn from what then seemed so certain to you, so absolutely true? Did you not protest that you had proved it and verified it? Is this according to the judgment passed against you by him who you know so well; or do you wish rather to dismiss that incident entirely from your memory? I hope that this judgment which you have passed upon the cross does not represent your real convictions, that you will not frustrate the grace which you have seen dwell in it.

(EB) You are good enough to say that you have a kindly feeling for me in your heart and wish to save me from the hell fire. No doubt this deserves my grateful acknowledgment. At least judged by the letter, I think, however, that I can turn the table on you. Really it is you who owe me thanks. Pray understand my argument, may God enable you to grasp it, for it is valid from first to last. It is not of the nature of idle talk that has neither profit or advantage in it. How best shall I put it? Five times every day you humble yourself before God in prayer. You pray: "Lead me in the right way, with the guidance granted those against whom Thou art not angry, nor do they go astray." (Qur'an 1:5-7) Now if you are really guided, surely, in God's name, you might

dispense with this petition and the accompanying prostrations which preface every prayer you make. If He guided you aright, surely it is a loss of time to pray for guidance already received. If you have not got this guidance even after you have sought it so long, tell me, in God's name, who are the favored few of whom you pray night and day that God may guide you in their steps and associate you with them as the elect people sent forth among the men? This true religion which you desire to adopt as your own, and which alone is recognized by heaven; whose is it? Do you refer to the Magians who worship the sun and practice detestable customs which are abhorrent to reason and nature alike? Everyone who has read history knows that no revelation of higher truth has come to them; they do not even hold the doctrine of the unity of God, but worship the devil along with God, praise be His name. Surely they are not favored people. Then are they the Jews? But your master washed his hands clean of them and your scriptures say that the wrath of heaven rests on them; they are reprobates, scattered among the nations, cursed by the mouth of every apostle and prophet. Surely they are no favored people into whose way you pray God to guide you. If you mean the worshippers of al-Lat, al-Uzza, Yaghut, Ya'ûq, Kathriya, Shams, Jihar, Hubbal, Nasr, Suwa, Waad, Asaf, Na'dah, Dhul Khaffayn, Manat, Sad, Dhul Halasah and other idols which the Arabs worship in Mecca,<sup>147</sup> then your own scriptures refute you pointedly, for they say: "We have found you in error and led you into the right way." (Qur'an 93:7) For your master was neither Jew nor Christian nor Magian, but what you call "orthodox," a worshipper of Azaf and Na'd. And when God graciously revealed to him the truth, then as we have seen, he prayed to be delivered from those who worshipped idols. If you claim that this way of truth and life is that of Dahri, Samatiyah<sup>148</sup> and the Brahmans, with others of that lot, who resemble the Manicheans in creed and confession, we reply that as you know, your master (had) never heard of them, nor was he present at those sessions where these heresies were refuted. Who then are left to represent this highly favored race, but the Christians? Here at last is the way of life, right guidance from the Lord of all, enriched by the perfect knowledge of God as Word and Spirit, who alone is Glorious and Great, with wise laws and spiritual precepts. This is nothing new, I merely remind you of what you already know. Or can you contradict

what I affirm of the grace revealed to us, the light and leading which have come to us through the Gospel? Your own master has set his seal on this; all creeds and nations acknowledge it. Consider then carefully what we have written. In all the relations of life we ought to walk warily, particularly in a matter which so intimately concerns our welfare. And truth must be sought in the right way; you must not wrong it of its due. May God guide you into the ways of continuance, in the greatness of His power and might.

(EC) And now let us begin with the utmost reverence; let us cleanse ourselves in ear and heart that we can recount the Gospel story from its beginnings. Let me adduce as witness some of the apostles to whom God entrusted this mystery. He revealed it to them by His Spirit and commanded them to teach others how He, to whom the future is known, purposed to perfect His grace and crown His goodness towards man by sending His beloved Son; incarnate among men. To Him therefore be praise, worship and obedience given by angels, men and devils, with due submission to the sovereignty which He has assumed and the deity inherent in Him. He came to teach men plainly that there is one God in three persons, one true eternal Godhead, that the grace and goodness given in earlier ages might be consummated by the revelation of this great mystery. In (the) presence of such overwhelming testimony, cavilling must cease. No man can any longer plead his ignorance or protest that the truth of God is veiled from view. No excuse is left to those who willfully disobey it, as said St. Paul: "That every mouth should be stopped and the world become guilty before God." (Rom. 3:19b)

(ED) First of all then, God spake by Moses in the book of Genesis, when Jacob came near to death, he called his sons, blessed them, told them what was to happen in the last times and confided to them this mystery. He continued to bless them one after another until he came to Judah, of whose seed was born the blessed Mary mother of our Lord. Then he said: "Judah, thou art he of whom thy brethren praise, thine hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies; thy father's sons shall do homage to thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up. He croucheth, ready to spring like a lion who shall

rouse them up. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet till Shiloh come; to Him shall the people make submission." (Gen. 50:8-10a) Look now at this oracle; interpret it spiritually. For if you do not understand it, you cannot profit by it. This oracle can only refer to Christ, the Savior of the world. He sprang from Judah by earthly descent. The children of Israel made submission to Him when He they came under His preaching. His hand, which was the power of Rome, was on the neck of those who were His enemies and opposed to His Gospel. These were slain or scattered on every side. Three days after His crucifixion He appeared to them alive from the dead; and, when they saw the signs and wonders wrought in His name, the people believed on Him. He is the lion's whelp, because He is the Son of God, mighty and strong. The succession of the prophets did not cease till He came, the hope of mankind. To Him all the prophets bear witness, they foretold His (manifestation); they testified to the advent of Christ our Lord, but since His appearing no prophet has arisen in Israel. For Him the nations waited; their hopes centered on Him, and just as a herald has no more place after the King Himself has come, so the star of prophecy paled before the Light of Christ's rising sun. The prophets hailed Him as King. Zechariah said: "Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh, He is just and clothed with salvation, lowly and riding on an ass and on a colt, the foal of an ass. He shall destroy the chariots from Ephraim and the horses from Jerusalem and the battle bow shall be broken in two, He shall speak peace to the people." (Zech. 9:9,10a) Now tell us, can this be said of any other than Christ, that He should come with righteousness, lowly and having salvation? Did He not at His coming destroy from the Holy Place, which is Mount Zion, the chariots and horses which were prepared for war? He broke the battle bow, a symbol of war, and rode humbly on an ass' colt. He spoke peace to the people and led them into the promised inheritance. In the same way David, as the mouthpiece of God, said: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of His power out of Zion; rule Thou among Thine enemies." (Ps. 110:1,2) Now will you try and understand what is implied in this oracle of the prophet? It contains a mystery which calls for thought on the part of those who study the

Psalter, if it is to become plain to them. I remark, then, that according to the custom of the Hebrews since the days of Moses to whom God spoke face to face, the letters which compose the name of God, most High and ever Blessed, have formed what is known as the sacred tetragram. In no other connection is the same combination of letters allowed. These letters were written on the tablets of stone which were given to Moses. Now in this passage "the Lord said to my Lord," the sacred tetragram occurs twice. This is admitted by Jews and Christians. Though they are two hostile camps, yet on this point there is no difference between them, nor does any doubt exist as to the fact. Yet there has been no collusion.<sup>149</sup> Understand then this mystery which God revealed to His servants; if you think, you will find it clear enough. For so it is written: "The Lord said to my Lord." In another place he says: "The Lord looked from the heights of His holy place, from heaven the Lord beheld the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner and to loose them that are appointed to death." (Ps. 102:19-20) By "death" here is meant sin, that is, the worship of idols and the forfeiture of that eternal life brought to us by Christ our Lord against the day of Resurrection. The passage proceeds: "To declare the name of the Lord in Zion and His praise in Jerusalem when the people are gathered together and the kingdoms to serve the Lord." (Ps. 102:21,22) So spake the prophet, and accordingly in Jerusalem we see the people gathered together to seek the name of the Lord, i.e., the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, which is the mystical name of the Lord. If a man dispute this, my friend, he must be regarded by all truth-loving people as a hardened unbeliever, whose heart has been darkened by ignorance and blinded by ill will.

(EE) So the blessed Isaiah cries with a loud voice saying: "Say ye to the fearful of heart, Be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with a recompense, even your God with a reward, He shall come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb shall sing." (Is. 35:4-6a) May God guide you into the truth, that you might see how our scriptures witness to the fact that Christ did all this. He healed the lame man who was 38 years of age, and said to him: "Arise, take up thy bed and go to thy house," (John

5:8)<sup>150</sup> and he arose straightway. He healed the leper, the deaf, the dumb and the demoniac whose story is published in the Gospel along with the comments made by the Jews when they saw the cure; and our Lord rebuked them and refuted their reasoning. In another passage Isaiah says: "Behold, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and ye shall call His name Immanuel, i.e., God with us." (Is. 7:14) What could be more clear than this? Yet this is only one of many passages we might quote as to the coming of our Lord.

(EF) But now I fancy you retort that these passages have been "cooked (up)." You escape the inference on the plea that the text has been corrupted; so you can apply your favorite argument and shelter behind it.<sup>151</sup> Let me speak frankly for once and remember what I say, and lay it to heart. I do not argue in the spirit of pride nor from a love of criticism, but that I might win you. My religion imposes this duty on me toward everyone, but I have a special solicitude for you, because of the depths of darkness in which I find you. I do not know that I have found an argument more difficult to dislodge, more desperate to disarm than this which you advance as to the corruption of the sacred text. I marvel that you should allow it. You know that the Jews, though they are hostile to the truth as proclaimed by Him who is the Light of the world and its glory, yet agree with us on this point.<sup>152</sup> Without any collusion between us, the genuineness of these Old Testament scriptures as inspired is established. They are not corrupt, nor have they been added to or taken from. But, without dwelling on that let me apply one test which is fair to both of us. In God's name I ask you, who accuse us of tampering with the text, can you produce a book which has not been tampered with and which witness(es) to the truth as you hold it; a book which can appeal to such signs and wonders as those which bear witness to the prophets and apostles, from whose hands we have received the writings which we still hold, as the Jews also do? I know that you cannot do this, nor even tell us how it can be done. Your own scriptures bear quite conclusive witness on this point. For they say: "If ever you are in doubt as to what we have revealed, ask those who read the earlier scriptures (i.e., the Jews and Christians)." (Qur'an 10: 94a). "Say, We have sent down the Law, in it is

good guidance and light; we have sent in their steps Jesus (the) son of Mary in confirmation of what they know of the Law, and we have given him the Gospel, with good guidance and light, in confirmation of what they already know.” (Qur’an 5:50). “And if the People of the Book believe and fear God, He will forgive their sins and bring them to a paradise of happiness. If they establish the Law and the Gospel and what was sent down to them from their Lord, they shall eat of that which is above and beneath their feet.<sup>153</sup> From them shall come a people doing righteously, but the majority of them, how evil are their deeds.” (Qur’an 5: 70) “Say, O People of the Book, ye stand on nothing till ye establish the Law and the Gospel which has been sent down to you from your Lord.” (Qur’an 5:72). See how your own book bears witness to us that the true reading of any passage is our reading. You are required to ask and receive judgment from us on such points. Now then, can you affirm that we have corrupted the text? What is this but to contradict your own scriptures?<sup>154</sup> The situation is plain enough; you witness to the truth of our text — then again you contradict the witness you bear and allege that we have corrupted it; this is the height of folly. What have you to do with lies? They are not in your kind nor of your nature. You attribute impiety to us and say that we have falsified the Word of God, whereas your master witnesses that the true text is ours. Consider, who is the corrupter?<sup>155</sup> We, who have received the scriptures from those who attest their truth by signs and wonders far beyond human power — scriptures concerning which there is general agreement among the people who differ in other points, or one who receives as the Word of God that which has no proof or witness to support its claim,<sup>156</sup> without records, without miracles,<sup>157</sup> who receives it from the hands of those who have transmitted it merely in their native tongue and contents himself with such a proof as if a production of this point could for a moment be compared with the parting of the waters or the raising of the dead? This he received according to a people among whom hatred and rancor lodge, each of whom adds to or takes away as he pleases. And this course he pursues till he ends by claiming that the book is the Word of God, most High, and must be accepted as proof of his own prophetic office. Not satisfied with this, he protests that if anyone will not receive the book and acknowledge it as inspired and himself as God’s prophet, he will kill him, plunder his

goods and sell his children into bondage. Quite naturally moved by the fear of the dread chastisement he might inflict, men accepted his word without reason or evidence adduced. May God help you judge fairly. Reason is the only test of such matters, she can distinguish the true from the false. See whither you are being led, intend your mind and grasp the situation. I trust your good sense may be the saving of you from deadly error. For God has appointed reason as the scales in the hand of justice. Apply what God has given you in this direction. If you seek for it, the truth will not fail you. So help you God most High!

(EG) Let us return to the question raised as to the Holy Gospel. We affirm that it is generally admitted that the witness borne by the prophets was summed up and sealed by the birth of the long-expected Christ. Let us now see what were the signs which accompanied Christ our Lord in proof of His divine sovereignty and authority. The first beginning of these was as follows: God the merciful, in His kindness to His creatures, chose from among men whom He had fashioned with His own hands and stamped His own image, thus honoring them above all other creatures, a virgin, chaste, pure and holy, without stain or blame in soul or body, that His Word might lodge in her, taking from her perfect body of flesh and uniting it to Himself so that He might dwell among us. He commissioned Gabriel the archangel to carry tidings to her, the elect of our race, queen of all earth's daughters, the blessed Mary, (the) daughter of Joakim<sup>158</sup> the mother of Jesus Christ our Savior God. He came to her with glad tidings, honoring her and saluting her with these words: "All hail, thou highly favored of *our* Lord, blessed art thou among women." (Luke 1:28, Diatessaron) ' Observe, he did not say, "my Lord;" he included all the angel host with himself. Who then is that Lord of men and angels alike, but the eternal Word of God, by whom heaven and earth were made, as David said? Try and understand this mystery; lay aside the ignorance and prejudice that blinds you. Continuing his address, Gabriel said: "Thou shalt conceive and bear a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, that is, the Savior. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give Him the throne of His father



David.” (Luke 1:32) While Gabriel thus spake to her, she wondered greatly and answered: “How shall this be to me, who hath not known a man?” (Luke 1:34) And Gabriel said: “The Holy Ghost shall come on thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.” (Luke 1:34a) Following up the message, he gave her a sign to confirm her faith, that she might not hesitate or doubt, saying: “And also thy cousin Elizabeth is with child in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.” (Luke 1:36) Such was the miracle of the annunciation. And now listen to the witness of one who differs from us and yet confirms our argument. Your master of his own freewill and with all solemnity, asserts the truth of all this (by) saying: “And see, the angels say of Mary, ‘God hath chosen thee and sanctified thee. He hath chosen thee among women. O Mary, call on thy God and worship Him and give Him thanks and reverence... God hath sent thee glad tidings with His Word, whose name is Messiah, Jesus (the) son of Mary. He is the cynosure of every eye in this world and in the next, of those who stand about the Throne. He shall speak to men in his cradle and in his prime, and shall be reckoned among the upright.’ She answered, ‘O my Lord, how shall I have a child when no man hath come near me?’ He answered her, ‘Nay, but God createth what He pleaseth; when once He hath uttered the words. God hath but to say, Be, and it shall be. He shall teach him the scriptures; the Law and the Gospel, and send him to the children of Israel. He shall say, I have come to you with a sign from your Lord; I will fashion this clay into the shape of a bird and breathe on it, and it shall fly. I will give sight to the blind. I will heal the leper. I will tell you what to eat and what to store up in your house. Surely this shall be a sign to you, if you believe I am come to confirm what is already in the Law. I will permit you what is forbidden, and bring you a sign from your Lord. Trust in God and obey Him.’ ” (Qur’an 3:37,38,40-44). Do you know, or can you recall from the wide field of literature anyone whose coming was thus foretold? Yet so we have it concerning our Lord, as given by God and confirmed by your master.

(EH) Soon after the pure and blessed virgin came to the mother of John (the) son of Zecharias, she and her husband were both righteous, fearing God, and she was with child. And when Mary knocked at the

door of her dwelling and saluted her, the child leapt in her womb for joy. Elizabeth said: "Whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me, for since the voice of salutation sounded in my ear, the babe hath leaped in my womb for joy." (Luke 1:43,44) You know what your master says about Zecharias: "Then Zecharias prayed to his Lord and said, My Lord, give me good seed from Thy presence. And the angel called to him while he stood praying in the temple. God sendeth thee good tidings, John, who shall confirm the promises of the Word from God, a Lord, a saint (son?), a prophet from among the upright." (Qur'an 3:33,34)<sup>159</sup> Now the meaning of this is that Christ is the Word of God and Lord of men. "Confirming the promise" is a description of John, but "the Word of God" and "a Lord" cannot apply to John. He was never credited with having been the "Word of God," nor was he "a Lord." On the other hand, the phrase "a son" and "a prophet among the upright" is applicable to John, who was all that. And indeed, I say it solemnly, if you do not twist the text and pervert it from its meaning, you cannot help seeing that such is the burden of the words. Soon afterwards a star appeared to the Magians, betokening the birth of a great King whose kingdom should have no end. The wise men, well versed in sacred lore, had foretold His coming, and trusted them to as to the time of His appearing. The sign appointed was a star which should go before them and guide them to His feet. For this sign the Magians waited. Led by its light they came from their distant homes to Jerusalem in Judea, till it stood above Bethlehem. There they fulfilled their quest and paid their homage. They saw what they had dreamed; they had what they had hoped. Then they returned, nothing doubting, but filled with joy because they had been so highly honored. The archangel also appeared to a group of shepherds feeding their flocks, and told them of the Lord's birth: "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day a Savior which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10) As he ceased speaking, the angel host appeared, hovering beneath earth and heaven, with psalms and hymns, praising God, and saying: "Glory be to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." (Luke 2:14) These shepherds made haste to the place and found the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. They told what had happened and how they had seen the heavenly host and heard their

wondrous song. They told the tale of their coming, so that all who heard it wondered. This is the story of the annunciation and birth of our Lord.<sup>160</sup>

(EI) Now let me tell you briefly as I can the beginnings of the Gospel. When our Lord was 30 years old, John (the) son of Zecharias appeared baptizing with water unto repentance in the river Jordan. Christ came to him that He might be baptized of him, but when John saw him, he said: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. I have need to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to be baptized of me?" (John 1:29 and Matt. 3:14)<sup>161</sup> And Jesus answered and said: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." (Matt. 3:15) He urged him till he consented, and as Christ came up out of the water, the gates of heaven were thrown open in (the) sight of all who stood by, and they saw the Holy Ghost descending on Him in the shape of a dove, and heard a voice from heaven saying: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17) After this, He began to preach, until the day He went up into heaven, stirring men to repentance, to despise the world, to abstain from its pleasures and to forsake friend, family and property that they might cleave to Him, to take delight in good works, refraining from sin and practicing benevolence toward all men. No more must they hate and envy one another, or grasp at riches or take vengeance on their enemies, or requite wrongs done to them, but rather forgive and conquer by kindness. He taught them to draw near to God, He inclined them to such a life, that they might be accounted worthy of a great and enduring reward, a recompense in the world to come. He preached to them the resurrection of the dead and the judgment to come; he who has done well shall have the Kingdom of Heaven as his reward, but he who has done ill shall be punished in hell fire forever. He confirmed His words by the miracles which He wrought and endorsed His promise by manifest signs and tokens such as no mere man could produce. All this He did with the utmost kindness of heart and an entire absence of that pride and arrogance which are the works of the devil. He gave all that was ever asked of Him, asking nothing in return, neither reward nor thanks, but only that men should give themselves to God and glorify Him and bear witness that He had kept

His promise and crowned His goodness toward the children of men by the mission of His Word, incarnate for their salvation.

(EJ) And now we come to the first note of the Evangel: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17b) Thus He revealed to men the doctrine of repentance and the resurrection which were unknown in the earlier dispensation. He taught them to seek the Kingdom of Heaven and to do works meet for entrance into it. He taught them to turn from the works of darkness in which they had lived and to cultivate such a temper as might insure the forgiveness of their sins. Forty days and nights He fasted, while angels ministered to Him, and while He fasted, He combatted the power of the Evil One and showed men that God could sustain life without the use of bread or water. In this way, by a sort of analogy, He showed us what may be that life after death when man shall no longer be dependent on food or drink.<sup>162</sup>

(EK) Immediately after this he began to publish the new constitution, precepts and maxims of a spiritual order, teaching men that divine Law which represents the mind of God and is free from all carnal sanctions. Of murder He said: "Ye have heard that it was said by the fathers, He who slays shall be slain, but I say to you, if one is angry with a brother for naught, he is guilty, and he who slanders his brother incurs condemnation, and he who injures his brother deserves hell fire. Let not the sun go down while you are angry with your brother." (Matt. 5:21,22 and Eph. 4:26, slight paraphrase) Again He said: "When ye stand praying and remember that a brother has ought against you, stop praying and go, be reconciled to your brother, then come and finish your prayer." (Matt. 5:23,24 paraphrase) So saying He put an end to those blood feuds which had been the fruitful sources of murder in the past. Then He said: "Ye have heard it said, ye shall not commit adultery, but I say unto you that he who looks on a woman with a lustful eye, he hath committed adultery in his heart." (Matt. 5:27,28) Then He taught us that God knows not the surface only, but (also) the heart of men's lives; nothing is hid from Him; nothing secret, and what is done in secret is openly rewarded by Him. Again He said: "Ye have heard that it was said, If a man put away his wife, let him get her a bill

of divorce, but I say to you, He that putteth away his wife, except for fornication, gives her over to adultery, and he who marries a divorced woman is an adulterer." (Matt. 5:31,32) Then He rebukes lying thus: "Ye have heard it said, Thou shalt not swear falsely, but I say unto you, Swear not at all." (Matt. 5:33,34a) Then He rebukes their greed of gain and incites them to forgive wrongs and refrain from retaliation. "Ye have heard it said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth and a wound for a wound, but I say unto you, Resist not evil, but if one smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left, and if he seek to take thy coat, refuse him not thy cloak also, and if he compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him who asks of thee, and from him who would borrow of thee, turn not away." (Matt. 5:38-40) So an end is put to vexatious litigation, so the fires of battle are quenched. All that alienates man from man is taken away, and they are drawn together in mutual love. Their boorish manners are softened, their savage tempers refined. The age of universal brotherhood under the law of love begins. Again, of kindness and beneficence He says: "Ye have heard it said, Love your neighbors and hate your enemies, but I say, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that wrong you and pray for them who treat you unjustly and persecute you, that you may be the children of your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:43,44, Diatessaron) Confirming this law, and inciting them to its observance, He says: "If ye do good to them who do good to you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same? But be ye perfect, doing good and showing favor, that you may be like your Lord." (Luke 6:33 and Matt. 5:48, paraphrase) Of righteousness He says: "Have regard to your alms deeds; give them not before man so as to receive kindness in return. But if ye give alms, let not your right hand know what your left hand doeth, that your alms may be in secret, and your Father who seeth in secret shall openly reward you. When you fast, do not distort your faces or lower your voices that men may take notice of you, lest in the praise of man ye lose your reward. When you fast, wash your faces and anoint your heads, and speak cheerfully, that you seem not to man to fast; your Father who seeth in secret will reward you openly." (Matt. 6:2- 4 and 6: 16,17; paraphrase) Rebuking greed, covetousness and avarice, He says: "Lay not up treasure where thieves and moths can reach them, but lay them up in

heaven, so shall ye hold them safely. Where your treasure is, there shall your heart be also." (Matt. 6:19, 20) "A servant cannot serve two masters without honoring the one and despising the other; so ye cannot serve God and the world. Take no thought as to what ye shall eat and drink, care rather for your souls and their salvation. This is more needful than caring for the body; for the soul is better than the body. The body cannot exist without the soul. Be like the birds of the air which neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns. They take their breakfast when they are hungry, and depart with a full crop; for your heavenly Father feedeth them. Verily I say unto you, Ye are better than they. Bear not today the burdens of tomorrow; let each day's burden suffice for itself. Nor take thought of supply for the morrow; it is not yours to provide; it shall be provided for you. He who sends the morrow will make provision for it." (Matt. 6:24a,25,26, 34; extreme paraphrase) "Let no one say, See the winter comes, what shall I eat, what shall I wear; or in summer, where shall I get food and drink? Your Father which is in heaven knows that ye have need of these things." (Matt. 6:31,32; paraphrase)

(EL) As to the habit of evil-speaking, He says: "Judge not nor condemn, lest ye be condemned; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be meted to you." (Matt. 7:1,2) "Seest thou a mote in thy brother's eye while a splinter is in thy own eye? Say not to thy brother, Let me pluck the mote out of thine eye, while a beam is in thy own eye. Take the beam out of thine own eye, then shalt thou see clearly to take the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Matt. 7:3-5; paraphrase) Of prayer, He said: "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. Is there any of you who if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask fish, will give him a serpent? If you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much rather shall your heavenly Father, with whom all is good, give good gifts to His faithful people." (Matt. 7:7,9-11) Of doing kindness to men, He says: "What ye would that men should do to you, do ye to them. This is the sum of piety wherewith God is well pleased." (Matt. 7:12; paraphrase)

(EM) Perhaps some captious and hypocritical person may find fault

with our Lord when He calls God "our Father." Let me answer him. Christ our Lord had it in His heart to make obedience lovely in the eyes of all men, that they might yield it from love and goodwill rather than by constraint and fear. He sought to naturalize it in their hearts that it might banish enmity and obliterate that pride of birth which is of the Evil One. He would have them recognize one another in a brotherly way, as becomes those whom a bond of nature unites to a common father and mother. He would have it thus, under all circumstances. He was not like your master, who sowed hatred among men, saying: "O ye faithful, ye have enemies among your wives and children, beware of them." (Qur'an 64:14a) Christ our Lord taught them saying: "Thus and thus doeth your Father in heaven, thus and thus it shall be done by you." (Matt. 5:45,48; extreme paraphrase) He did this that He might sow the good seed of love in their hearts, and clean out the tares of anger and malice. And verily God, in His greatness and glory, is a merciful and compassionate Father, dealing tenderly and graciously with us. To begin with, He made us (out) of His mere good pleasure, thus showing us favor before we had any being; so He nourishes and sustains us by His grace, visits us in His goodness, is mindful of us in our sin and pardons our transgressions. In His longsuffering He has borne with our ignorance and deals with us not hastily, but as a compassionate father deals with his child. When He chastens us, He mingles mercy with His chastening. He has not dealt with us as we deserved. Who then is more worthy to be called by us "our Father" than is God, most High, blessed forevermore? Surely they have little reason on their side, who impugn the teaching of our Lord on this head.

(EN) On the discharge of religious duties, He says: "Fast and pray, and discharge the duties God has imposed on you; yet, when you have done all these things, say, We are unprofitable servants." (Luke 17:10; extreme paraphrase) All His words and precepts are confirmed by what was seen of His own life, for He fasted and prayed, without house or home, without anything in the way of stores beyond the clothes He wore. One who begged of Him said: "Master, where dwellest Thou, that I may come to Thee there?" (John 1:38; paraphrase) Jesus answered: "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but I

have neither house nor home where I set my feet, there I find My pillow, where ye seek Me, ye shall find Me.” (Luke 9:58; paraphrase)<sup>163</sup> He never spake an untruthful word; never thought or sought or planned or perpetrated a sin. He did not reproach or refuse those who applied to Him. No one who sought His help or begged alms of Him was ever disappointed. So the prophecies concerning Him were fulfilled.

(EO) This He followed up, confirming His words by wonders and signs which He did, healing the sick in numbers known only to Himself. He cleansed the leper, cast out devils and quickened those who were already dead for many days, like Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus, the widow’s son and many others. He divined the secrets of men’s hearts and what lay hidden there, buried in their bosoms. By a word He healed the paralytic and commanded the lame man to take up his bed and walk. Devils responded to Him, obeying His command, confessing that He was the Son of the living God, who should yet subvert their kingdom. Sins were forgiven and transgressions blotted out by His lifegiving word, according to the Spirit of glory which rested on Him. He opened the eyes of those who were known to have been blind many days, smearing their eyes with clay which He had kneaded in His spittle. For He had power over nature in all her forms. With five loaves and two fish he fed 5000 and 12 baskets of fragments were taken up. Wherever He went He brought blessing. Water poured into vessels was changed into wine at the marriage feast, babes were blessed by Him and infants babbled His praise.<sup>164</sup> He cursed the fig tree, and immediately it withered away. He rebuked the storm and there was a great calm. He was seen walking on the waters. He showed Himself to His disciples on a mountain, talking with Moses and Elias. He discovered to the Samaritan woman the secrets of her past life, and healed a woman in whom was an issue of blood for 12 years, though she only touched His clothes. She thought He would not know, but He knew by the virtue that had gone out of Him, and said to the crowd: “Who touched me?” Then the woman came and worshipped and confessed what she had done. And He said: “Thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace.” (Luke 8:43-48; paraphrase) He commanded the devils to enter into swine, that they should be drowned in the sea, and



they obeyed. He did many wonders; the apostles have not told them all, lest their writings should be too bulky, and we too have left out many, lest we should transgress our limits. But I know that you have read the Gospel, where we read in order what the apostles have written down.

(EP) Here too is the word of your master: "We have sent proofs with Jesus (the) son of Mary, and have helped him with the Holy Ghost." (Qur'an 2:81a or 2:254a) Now, how can you be deceived as to the heavenly origin of the works? No one can doubt them, but one in whom wrath usurps the place of reason, who is blinded by anger or seduced by the love of the world to the ruin of his soul. A man of understanding with any self respect, if he reads what I have written with a fair unprejudiced mind and (who) compares the witness of the Gospel with what we know of your master, will have no difficulty in distinguishing the true from the false. Your master's achievements are well within the reach of the average man, as we see and hear of him among the elders, the worthies of a bygone age. If you remind me that the prophets Moses and the others did wonders far beyond mortal power to achieve; here is my reply: I know that the prophets did these wonders, but only after great humiliation, protracted prayer and fervent supplication. They had no indisputable and irresistible authority behind them to carry them through, such as we see in the case of Christ our Lord. The saints wrought miracles as a servant might, submissively, solicitous to execute the commands he has received. Before he divided the sea that the children of Israel might pass over, Moses "ceased not to cry to the Lord," and God said: "Why criest thou to Me; arise and smite the waters with thy staff, and they shall be divided before thee." (Ex. 14:15a,16a; paraphrase) And so Joshua (the) son of Nun, Elias and Elisha humbled themselves and made constant supplication. Such humble supplication is never absent as a condition of the power they possess. Otherwise it had been as when He, the most High and ever Blessed, said to Moses: "Thou shalt not enter the land of promise, for thou hast not sanctified Me before the children of Israel." (Num. 20:12; paraphrase) So Jeremiah prayed, yet God answered: "I will not hear thy prayers nor receive thy requests." (Jer. 7:16; paraphrase) But Jesus Christ, our Lord, the beloved Son of

the Father, did these wonders by the energy of the all-creating Word which dwelleth in Him. Can anyone question this? As well might he say that the sun does not shine, or fire burn, and try to look surprised!<sup>165</sup> He ought rather to be ashamed of himself.

*[(EQ) Thus then we have transcribed some of the precepts of our Lord, and recounted some of His wonderful works. Let me remind you how He chose His first disciples and sent them into the world to preach the truth. He chose illiterate men, men with no science or education, they were fishermen and tax gatherers, yet so were there hearts illuminated with the heavenly light that they overcame philosophers and learned men and vanquished those who were skilled in debate. Mighty kings, great rulers (and) high-handed despots humbled themselves before them. The great ones of the earth were subject to them, the wealthy surrendered their wealth, the prosperous bowed down before them, and all the wise and understanding confessed the truth they taught. Learned orators were silenced by their reasoning and yielded to their authority. None could deny or gainsay the gracious words which they uttered, or fail to recognize the goodness of God to them and the hand of God working with them. These signs and wonders they wrought according to His Word: "Go, summon all men everywhere to eternal life; preach to them the resurrection. Their bodies shall be raised from the grave and quickened by the Spirit; they shall be released from the bonds of death and set free from its power and presence. In order to confirm the promise I will give you this power to work miracles; freely you have received, freely give. Take no gold or silver from any man, in My name lay your hands on the sick, and they shall be healed, on the dead, and they shall live, that the world may wonder, and that I may plead against them." So they followed in His steps, preaching forgiveness to all men and summoning them to the truth. They did this unweariedly, claiming no earthly reward for themselves. He sent forth 70 men before His ascension; there were also the 12 who had been with Him from the beginning. His first disciples who had been companions of His tribulation. By them a faithful record has been transmitted and authorized among the nations.*

*[(ER) While He was with them He made a covenant with them: "He*

*who knows and does these things shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. When ye pray, pray for the pardon of your sin; multiply not words and make not vain repetitions. Set your hearts on such provision as is requisite for you; your heavenly Father knows your need and what is good for you. Behold I will send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. When they bring you before magistrates, take no thought of what you shall speak, for it shall be given unto you in that hour, for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Fear not those who kill the body, but have no power over the soul, but rather fear Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell fire. Be assured that if you oppose My commands and deny My Gospel, I will deny you at the last day, when you shall stand with all creation at My judgment seat; but, if you confess My name and are not ashamed of My Gospel, I will confess you among My saints on that great day. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Forgive those who are churlish to you, and act fairly even to your enemies. Forgive those who wrong you with the forgiveness of God; if ye will not have mercy on one another, how shall God have mercy on you? Verily I say unto you, that as ye do, it shall be done to you. The light of the body is the eye, if the eye is single, the whole body is full of light, but if the eye is evil, the whole body is full of darkness. If the light that is in you is darkness, how great must your darkness be. Thus a servant, if he know his master, can see his faults, but if he is ignorant of his master, he is blind to his faults. As the body cannot exist without the soul, so religion cannot exist without a good and honest purpose. Look not at the faults of others, lest you rebuke them when they do well; begin by mending your own faults, and cover them over with good deeds. Cast not what is holy to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn and rend you. Beware of false prophets which shall come after Me, without rhyme or reason and with the sword (!) in their hand. Go and summon all men to eternal life, teaching them what I have taught you of spiritual judgment. Teach them that God quickens the dead and shall judge the world. He who has done well shall inherit life eternal, incomparable felicity, unruffled by fear or pain, fed from springs that never fail. He who has done ill and opposed My Gospel, his reward in the day of*

*judgment shall be hell fire and everlasting torment. For he who rejects My claim makes war against God. Behold, I have given you power to confirm your preaching, so that the appeal you make to men may prove irresistible. Lay hands on those who are sick even to death, and they shall recover; so shall ye make My Gospel shine throughout all lands. In every distant spot shall sound the Gospel call; it is for all men, grace vouchsafed to all the seed of Adam. He who obeys shall have good luck, peace and plenty, prosperous times, victory and great spoil. See, I send you forth without scourge or sword or any weapon, without treasure or troops or any force at your disposal by which to resist or compel your enemies; not as men who are in love with strife, not coveting either the wealth of the world or its lusts, and certainly with no concessions to offer. Call men to repentance; make quite clear what you mean and promise, to wit, the Kingdom of Heaven. Confirm it with signs and wonders such as I have given you power to work. Take no man's silver or gold. Eat the labor of your hands, and what is ever of your stores, give as alms to the poor. Go forth with this Gospel, faint not in it, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, and lo, I am with you always.*"<sup>166</sup>

(ES) Minded to carry His self abasement to the utmost point, He did not withhold Himself from the hands of sinners. They did to Him as He would; they crucified Him on the tree, while He cried: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 11:34a) Thus in the flesh He died and hung on the cross till the hour of sunset. After that, He was buried and continued in the grave till the morning of the first day. Then He arose, declaring to be the Son of God with power. He was seen of the women who came to the tomb and afterwards by the disciples, once in Galilee, twice in the Upper Room, once by the way while two of them were going to Emmaus and once on the sea-shore while they were fishing. Again He renewed His charge and reminded them of the covenant He had made with them. So it was until He ascended into heaven, openly in (the) sight of all who were gathered together while they stood looking through the open doors of heaven and seeing the angel host escort Him to the Throne. Meantime it was said to them: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into the heavens? This same Jesus who is taken from you shall come again in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11) So

He was taken from them, and the angels departed. The hill from which He ascended is the Mount of Olives in Syria, known to this day.

(ET) Having heard these various witnesses, you shall hear one who differs from us, yet openly proclaims: "See, God said, O Jesus, I will take you and raise you up to Myself, and will rid you of those who are unbelievers and place those who follow you above the unbelievers in the day of Resurrection. Then ye shall return to Me, and I will judge between you when ye differ from one another. But those who are unbelievers I will torment with sore torment in this world and (in) the next; they shall have no helpers. But those who believe and do righteousness, their reward shall be great. God loves not evildoers." (Qur'an 3:48-50) Such is the testimony and witness borne to God by your own master, as you yourself allow. Intend your mind, guard yourself, do not be led astray into error. If you do your duty, clear light will arise and truth shine.

(EU) Finally after 10 days had lapsed, the disciples were gathered together in the Upper Room and heard a rushing mighty noise, and the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete was revealed to them and rested on them in tongues of fire, that they might speak with men in their own tongues and work wonders. Thereafter they were scattered, each man to his appointed sphere. And God gave them the power of tongues and knowledge of men. And they, being filled with the Holy Ghost, wrote the Gospel and all the acts of Christ in every tongue. Then the nations bowed and obeyed the call. They forsook the world and chose the better part, leaving their own religions that they might embrace the Christian faith. Everywhere the light of the truth shone and the Gospel day dawned. Conviction came, faith followed, men confessed without doubt or question, they distinguished the true from the false; good guidance from soul-destroying error. They saw signs and wonders which enabled them to follow in that good way, the way of Christ, in which we also, to this day and hour, seek to follow. this is the faith we have received at their hands; we live by it and hope to die in it, that we may rise and stand approved in the presence of Christ our Lord, the Judge of all. This was not the way of your master or his friends, it was their way to kill, steal and smite with the sword. They do so to

this day; they incite men to what is forbidden and hurtful to the race, to such an extent that, as you know, they make a boast of what you dare not do. Recall the words of 'Umar (the) son of Khattab: "If a man's neighbor is a Nabatean and he requires his price, let him sell him."<sup>167</sup> This is how they speak and act, not so St. Peter or St. Paul.

(EV) If you say, why do not the monks in our own day work the miracles like the disciples who were sent out by our Lord; here is our reply: When the disciples were sent out to preach the Gospel, they wrought miracles as a necessary part of their mission, that these to whom they preached might know the truth of what they taught. Now today the monks are not preachers. Many of them no doubt exercise their ministry in a private and unostentatious way, that it may be known that this gift of grace continues among men. Should circumstances arise which require them to exercise the supernatural power they possess, they do so; East and West and wherever they go. But if they took in hand to raise all the dead and heal all the sick, no one would ever die, and where would be our hope of the Resurrection and the end of the world? The purpose of the Most High would be frustrated. An occasional dose of their power is permitted them, that by their efforts they may strengthen public confidence and show that they are honored by that God whom night and day they serve. Those who seek them with a true heart and earnest mind have their prayers answered; they receive the blessings which they crave, in answer to the prayers of these good men. You must remember that if miracles were a matter of daily occurrence, as in the time of the holy elders, men would have no praise for their faith and obedience beyond such as you give to the beast whom you compel to move backwards and forwards by the use of a bridle and stick. But God, Blessed be His name, has distinguished us from the beasts in that He has given us reason and imposed on us the task of guarding these evidences of religion which otherwise might be lost. So that we no longer need to see miracles in confirmation of faith, unless indeed we have lost the use of reason and have degraded ourselves to the level of beasts.

(EW) Thus with the utmost brevity, I have recounted to you the story of Christ. Compare what you will of all this with your own religion.

You have received the good guidance I wished to give; God and His angels be witness to me in this. If you turn your back on the idolaters and come forth into the light of the Evangel, which shines so brightly for you, and into the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, then you shall be as one of the saints and honored in the Kingdom of Heaven. A felicity such as the unenlightened can never know shall be your portion. Surely the truth of God must appeal to you, whom He has distinguished so highly above others with the gift of reason. Be not slack, nor suffer the world to seduce you. Recall what I have written; compare point with point. Apply the precepts of justice. Flee from every false doctrine which imposes on the ignorant who have neither wit nor wisdom, insight nor principle to direct them. This is not one of those matters which men may safely shirk. It is pregnant with results for both estates, the immediate future and that distant day when no excuse shall avail. Be sure that he who abjures the devil and believes in God has got hold of "the right hand" which will never fail him. For myself, I have done my uttermost to advise you, I have kept back nothing, not the smallest jot of what was in my mind. I pray God that He may perfect us both in well-doing; that He may save us from our sins and unite us in His good time with the saints, on whom He has had favor. Peace be with you and mercy from God. Amen.

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The editor (Tien) of these pages affirms that nothing has come into his hands for this work except two manuscripts, one of them said to be transcribed from a manuscript in one of the libraries of Constantinople and the other from a manuscript in one of the libraries of Egypt, without the name of the copyist or of him who caused the copy to be made and without date. Both manuscripts are largely corrupt and differ in a number of passages. He has labored to put them together as best he could; he who has done his best is not to be blamed, even if he fails. At the end of the Egyptian manuscript he found a note, of which the following is a literal transcript:

"We have heard that the result of the above correspondence was as

follows: The Caliph Ma'mun ordered both letters to be read to him. He listened in silence to the close, and then said that it was not his business to interfere with other people's affairs till he had rid his own soul of anger. As for the Christian, he had no quarrel with him; he must believe what he said; otherwise why should he adhere to his religion? He added that there were two religions, one of them the religion for this world and the other for the next. The religion of this world was the religion of the Magians, and the religion of the next world was the Christian religion. But he added, the true religion is that of the unity as taught by our master, that is the religion which reconciles this world and the next."

As to the letters, the famous savant Abu Rayhan Muhammad (the son of Ahmad al-Biruni mentions them in his well-known book entitled "The Chronology of Ancient Nations." He there bears witness to the statement made by the Christian as to the practice of human sacrifice among the Sabeans, when he says: " 'Abd al-Masih al-Kindi the Christian records of them in his answer to the letter of 'Abdullah the Hashimite, that they are accustomed to sacrificing men, but are not able to do this openly." As to this 'Abd al-Masih, I have searched, but find no mention of him in any of the histories of Islam save what I have here recorded from Biruni. It is quite certain that he was not related to Yakub (the) son of Ishaq the Kindi, the famous translator of Greek books and known as the philosopher of Islam.

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Notes on the Christian's letter:

[1] The word is "Hanifite." See previous note p. 404, n. 8.

[2] The argument is obscure and inconclusive. It moves on a thin sphere congenial enough to the logician, but alien to that of religion which is reality. So far as I can follow it, our author's line of thought is this: God is affirmed to be one. But unity must be of one of three kinds, generic, specific or numeric. Each in turn is proved to be inapplicable to the divine. His opponent then shifts his ground and introduces a new category affirming the unity of God to be essential. But the writer insists on interpreting this essential unity to be one or (the) other of the logical categories to which he is wedded. He asks —



does specific unity, as applied to the divine essence exclude numerical unity, or are they the same insofar as the one God is all? If the answer given be (that) specific unity excludes numerical unity, he reminds his antagonist that in the language of the schools, the species includes various individuals. Are there then various personalities of the divine? If not, does he really mean that specific and numerical unity are the same? If so, what is the specific unity apart from numerical unity? We are forced back on the latter, pure and simply, with all the objections already raised against it; to wit, that it makes God an individual like His creatures and excludes the idea of perfection. For himself (here the writer becomes didactic) he affirms that God is one in the perfection of His essence, but threefold in His personality. He is one in essence in so far as He is distinct from all His creatures; He is also one in number in as far as He is all-inclusive, i.e., you cannot add or take away from Him. But then (and here comes the threefold personality) number is of two kinds, odd and even, and those two kinds may be predicated of each of the Persons within the divine essence, i.e., each may be regarded simply as God, one and indivisible, or as a distinct aspect of the Godhead. However unsatisfactory all this may be, one cannot help thinking that behind the logical hair-splitting there lies an idea which answers to a religious truth. Pure theism (as Jehovah of the Jews, or Allah of the Muslims) cannot long exist. As thus conceived, the Godhead tends either to receive itself into the pure being of the Pantheist, or to divide and so multiply itself as in all forms of nature worship. It is the fullness of the divine nature, the fellowship of love with the Godhead, as revealed by Jesus Christ, which enables us to hold fast the personality and with it the unity of God. And thus, as our author puts it, whichever way we speak of God, as one or as three, we do not detract either from the reality or the perfection of the divine nature.

[3] By Muslims, the virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord, was represented as playing the part in Christian theology of God's wife.

[4] The word "mursal" is used (a) of a tradition which is not traced back to its sources, or (b) of a word of which the series of transmitters is interrupted. Thus applied, it means "of doubtful authority." Here

the application is logical rather than historical and describes a term which is isolated, i.e., positive as opposed to relative.

[5] An apparent reference to Daniel 4:31, though the Masoretic gives this in passive voice: "to you it is declared." A version of the Septuagint does give the active *third* person plural "to you they say." I have been unable to find a source for the first person plural as al-Kindi claims - ed.

[6] On this passage Canon Cheyne has the following note: "It is debated whether these words are the subject or the object of the verb; whether the Spirit is sender or sent. As there is no analogy in the Old Testament for the Spirit being the sender of a prophet and as the Spirit is elsewhere in Isaiah distinctly subordinated to Jehovah, it seems to me safer to take the words 'and His Spirit' as equivalent to 'with His Spirit.' Possibly the particular construction may have been chosen here to indicate the personality of the Spirit; for I cannot but think with Kleinert that we have both here and in Gen. 1:2 a trace of what is known as the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit." These words throw some interesting light on our author's treatment of Old Testament passages generally.

[7] I have read "muwarabath." I cannot make anything of the text.

[8] So far as I can see, there is some misplacement of the text, and possibly some misunderstanding of the facts on the part of our author. The caravan of Abu Jahl was raided by the Prophet at a later period, as we shall presently find. I do not read in any of our authorities that Muhammad began the practice of raiding while in Mecca, nor indeed was he then in a position to make such a course possible.

[9] If our author means to impute that Muhammad took the ground by force from the orphan lads, he is scarcely fair to the Prophet. The Banu Najjar were distantly related to him through Salma (the) mother of 'Abd al-Muttalib, with whom he found refuge when he first arrived in Medina. The plot of ground referred to was a neglected plot used

partly as a burial ground and partly as a yard for tying camels up. The Prophet called the boys and offered to buy this, on which they replied: "We will make a free gift of it to thee." The Prophet refused the gift, and the price fixed was ten golden pieces. (Muir's *Life of Muhammad*.)

[10] Hamza was an uncle of the Prophet and an early convert to Islam. Abu Jahl was to the end one of the most bitter opponents of the new faith. His proper name was Amr b. Hashim, but he was called Abu Jahl, "father of folly," by the Muslims (Sprenger's *Leben*). He is supposed to be alluded to in the Qur'an in the passage: "There is a man who disputeth concerning God without knowledge or direction." (Qur'an 22:3) - see al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 7, p. 10 for reference to Hamza's raid - ed.

[11] The alternative is this: either Muhammad *was* a prophet and yet his messengers were defeated, contrary to what history leads us to expect; or Muhammad was *not* a prophet, and the claim made on his behalf is refuted. The sentence is somewhat involved.

[12] 'Ubayda was a cousin of the Prophet (and) somewhat older than he. Abu Sufyan was the good adversary of the Prophet. He commanded at the battle of Uhud, when the Prophet was heavily beaten. He led troops again and again against Medina, burning the vineyards around the city and for a time holding it in siege. Slowly it was borne in on this strong spirit that the tide was against him; as Muhammad advanced against Mecca (630 A.D.) he made up his mind to the inevitable and submitted. As father of Mu'awiya, he is the head of the Umayyad dynasty. - see, al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 7, p. 10 on this raid of Ubaydah - ed.

[13] Cf. al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 3, p. 71 - ed.

[14] Sa'd b. Waqqas was a nephew of Amina, the Prophet's mother, (who) converted in his 16th or 17th year. On one occasion in the valley of Mecca, where he had retired with some like-minded

companions for prayer, he was set on by the unbelievers. From words they came to blows. Sad struck one of his opponents and wounded him. Even afterwards, Sad boasted that he was the first to draw blood in the cause of Islam. - see, al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 7, p. 11, for an account of this raid - ed.

[15] See, al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 7, p. 12 for an account of this raid - ed.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 13 gives an account of this raid - ed.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 28 ff. gives an account of this - ed.

[18] Atabek (or Babak) - a famous brigand described as the "scourge of the Empire" in the days of Ma'mun. When that great prince died, Babak was still powerful in Azerbaijan, whence he struck terror over all N. Persia, and enjoyed the countenance of Arabia and Greece. Motassen sent against him Afshin, one of the ablest of his Turkish generals. He was taken; thousands of captives were released and vast treasure recovered. On his way to the caliph with his doughty prisoner, Afshin received a royal ovation. Each day the caliph sent him a fresh dress of honor with a splendid gift. Babak meantime was kept under guard. The caliph went in disguise to gaze on the "satan of Khurasan" as he was called. He was paraded through the streets and then brought to the palace, where the caliph ordered his own executioner to fall on him and sever him limb from limb (833 A.D.). (Muir's *Caliphate*). - see also Mingana's introduction to the Patriarch Timothy's discussion with the Caliph Mahdi, note 7, and Muir's essay on the age and authorship of al-Kindi's Apology, note 10 - ed.

[19] In al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 9, p. 118, n. 813, Ismail Poonawala shows Baladhuri (*Ansab*, I, 371-84) as giving approximately 60 as the number of raids commissioned by Muhammad - ed.

[20] Usayr was the chief of the Jews at Khaybar. Ibn Rawaha was sent to persuade him to visit Medina, and murdered him and all his

companions on the way thither. - See, Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 665, for an account of this - ed.

[21] Abu Afak the Jew had professed Islam, but still lived with his tribe in upper Medina. Though above 100 years of age, (he) was still active in his opposition to the new faith. He had composed some stinging verses against the Prophet. "Who will rid me of this pestilent fellow?" said Muhammad to those about him. The sequel is as above. - See, Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 675, for an account of this - ed.

[22] The attack created great scandal because it was during the month of Rajah, in which it was forbidden to fight. In consequence of this and in excuse of the Muslims it was immediately revealed to the Prophet as follows: "They will ask thee concerning the sacred months, whether they may make war therein. Say, Warring therein is grievous, but to be obstinate in the ways of God and to deny Him is still worse." (Qur'an 2:214). This 'Abdullah was first known as the Amr of the Faithful. - See, Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, pp. 286 ff., for an account of this - ed.

[23] Qaynuqa' - One of the three Jewish tribe residing near Medina and the first to feel the brunt of the Prophet's anger against their race. The occasion was trifling. A foolish practical jest played on one of their women was followed by a blow which killed the jester. The revenge taken was complete, as narrated above. 'Abdullah b. Ubayy was the leading man of the Banu Khazraj, the original non-Muslim people of Medina. Being on friendly terms with the Jews, he protested against the order given to massacre them to a man, and laid his hand on the Prophet. "Wretch, let me go!" said the Prophet!" "No, I will not let thee go," replied 'Abdullah, "till thou hast compassion on my friends; wilt thou cut them down in one day? As for me, I am one who fears the vicissitudes of fortune." Muhammad was not yet strong enough to ignore such a protest. "Let them be; the Lord curse them and thee too." - See, Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, p.363, for an account of this - ed.

[24] See, al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 7, p. 124, for an account of this - ed.

[25] The mention of Muhammad's name being on the throne of God has been used as an argument against the 9th century dating of al-Kindi's Apology as al-Tabari countered this notion which was (also) held by al-Barbahari almost a century later. Mingana responds to this argument in his introduction to the Patriarch Timothy's dialogue with the Caliph Mahdi, see his notes 16 and 17 (p. 171) and note 16 (p. 406) to 'Abdullah b. Ismail's letter above - ed.

[26] See Wensinck, *Handbook*, p. 158, for a listing of hadith showing Muhammad's love for women, perfume and horses - ed.

[27] *Sahih Bukhari*, The Book of Ghushl, ch. 13, hadith 268, vol. 1, p. 164 gives "30 men" - ed.

[28] Zayd was a slave boy adopted by the Prophet as his son. Some years after he (Zayd) had married Zaynab, Muhammad, going to his house and not finding him home, cast eyes on Zaynab his (Zayd's) wife, who was then in a dress which discovered her beauty to advantage, and (he was) so smitten at the sight that he could not forbear crying out, "God be praised, who turneth the hearts of man as He pleases." This Zaynab failed not to acquaint her husband with on his return home, whereon he thought that he could do no less than divorce his wife in favor of his benefactor. Apprehending the consequences that might ensue, the Prophet affected to dissuade him, but at length, his love for Zaynab being authorized by a revelation, he (Muhammad) acquiesced, and the marriage was consummated. (Sale, p.317). - The subject of Zaynab's marriage to Muhammad was very popular with Christian polemicists, see, Leo, parag. AX; John of Damascus, parag. G. This event is referred to in the Qur'an (33:37) and al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 8 and vol. 9, p. 134 - ed.

[29] The word comes from the word "sa'a," and indicates the act of running, earning, gaining. (Lane). The verb "qarad" means to cut into

or nibble (*secuit rodendo*, Freytag). “qarad” and “arad,” says our author, equal “kinayet,” of which Lane gives the following illustration: “You say of a man he has a long suspensory cord to his sword and has many ashes of the cooking pot; by this statement you imply, without saying it, that he is tall of stature and entertains many guests.” One can easily understand ‘Ali’s game.

[30] In this sura it is directed: “As to those who accuse women of reputation and do not produce four witnesses to the fact, scourge them with four score stripes and do not receive their testimony forever.” (Qur’an 24:4) It proceeds: “As to those who have published the falsehood concerning Aisha, think it not to be an evil unto you; on the contrary, it is better.” (i.e., God has done you the honor of thus exculpating you.) (Qur’an 24:11, where the word “Aisha” has been added - ed.) The penalty was rigidly enforced.

[31] There is some doubt as to the exact dimensions of the Prophet’s harem. Sir W. Muir places it at ten wives and two concubines; our author is more generous. (al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 9, pp. 126 ff. and Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 792 n. 918, give the number as fifteen, with whom only thirteen marriage was consummated - ed.) The following notes may be of use:

a) Kadijah - By her the Prophet had two sons and four daughters. She died 619 A.D., a year before the Hagira. During her lifetime the Prophet had no other wife.

b) Aisha (the) daughter of ‘Abdullah (the) son of Kuhafa, better known as Abu Bakr (i.e., “father of the virgin”); betrothed to the Prophet when (she) was six years-old. She brought her toys with her, and the Prophet used to play with his girl-wife of an evening. She died late in life, and was known as the “mother of the faithful.”

c) Sawda, whose first husband was one of the earliest adherents to the new faith and fled to Abyssinia. Soon after his return, he died and the Prophet married his widow in 619 A.D., a few months after the

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death of Khadija. She was divorced by the Prophet at a later date on the plea of her advanced age, but she was permitted to remain in his harem.

d) Hafsa - Owing to her displeasure with her husband (Muhammad) because of his intercourse with the Coptic Mary, he divorced her; but, when he saw the offence it gave to 'Umar, her father, he took her back, affirming that Gabriel had revoked the divorce. The political influence of Hafsa (daughter of 'Umar) and of Aisha (as daughter of Abu Bakr) was pretty equally balanced. There was much rivalry between the two ladies, but the youth and vivacity of Aisha maintained her supremacy. Occasionally they made common cause, as against the Coptic Mary.

e) Umm Salma - Her first husband died of a wound received in the battle of Uhud. Four months later the Prophet married his widow, who received his attention as narrated in the text. Our author accuses the Prophet of unfaithfulness to Umm Salma; Sir W. Muir thinks this without ground.

f) Zaynab (the) daughter of Jahsh, wife of Zayd (the) son of Harith. See note 28 above.

g) Zaynab (the) daughter of Khuzayma. Was three times married before the Prophet took her. Like Khadijah, she pre-deceased him.

h) Umm Habiba (the) daughter of Abu Sufyan - Her previous husband Ubaydullah was said to be one of the four inquirers, i.e., persons who were in a state of expectancy of the Prophet prior to the time that Muhammad announced his mission (see Introduction [deleted]). He embraced the new faith. (He later) retired to Abyssinia in the persecution, embraced the Christian faith and died there. On his death bed Muhammad sent for his widow. She was the sister to the caliph Mu'awiya and survived to his caliphate.

i) Maymuna - Maternal aunt of Ibn Abbas, the Prophet's uncle. Some do not allow that there was any formal marriage in this case.



j) Juweira - After the Banu Mustalik had been plundered (626 A.D. - 5 A.H.), the captives were brought to Medina. Juweira was of special beauty and the ransom fixed for her by her captors was far beyond her powers. She applied to the Prophet for easier terms, but he was so charmed by her beauty that he paid the ransom already fixed and took her for himself.

k) Safiya (the) daughter of Hayy - Married by the Prophet on the field of battle where her previous husband (Kinana chief of the Khaybar) had been barbarously tortured and then slain. She was only 17 years-old. On the first night the Prophet spent with her, some of his friends kept guard at the tent door with drawn swords, lest a woman so young and so beautiful should try to avenge herself on her captor. But Safiya easily accommodated herself to the new relationship.

l) Fatima - This is a doubtful marriage.

m) Anna (the) daughter of Zazid of the tribe of Kunda; little is known of her.

n) Muleika (the) daughter of Naaman the Kindi will meet us later in the text.

o) Muleika (the) daughter of Ka'ab; a doubtful marriage.

p) Mary the Coptic maid - Sent as a present from the Abyssinian king. The Prophet had no surviving son, and when Mary gave birth to a boy, Ibrahim, there was great rejoicing, but he died early. The Prophet's grief for the little dead boy is one of the most pathetic passages in his story. The envy felt by Aisha and Hafsa towards this friendless girl has been alluded to.

q) Rihana a Jewess - Not further known. Mary and Rihana did not take rank among the Prophet's wives. Three of these ladies offered their hands to the Prophet (Umm Salma, Zaynab bint Khozeima and

Maymuna). See Bate in the *Indian Antiquary* (April 1878) (for a fuller account.

[32] See, *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Salat, ch. 324, hadith 1999, vol. 2, p. 435, and Wensinck, *Handbook*, p. 236 - ed.

[33] The reasons given in the hadith for Muhammad not visiting his wives for a month (or 29 days) range from Hafsa revealing a secret that Muhammad had visited Maria on Aisha's day to Muhammad visiting Zaynab (d. Jahsh) or Hafsa and having eaten honey with them. See *Sahih Bukhari*, The Book of Oppressions, ch. 26, hadith 648, vol. 3, pp. 387 ff.; The Book of Divorce, ch. 8, hadith 192 (193), vol. 7 pp. 140-41. I have been unable to find a reference to Zaynab (d. Jahsh) refusing flesh sent from Muhammad in this connection - ed.

[34] This is quite similar to the account in *Sahih Bukhari*, The Book of Divorce, ch. 3, hadith 182, vol. 7, pp. 131-32, where "princess" for "queen" and "ordinary man" for "trader" - ed.

[35] The Aad were an ancient Arab tribe to whom, according to the story, the prophet Hud was sent, but they ignored his warnings and were rendered "like the refuse which is carried down by a stream." (Qur'an 23:43). The Thamud were another tribe to whom Salih was sent. "He said, O my people, worship God, ye have no God but Him." (Qur'an 7:71) In their scorn the people pointed to a rock and bid Saleh cause a she camel, big with young, to come forth from it, but when he did this, the people cut off the camel's feet and still refused to believe. In the morning they were all "prostrate on their breasts," i.e., dead. In 570 A.D., the year in which the Prophet was born, Abraha (the) viceroy of Yemen marched against Mecca. He reached Taif and was then furnished with a guide. He then sent an embassy to Mecca, saying that he had no desire to hurt them, he only wished to destroy the Ka'ba with its idol worship to establish the Christian faith. Unable to resist, the people betook themselves to the hills. Meantime a pestilence attacked the invaders. The retreat began, but abandoned by their guide, they perished among the valleys. In the train of Abraha

was led an elephant, so singular an apparition in Arabia that the army was called "the masters of the elephant" (Qur'an 105).

[36] The paragraph is an interlude. The issue first raised is debated in the following paragraph. - For references on the expectation of signs and miracles as a confirmation of prophethood, see note 156 below - ed.

[37] See Leo, parag. BG, - ed.

[38] See Wensinck, *Handbook*, p. 167 - ed.

[39] *Fatah ul-Bari*, vol. 7, p. 23, as given in *Sahih Bukhari*, Vol 5, p. 10, n. 1 - ed.

[40] I have ventured to read an adjective from the verb "darajah," I cannot find the word printed in the text in any Arabic lexicon, nor do I find mention of this particular miracle in the long list given by Muhammad Inayat Ahmad (Lahore, 1894). - *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab Fada'il al-Sahabah, ch. 993, hadith 5881, vol. 4, p. 1276 - ed.

[41] See Wensinck, *Handbook*, p. 167 - ed.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 167 - ed.

[43] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 516 - ed.

[44] *Sahih Bukhari*, The Book of al-Maghazi, ch. 81, hadith 713, vol. 5, p. 510 - ed.

[45] In 628 A.D. (6 A.H.) the Prophet made an attempt to visit Mecca in the sacred month. But the Quraysh opposed his advance. During the march he alighted at Hudaibiya. The wells were choked with sand, but the Prophet took an arrow from his quiver, the only implement at hand, and bade one of his followers descend into the well and scrape away the sand; a simple but successful device, magnified

into the miracle narrated in our text. (See Muir's *Muhammad*).

[46] Whatever the status of such a hadith was in the time of al-Kindi, a similar one, in all probability referring to the same event, can be found in *Sahih Bukhari*, The Virtues and Merits of the Prophet, ch. 24, hadith 774, p. 498 - ed.

[47] There are quite a number of hadith concerning sayings attributed to Muhammad. Though I have not been able to find this particular hadith, the introduction to Abu Da'ud, *Sunan* is said to contain some showing the relationship between the Qur'an and hadith. See Wensinck, *Handbook*, p. 231 - ed.

[48] Though there appear to be no Muslim sources for Muhammad ever saying that he would be resurrected as Jesus was on the third day, al-Kindi's accusation is not entirely without merit. Muhammad died on a Monday, June 7, 632, but according to most major Islamic histories he was buried in the middle of the night Wednesday without even Aisha's knowledge (Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 688, al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 9, p. 209). It appears that the normal procedure, however, was to bury the dead on the day of their death (to precede the rapid decay of the corpse which was increased by the heat of the season), as in the case of Abu Bakr who died in August (*Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 9) and was buried within a few hours of his death (*Sahih Bukhari*, Actions While Praying, ch. 92, hadith 469, vol. 2, p. 265). Quite often Western and Eastern scholars of Islam attribute the delay in Muhammad's burial to disagreements in the Muslim community at the time as to who was to be their new leader. The vast majority of Islamic sources show that 'Umar didn't believe that Muhammad was dead at all and that he threatened anyone who should maintain such a thing. 'Umar is reported to have said that Muhammad had just gone to be with Allah as Moses had for forty days and that he would return (Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 682; al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 9, p. 184). Nöldeke and Schwally (*Geschichte des Qorans*, vol. 2, p. 83) show Shahrastani (ed. Cureton I, 11) as maintaining that 'Umar alluded to Jesus the son of Mary instead of Moses in this statement,

and *Sahih Bukhari*, The Virtues and Merits of the Companions of the Prophet, ch. 6, hadith 18, vol. 5, p. 13 shows 'Umar as saying that Muhammad was to be resurrected. One result of these somewhat apparent contradictions is that some Western scholars of Islam have brought the charge that Qur'an 3:138 and other verses (concerning Muhammad's being mortal) were added to the text of the Qur'an by Abu Bakr at a later date. Schwally and Nöldeke (as the major Islamic histories also show) believe 'Umar to have forgotten this verse in the moment of his shock over Muhammad's death and see no reason why 'Umar would have allowed Abu Bakr to add such a verse (*Geschichte des Qorans*, vol. 2, pp. 81-2). However, if Muhammad had said that he was to be resurrected and then was not, this would have been reason enough for a fairly well organized cover-up on the part of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and even the rest of the community. (This could have also been a cause of the apostasy of the Arabs after Muhammad's death.) The accounts of Muhammad's burial being delayed because of the choice of the first caliph seems to be extremely superficial. Furthermore, even if Qur'an 3:138 was originally part of the Qur'an, Abu Bakr still waited a few days to bury Muhammad's corpse. In view of the many inconsistencies concerning the death of Muhammad, it is quite possible that there were Muslim hadith in al-Kindi's day which reported that he was to be resurrected in a manner similar to Jesus. Moreover, it appears that none of the later Muslim apologists even tried to respond to al-Kindi's charge, though they must certainly have known of it at least through al-Biruni. Be that as it may, the matter of Muhammad's resurrection has long been a subject of dispute in Muslim circles, see Fritz Meier, "Eine auferstehung Mohammeds bei Suyuti," *Der Islam*, vol. 62 (1985), pp. 20-58 - ed.

[49] Most major Islamic traditions and histories report that Muhammad died in Aisha's lap, see *Sahih Bukhari*, Actions While Praying, ch. 94, hadith 471, vol. 2, p. 267 - ed.

[50] "Sahuli" is rendered by some (to) be "beaten" or "washed," from "sahul," i.e., one who beats or washes and so whitens cloth. - (three garments, two of Suhar) See Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*,

p. 688, al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 9, p. 203 - ed.

[51] See *Sahih Bukhari*, The Book of Holding Fast to the Qur'an and the Tradition, ch. 2, hadith 388, vol. 9, p. 286, which reports the apostasy of some of the Arabs after the death of Muhammad and how Abu Bakr fought with them to receive the same amount of Zakat they formerly gave Muhammad - ed.

[52] Cf. Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, p. 239 - ed.

[53] There were several attempts to murder Muhammad during his lifetime, but I have been unable to find a reference to this particular incident in any of the major Islamic sources - ed.

[54] See note 51 above - ed.

[55] This statement of al-Kindi conforms with the majority witness of Islamic tradition and histories - ed.

[56] It is not known exactly to whom al-Kindi is referring here, but it could have been one of the followers of Ibn Ishaq (d. cir. 150 A.H. - 767 A. D.), who was also accused of having Shiite sympathies (Ibn Hisham, *The Life of Muhammad*, ed. Guillaume, p. xii-xvii.).

[57] Hostility towards the Jews was unfortunately predominant during this era of church history. See, Leo, parag. BC - ed.

[58] Cf. Matt 11:13 (paraphrase - "My coming" for "John."). The second notion, namely that Jesus said no prophet was to come after Him, has no Biblical support whatsoever. The Patriarch Timothy I also made this mistake, only to correct it later; see, Timothy, parag. AZ, n. 150. Sadly, the belief that no prophet is to appear after Christ is still predominant among Eastern Christians - ed.

[59] Cf. John 10:8 (Diatessaron gives: "For all, as many as came, are thieves and robbers.") In his zeal to find verses against Muhammad,

either al-Kindi or later copyists appear to have modified this verse to suit their own aims - ed.

[60] On the question whether Muhammad could read and write and how far study influenced his utterances, see a discussion in Sprenger's *Life* (English Version Books). See Nöldeke, "The Qur'an," p. 6, n. 6 - ed.

[61] For the facts behind this legend, see Introduction [deleted]. - See Appendix A - ed.

[62] Since al-Kindi appears himself to have been Nestorian, this passage thus presents good evidence that the text was tampered with by non-Nestorian Christians at some time during its transmission - ed.

[63] Praying: "Effecit ut perseverarat in lite."

[64] 'Ali was so called as (the) father of Hasan and Husayn.

[65] See Jeffery, *Materials*, p. 182, for the Muslim sources for this tradition - ed.

[66] Hajjaj - A famous (or rather infamous) soldier who rose to power in the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik. Mecca was at that time held by Ibn Zubayr, who represented the 'Alid party against the Umayyad dynasty. After a siege of seven months it fell (691 A.D.) into the hands of Hajjaj, who had the bodies of Ibn Zubayr and two of his officers impaled. Tradition puts the number of lives sacrificed by Hajjaj, apart from the carnage of the battle, at 120,000. He was fond of making copies of the Qur'an with his own hand as a work of merit and distributing the same, but he was bitterly opposed to the text of Ibn Mas'ud, declaring that he would behead anyone who used it. (Muir's *History of the Caliphate*). See also Muir's essay on the authorship and age of al-Kindi's Apology, n. 13; see Appendix A - ed.

[67] A mere figment of our author. Gabriel is rather to be identified

with the Holy Spirit, as the medium of revelation. - See p. 388 and Qur'an 26:193 - ed.

[68] See Jeffery, *Materials*, pp. 182 ff., for more information on 'Ali's Qur'an codex - ed.

[69] See *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Salat, ch. 291, hadith 1799, vol. 2, pp. 393-4; and Jeffery, *Materials*, pp. 20 ff., for more information on Ibn Mas'ud's codex - ed.

[70] This hadith is similar to *Sahih Bukhari*, The Book of the Virtues of the Qur'an, ch. 7, hadith 521, vol. 6, pp. 486-7 - ed.

[71] The word might mean either "one who recites best," or rather "one who is most sound in his knowledge of the Qur'an, retaining most of it in his memory." In those old days "to read" was always "to recite." - *Sahih Bukhari*, Book of Commentary, ch. 9, hadith 8, vol. 6, p. 10 - ed.

[72] A similar hadith is the famous *Sahih Bukhari*, The Book of the Virtues of the Qur'an, ch. 3, hadith 510, vol. 6, p. 478 - ed.

[73] "The disposition is true, but not the case here alleged for it." (Muir, *Apology*, p. 74). See Jeffery, *Materials*, pp. 20-1, p. 14. - ed.

[74] See reference in note 72 above - ed.

[75] A notable adventurer who, beginning as a brigand, soon raised a great following. By his lieutenants, Mecca was besieged and burned in 200 A.H. The event must have been quite recent when al-Kindi wrote. - See Muir's essay on the authorship and age of al-Kindi's *Apology*, p. 370 - ed.

[76] Mukhtar - Another of the adventurers, of whom there were so many at this time. He assisted Ibn Zubayr to resist the attack of Hajjaj on the city of Mecca. After a heavy defeat, he took refuge in



Kufa, till hunger drove him out with 19 of his followers to meet their fate.

[77] See the reference to note 72 above - ed.

[78] For Sura Nur, which is said to have contained more than 100 verses, see Nöldeke and Schwally in *Geschichte des Qorans*, vol. 2, p. 97. In Suyuti, *el-Itkan*, vol. 2, p. 65-6, Sura Ahzab is said to have once been as long as Sura Baqara - ed.

[79] "Barat" means "declaration of immunity," otherwise known as "repentance." Others attribute the important omission in our text to the nature of the sura and call it the Sura of Punishment. The two final suras are known as the Incantation suras. They were both very brief, and this may have tempted some to add to their length by the introduction of other matter, as has been in the case of the sura Baqara (the Cow) which is composite. - Nöldeke and Schwally were of the opinion that the bismillah between Qur'an 8 and 9 was probably due to an omission in an early copy rather than that the two suras were previously one; see, *Geschichte des Qorans*, vol. 2, pp. 80 and 41 n. 2 - ed.

[80] Though I have not been able to find a reference for this alleged saying of Ibn Mas'ud, it is quite well known that his Qur'an codex did not contain the suras 1, 113 and 114; see, Jeffery, *Materials*, p. 21 - ed.

[81] Sir W. Muir says, "That the comment should have been omitted, if it ever was in the Qur'an, as unaccountable. There must, however, have been some foundation for 'Umar's speech, as stoning is still by Muslim law the punishment for adultery, and the only authority for the practice is the withdrawn verse." - See, Suyuti, *el-Itkan*, vol. 2, p. 68, for 'Umar's statement - ed.

[82] "Al-Mut'a" is a temporary marriage. The contract does not specify for how long it shall be valid (See R.W. Smith's *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*). 'Uthman is said to have claimed that this

particular type of marriage was allowed by the Qur'an and the anathematizes the man who, too fastidious, excised the passage. Mut'a is (actually) the gift given to the divorced wife. - Oddly enough, Sunni traditions typically portray 'Umar as the one who forbade Mut'a; see *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 418 - ed.

[83] See Suyuti, *el-Itqan*, vol. 2, p. 65 for Ibn 'Umar's remark on no one possessing the whole of the Qur'an - ed.

[84] I have been unable to find this saying of 'Umar's in any major Islamic source - ed. .

[85] See Jeffery, *Materials*, p. 115 - ed.

[86] 'Ali appears to have been against the practice of Mut'a (*Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Nikah, ch. 541, hadith 3263, vol. 2, p. 708 - ed.

[87] A great battle (656 A.D.) 36 A.H. when 'Ali defeated the forces led by Zubayr and Tatha against him and (which were) accompanied by Aisha who aided them. ('Ali was accused of the murder of the late Caliph 'Uthman.) Aisha rode on a camel which became to the gallant men who fought for the mother of the faithful, the center of the battle. Hence the name given to the whole affair. The origin of the longstanding feud between 'Ali and Aisha has been already noted. - I have been unable to find references for these traditions concerning 'Ali in major Islamic sources - ed.

[88] An-Nadim (d. 995 A.D.) reports having seen several manuscripts recorded which were transcribed as having been Ibn Mas'ud's even in his day; see *Fihrist*, vol. 1, p. 57 - ed.

[89] An-Nadim also records seeing a Qur'an codex written in the handwriting of 'Ali and that the family of Hasan retained it as an inheritance; see *Fihrist*, vol. 1, p. 63 - ed.

[90] Exactly which book is meant is not clear. The Qur'an contains

several similar verses - ed.

[91] The argument that the Qur'an was Muhammad's miracle (as he himself was illiterate) is still prevalent among Muslims - ed.

[92] See Finkel in Jahiz, n. 34 - ed.

[93] "Diodorus tells us that the inhabitants of parts of Arabia towards Syria lived by agriculture and trade; but, with the Nabateans, the land began to be arid and barren, and they led the lives of robbers, plundering their neighbors far and wide. The name is probably connected with Nebaioth though Margoliouth denies this." (*Dictionary of the Bible*). For their rapid advance northwards into Syria and the empire founded there; see Ewald's *History of Israel* (vol. 5). The civilization to which they had attained is used later by our author as an argument against them in contrast to the pure-bred Arab of the desert.

[94] Three pretenders who rose to disturb the closing days of the Prophet's life. One by one they were judged by Abu Bakr. It was the slaughter of the faithful in the battle of Yamma (garden of death) that induced Abu Bakr on the suggestion of 'Umar to collect the Qur'an, lest all who could recite it should die and it be wholly lost. Sir W. Muir protests against the too favorable judgment passed by our author on the utterances of Musaylima, which (in the form they are presented in Muslim tradition) he prefers to describe as "the veriest rubbish." (Muir, *Apology*, p. 81, n. 1 - ed.)

[95] See note 34 above - ed.

[96] For the style of poetry on which so unfavorable a judgment in passed, full of bombast, the reader may be referred to the amusing account of a poetical contest between the chiefs of the Banu Tamim and Hasan b. Thabit, on the issues of which the prophetic claims of Muhammad were staked, as given by Sir W. Muir (p.420). The real judgment to be passed on the value of Arabic poetry and its influence on history, is of course very different from that given here. - See

Nöldeke, "The Qur'an," pp. 10-15, for the poetic merit of the Qur'an - ed.

[97] Al-Kindi is also referring indirectly to the Qur'anic preconception of Paradise - ed.

[98] Muir in *The Caliphate*, p. 52, gives al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, i, 2031 as the reference for this speech of Khalid b. Walid - ed.

[99] In this (and) a few other passages, I have embodied a phrase, the origin of which the reader will have no difficulty in identifying. In each case the phrase borrowed correctly, I think, convey's our author's meaning. I have omitted the inverted commas lest I should be accused of the anachronism of making al-Kindi quote from Tennyson, Milton, Shakespeare, etc.!

[100] Cf. Jahiz, parag. N, n. 64 - ed.

[101] The reference is no doubt to 'Ali. It was affirmed that Gabriel had been charged to communicate the Qur'an to 'Ali; but, by mistake, he went to Muhammad.

[102] Person unknown. - Ibn Rabban in *Religion and Empire*, responds to someone's attack that according to the Bible Ishmael would be "a wild ass of men" (Gen. 16:12a, Peshitta). Mingana is of the opinion that al-Kindi meant Ishmael here - ed.

[103] "As usual the illustrations go in depreciation of Abu Bakr, as was the fashion of the 'Alids at al-Ma'mun's court. A few reigns later, no one would have dared to repeat traditions affecting the character of the first three caliphs." (Muir, *Apology*, p. 87, n. 2) - I have been unable to find this tradition in any major Islamic source - ed.

[104] Though I have not been able to find this exact hadith, there are several dealing with telling lies about Muhammad; see Wensinck, *Handbook*, p. 165 - ed.

[105] The argument is lengthy and involved. a) First of all the history of the Qur'an is reviewed and the conclusion drawn that the present text is quite unreliable. b) Next the argument from style is considered. The Qur'an is found to contain a large number of foreign words. By use of his logical weapons the author tries to force the conclusion that, as (the) Arabic equivalents of these words may be found in writers earlier than Muhammad, they must have been introduced not by him, but by other and alien hands. Thus, from another point of view, the corruption of the text is supposed to be established. c) And again the poetic form into which much of the Qur'an is cast is shown to be no proof either of inspiration or authenticity as all foreign writers mainly affected it. "The passionate is seldom pure" — mingled with this argument are digressions 1) on the author's birth, 2) on the nature of Arabic poetry, 3) a long account of the various converts to Islam, whose conversion is, without exception, attributed to impure motives, and 4) the conduct of the Jews who have done their best to introduce the fictitious and absurd.

[106] On this legal phrase, the following notes from al-Biruni may be given: "At the time of paganism the Arabs used their months in a similar way to the Muslims: their pilgrimage went wandering through the four seasons of the year. But then they desired to perform the pilgrimage at such time as their merchandise (hides, skins, fruits etc.) was ready for the market and to fix it according to an invariable rule, so that it should occur in the most agreeable and abundant season of the year. Therefore they learned a system of intercalation from the Jews about 200 years before the Hagira, and they used intercalation in a similar way to the Jews, adding the difference between their year and the solar-lunar year when it summed up to one complete month, to the months of their year. Then their intercalators themselves, so called Kalamis of the tribe of Kinana, rose after the pilgrimage had been finished to deliver a speech to the people at the fair and intercalated the month by calling it the next following month by the name of that month in which they were. This proceeding they called "nasi," i.e., postponement. One of their poets has said:

'We have no intercalator under whose banner we march; He declared the month sacred or profane as he liked.' "

Muhammad disused this custom and returned to the simple lunar year, with (the) results already noted in connection with the fast of Ramadan.

[107] See above parag. BX, n. 25 - ed.

[108] According to Mingana, this is a Nestorian hymn; see Timothy, p. 171, n. 10 - ed.

[109] Reference is uncertain. - See n. 102 above - ed.

[110] I have been unable to find the origin of this saying - ed.

[111] "Ahli Bayt" generally refers to the direct relatives of Muhammad and occupies a very special place in Shiite theology - ed.

[112] I have been unable to find the origin of this saying - ed.

[113] The close of the passage, while very interesting, is a little obscure; apparently the meaning is this: If there is to be any comparison between Muhammad and the Jews, then on his own testimony the precedence must be given to the latter. This our author must say lest it be thought that he has no answer to give to the claims advanced by the Prophet. On the hand, and for himself, he believes in the equality of all men in point of birth, etc.

[114] An obvious reference to the Islamic ritual washings and prayer - ed.

[115] Al-Kindi's argument here lacks all Biblical support - ed.

[116] Oddly enough, what appears to have survived of early Muslim traditions tells us little or nothing about whether or not Muhammad

was circumcised. One tradition listed by Wensinck, *Handbook*, p. 157, reports that Muhammad was born circumcised and with his navelstring severed. Were this truly the case other major Islamic sources would have no doubt shown the same - ed.

[117] The Muslim use of the example of Christ in circumcision, direction of prayer, not eating pork, etc., was widespread; see, Leo, parags. AJ, AN, AP; Timothy, AB, AC, AD - ed.

[118] Cf. Timothy, parags. AB, AC - ed.

[119] Circumcision is nowhere mentioned in the Qur'an, and I have not been able to find a Qur'an verse fitting al-Kindi's description here - ed.

[120] Here follows in the original passage (that) which good taste forbids us to render in English. It adds nothing to the argument and only illustrates the extraordinary difference in point of taste between East and West.

[121] Al-Kindi's explanation for the Jewish dietary laws is not only un-Biblical, but also extremely incomplete - ed.

[122] The practice (is) peculiar to Arabia - see Canon Cheyne on "Circumcision" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*). In this connection the word for circumcision equals "degradation" and is so rendered in what follows. - The practice of circumcision is not only peculiar to Arabia, but is also performed in other parts of the Muslim world. This subject also came up in other Christian-Muslim discussions; see Leo, parag. AP, n. 86; John of Damascus, parag. J; Jahiz, parag. T - ed.

[123] See al-Tabari, *History*, vol. 3 - ed.

[124] The author stumbles again. "The only change made by Muhammad in the season of the pilgrimage was to abolish the

intercalary month so that the pilgrimage shifts with the lunar, instead of being stationary, according to the luni-solar year." Muir (*Apology*, p.93). - The effect of this shifting with the lunar year means that the time for the pilgrimage comes about 10 days earlier each year, thus the pilgrimage is performed but once a year, and because of this shift, at different time periods from year to year. Al-Kindi certainly could have explained this better, but I do not think he was all that wrong in his statements on this matter - ed.

[125] The stone on which Abraham is believed to have stood when he built the Ka'ba. It is said to have served as a scaffold, rising or falling as required. Others say that he set foot on this stone when he came to visit the wife of Ishmael. Sarah had made him promise that he would not alight or touch ground (See Sprenger).

[126] *Sahih Bukhari*, Chapters About Sadaqat ul-Fitr, ch. 56, hadith 675, vol. 2, pp. 394-5; *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Hajj, ch. 484, hadith 2912-, vol. 2, pp. 642-3 - ed.

[127] There are several versions of this hadith which differ slightly from one another; their chains of transmitters are various, so it is difficult to tell who al-Kindi meant here - ed.

[128] Cf. Qur'an 2:230. This subject was very popular among early Christian polemicists; see Leo, parag. AY; John of Damascus, parag. G - ed.

[129] The verb "jana" means "to gather," i.e., to bend over the ripe fruit. No doubt it is connected with the verb which occurs two lines above, though they are given separately in the lexicon.

[130] "The words are not quoted literally; but the expression occurs in more than one passage, as Sura 21:107; 28:47." (Muir, *Apology*, p. 97, n. 1)

[131] This appears to be a rhetorical device used by al-Kindi to sum



up the mission of Muhammad - ed.

[132] A pathetic name for the Evil One from Balara (4th century), i.e., "to despair." Compare a previous passage: "The ways of Satan from whom God has taken His mercy."

[133] See Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 136-39 for more on the occasion of this verse - ed.

[134] Cf. Religious Dialogue, parag. P - ed.

[135] I have been unable to find a reference to this in other works - ed.

[136] I have been unable to find a reference to this in other works - ed.

[137] See note 127 above - ed.

[138] Manaf (the) son of Qusayy and father of Hashim, was the ancestor not only of the Prophet, but of the Umayyads, 'Alids and Abbasids. The appeal therefore is of the widest. The other, on whose the good works the Prophet relies, is no doubt himself.

[139] I have not been able to find a reference to this in major Islamic sources - ed.

[140] See the letter of al-Hashimi, parag. AU, n. 26 - ed.

[141] Literally "a wink."

[142] Muslim arguments against the worship of the cross as practiced by the Eastern churches were developed early on and became widespread; see Leo, parag. AW; John of Damascus, parag. F; Timothy, parag. BB - ed.

[143] Cf. Leo, parag. AX - ed.

[144] That the Israelites sang this Psalm as they brought the ark to Jerusalem has no direct support in the Bible - ed.

[145] I.e., the Prophet Muhammad.

[146] In the passage which follows reference is made to events of which we know nothing. Apparently on various occasions when in danger of his life, the Muslim had invoked the cross. Apparently too in a previous discussion in the presence of the Amir Ma'mun, that amiable and impartial monarch had been pleased to assign the honors of the day to the Christian, as having made out the better case. Of this incident our author makes a use which is perhaps hardly worthy of the serious discussion in which he is engaged.

[147] In regard to the case of pre-Islamic Arabia some information may be found R. W. Smith's *Kinship and Marriage*. A fuller account may be had in Wellhausen's *Skizzen* and in Krehl's *Religion der Vorislamischen Araber*. The two first mentioned in (the) text may safely be regarded as "merely titles," probably of one and the same supreme deity (See R. W. Smith). Al-Lat is probably the feminine of Allah (mother of the gods), al-Uzza: the mighty one. In Herodotus al-Lat appears as "Alilat." According to the Arab writers, Yaghut, Ya'uq, Nasr, Waad and Sawa were good people who lived in the days of Noah and were worshipped by their descendants after the flood (See Krehl and Wellhausen). Azaf and Na'ila were originally persons of less honorable fame. Azaf (the) son of 'Amr and Na'ila (the) daughter of Sahl committed fornication in the Ka'ba and were changed into stones, which were placed on as-Safa and al-Marwa, hills near Mecca, where they were afterwards worshipped. On the other hand, in most cases the immediate object of worship is a stone. In Sawa's case, e.g., the stone is said to have been buried in the deluge, but (then) exhumed by the Evil One in order to tempt men. It is said to have had the form of a woman. Al-Lat and al-Uzza were also worshipped as stones. Manat was a shapeless stone. The Quraysh swore by al-Lat, al-Uzza and

Manat. Again, several of these deities point back to an original totem (animal) worship. Yaghut, e.g., is the lion-god, Ya'ûq is the horse-god and Nasr is the vulture. In the case of Dhul Halash we have a suggestion of primitive tree worship. The name means "the lady of the temple within whose precincts the falash tree was cultivated." Aga in Kathra may be connected (See Krehl) with ath-Thara, the rain-god, the Arabic title for Pleiades (Hebrew "Kimah," i.e., "the cluster") a constellation widely worshipped in Shemite lands and known by the Arabs as an-Najum, i.e., the star *par excellence*. In this case we have the original star worship, so with Shams, the sun and Sad (Sadayn), the name for Mercury and Venus, gods of good luck. Hobal had the figure of a man with an arrow in his hand, i.e., the archer. Dhul Khaffayn is the two-headed god.

[148] Probably both eastern tribes with whom, in the course of their conquests, the Muslims had come into contact. The sessions which our author alludes to were no doubt public discussions in which the Muslim doctors sought to win the conquered races over to the faith. Akbar, the great Muslim ruler in India (1600 A.D.), was in the same way famous for his policy of conciliation and justice. "All religions were put upon a political equality, and Jews, Parsees, Hindees and Christians were invited to his court to discuss with the mullahs about religion." (See *Desire of India*).

[149] The argument which follows seems to be wrecked on the fact that, while the word "Lord" occurs twice, it represents two distinct words in the original; "Jehovah" and "Adonai." The tetragram occurs only once, not twice as our author asserts. Our Lord's argument from the same passage is based, not on the use of any particular word, but on the fact that David imputes to his son a certain Lordship and precedence.

[150] Al-Kindi apparently confuses the occasion of John 5:5-8 with that of Luke 5:24 here - ed.

[151] The-Muslim charge that the Jews and Christians had corrupted

the scriptures developed quite early; see Leo, parags. H, N; John of Damascus, parag. D; Timothy, parags. AS, CL - ed.

[152] The argument that the enmity between Jews and Christians is the best guarantee that the Old Testament was not corrupted, also seems to have been widespread; see Leo, parag. K; Timothy, parag. CN - ed.

[153] That is, they should enjoy blessings both in heaven and earth.

[154] This contradiction between Muslim doctrine and the Qur'an is even more evident in that the Torah, Psalms and Gospel are said to be God's Word and several verses in the Qur'an (6:34,115; 18:26) show that no one can change God's Word - ed.

[155] Although al-Kindi himself appears to have quoted some texts rather freely himself, cf. Leo, parag. U - ed.

[156] Christian polemicists charged that Muhammad had no prophetic witness to his mission; see Leo, parag. G; John of Damascus, parag. C - ed.

[157] The expectation that one's prophethood should be confirmed by signs and miracles certainly was not anything new (Matt. 12:38; I Cor. 1:22), and since these were lacking for Muhammad (e.g., see parags. CC, CE above) Christians used this as an argument against his being a prophet; see, John of Damascus, parags. AI-AJ; Timothy, parag. AU - ed.

[158] According to Muslim writers, the virgin's father was Amram, possibly by confusion with the father of Moses and Aaron. Some Christian writers give his name as above (as) "Joakim."

[159] "He (al-Kindi) applies 'lord' (*Syed*) to Jesus, whereas by the construction it clearly refers to *John*." (Muir, *Apology*, p. 116, n. 3) - ed.

[160] Al-Kindi gives the reverse order for coming of the magi and the proclamation to the shepherds. The Diatessaron correctly has the events concerning the shepherds prior to the coming of the magi - ed.

[161] These two scripture references appear to have been taken from the Diatessaron, where they are separated from each other by John 1:30,31 - ed.

[162] The Arabic Diatessaron gives: "...and He fasted forty days and forty nights; and tasted nothing in those days..." (trans. Hill) apparently whence the idea that Jesus did not even drink water. Al-Kindi also shows here the reverse order of Jesus' being tempted in the wilderness and the beginning of His ministry - ed.

[163] Al-Kindi uses both of these passages out of context - ed.

[164] Cf. Religious Dialogue, parag. AQ - ed.

[165] Cf. Leo, parag. C - ed.

[166] The paragraphs EQ and ER appear to be later corruptions to the text. The alleged quotations from the Bible in this section are at times absurd and ridiculous. Even though al-Kindi himself paraphrases some Bible passages, the verses to which he is referring can at least be found; this, however, is not the case with the alleged quotations in these passages, which have obviously been modified to be anti-Islamic - ed.

[167] I have been unable to locate a reference for this saying in major Islamic sources - ed.