

***WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY
ABOUT ISLAM ?***

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PREFACE

What are the basic Islamic beliefs?

The word Islam derives from the same semitic root as the Hebrew word Shalom, which means peace. Islam means "entering into a condition of peace and security with God, through allegiance or surrender to him". Main tenets central to Islam is the absolute sense that there can only be one God - Allah - and that he is the source of all creation and disposer of all lives and events. Hence, there is no God but God and Mohammed is his final messenger.

It was not a completely new faith but is the third great monotheistic religion. Muslims believe that the original, unchanged message given to Muhammad, Jesus, Moses and all other prophets came from the One same God. In Muslim eyes, Muhammad completes a succession of prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, each of whom refined and restated the message of God.

Islam enjoins belief in God as well as (a) His revealed books; (b) His angels; (c) His messengers or prophets, (d) the Latter Day (of Resurrection, or Judgement); and (e) the graceful acceptance of whatever comes from God. Regarding some of these points, the following needs to be understood:

- 1) Allah is the Arabic name for God and not the name of a special god of Islam. Jews, Christians and Muslims who speak Arabic all refer to God as Allah.
- 2) Islam regards the original Torah of Moses (the first five books of the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible), the Psalms of DAVID and the teachings of JESUS as being no less divinely revealed than the KORAN, although the Koran is believed to be God's final, complete, unadulterated and authoritative revelation.
- 3) ISLAM reveres the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets (especially ABRAHAM and MOSES) as true messengers of God, and considers Jesus as a virgin-born prophet of special pre-eminence, in whom the Word and Spirit of God were manifest. MUHAMMAD is regarded by Muslims as the last of God's messengers and, hence, 'the seal of the prophets'.
- 4) MARY, the mother of Jesus, is considered especially holy in Islam and is, in fact, the only woman mentioned by name in the Koran, "Mary" (Arabic, Maryam) being the name of one of the Koran's most often-read chapters.

Is it justifiable for Muslims to quote the Bible or refer to it?

There appears to be two common and extreme misconceptions about the Muslims attitudes towards bible.

- a. That Muslims base their faith in full or part on the Bible;
- b. That Muslims reject the Bible 'in toto' and accept no single word of it.

What is the Muslim basis or criterion for accepting or not accepting portions or passage from the Bible?

The Qur'an itself provides such criterion:

"And unto you We have revealed the scripture with the truth confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a watch over it..."(The Qur'an 5:48)

This emphasizes two main aspects of the Qur'an:

- a. The Qur'an confirms those teachings or passages of previous scriptures, which remained intact.
- b. The Qur'an is the last complete, authoritative and authentic revelation. It is the final arbiter and the only criterion to correct any inaccuracy or misinterpretation, which might have occurred in the transmission of scriptures. It helps in discovering human additions to or interpolations of previous revelations, even as it reveals possible deletions, which might have taken place through the

centuries prior to its revelation (the Quran). Indeed, one of the names of the Quran is al Furqan (the criterion which distinguishes between right and wrong, truth and falsehood). It follows therefore that a Muslim has no reason to reject the essence of any passage in the Bible in such a passage is confirmed in the Quran.

If, however, a Muslim reads the Bible (or other scriptures) accusations of major moral sins levied against great prophets of doctrines which are totally negated in the Quran, the Muslim accepts only the Quranic version as the original unadulterated truth, revealed by Allah (God). Likewise, if the Bible (or other scriptures) contains apparent prophecies about the advent of Prophet Muhammad, and if the Quran confirms that fact, then there is nothing unusual or objectionable in referring to such prophecies.

The Original revelations given to the prophets in the past contained a complete and clear profile of the advent of Prophet Muhammad. Even in its present form(s) the Bible still contains several such prophecies.

Describing true believers, the Qur'an states:

“Those who follow the messenger, the prophet who can neither read nor write, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel (which are with them). He will enjoin on them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong. He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibit for them only the foul; and he will relieve them of the burden and the fetters that they used to wear. Then those who believe in him, and honor him, and help him, and follow the light, which is sent down with him: they are the successful.” (The Qur'an 7:157)

Quoting prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), the Qur'an states:

“And when Jesus, son of Mary said: O children of Israel: Lo! The main question I am the messenger of Allah unto you, confirming that which was (revealed) before me in the Torah, and bringing good tidings of a messenger who came after me, whose name is Ahmad. Yet when he has come unto them with clear proofs, they say: This is mere magic.” (The Qur'an 61:6)

Why doesn't the name 'Muhammad' appear in the Bible?

Many Christian theologians find no difficulty in pointing out what they consider as clear prophecies of the advent of Jesus. Where in the Old Testament does the name Jesus appear? Nowhere! The main question is whether or not the profile of “that prophet” to come was materialized, and who fits that profile?

The profile of Prophet Muhammad was so clear to many Jews and Christian among his contemporaries that, many embraced Islam, accepted him as the fulfillment of numerous Biblical prophecies.

Why doesn't the Quran refer to the exact locations of the prophecies concerning Prophet Muhammad in the Bible?

According to Islamic belief, the Jewish and Christian scriptures available today exist in an unadulterated form. Therefore, if the Quran or Prophet Muhammad had referred to the exact locations in those scriptures, this could have been understood as an approval or recognition of those scriptures in their present form.

What about the Biblical prophecies which were believed to have been fulfilled in Prophet Jesus?

There is no reason to rule out the possibilities, that some of the Old Testament prophecies were in fact, fulfilled by prophet Jesus. This does not constitute a problem for the Muslims. On the authority of the Qur'an alone, the Muslims accept Jesus as a legitimate and major prophet of Allah.

The same was reiterated in the sayings of Prophet Muhammad. There are, however, several Old Testament prophecies, which were for along time misinterpreted so as to apply to Jesus. Analysis and reinterpretation of such prophecies should in no way reflect negatively on the honored and revered status of Jesus in the hearts of Muslims. It is rather a declaration of truth, which would have been proclaimed by Jesus himself if he were among us today.

N.B. In the first chapter, all scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV). In the second chapter, all scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NEW KING JAMES VERSION (NKJV).

1 THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE BIBLE

1-1 ANSWERING FAMOUS TRINITARIAN ARGUMENTS

1-1-1 The Term 'Son of God'

The Meaning of the Term:

The term 'son of God' in the language of both the Old and New Testaments is used to describe a loyal and obedient servant of God who loves God and is loved by God. Whether the translators chose to write it with a capital S in reference to Jesus and with a small S in reference to others does not diminish the fact that in the original languages both cases are exactly the same.

Even in modern language the word 'son' is used figuratively to describe a person attached to a country, organization, or other undertaking as a child is to his parents e.g. 'son of Texas', 'sons of liberty', 'Afflictions sons are brothers in distress'.

Jesus Explains the Term:

Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

"I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father."

Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father."

Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father--God."

Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God." [John 8:34-47, NKJV].

"We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God." Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came--and the Scripture cannot be broken-- what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?" [John 10:33-37].

Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice." [Luke 8:19-21]. See also Mark 3:35.

Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' " [John 20:17].

The Term is Explained Again:

Even after Jesus left this world, the writer of the First Epistle of John explains how he understands what the term 'son of God' means.

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. [1 John 5:1-5].

Examples from the Old Testament:

Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son, and I told you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.' " [Exodus 4:22-23].

"... because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son." [Jeremiah 31:9].

"He (Solomon) is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son..." [2 Samuel 7:13-14].

"I (David) will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You..." [Psalm 2:7, NKJV].

Examples from the New Testament:

'...the son of Kenan, the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.' [Luke 3:38].

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. [John 1:12-13].

"But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven..." [Matthew 5:44-45].

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." [Matthew 5:9].

'Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God...' [Philippians 2:14-15].

"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." [2 Corinthians 6:18].

1-1-2 The Term 'Only Begotten Son'

Trinitarians claim that the sonship of Jesus to God described in the Bible is totally different than the sonship of others to God and consider John 3:16 a support for their claim. In the KJV John 3:16 reads: *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'*

This argument can be answered by the following:

- 1) The word 'begotten' does not exist in any of the Greek manuscripts. Accordingly, several later translations don't use this word when translating John 3:16, as well as several non-English translations. e.g. The NIV reads: *'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...'* Even if we assume the authenticity of the word 'begotten' in this verse, we would find that it shouldn't be taken literally when comparing it with Psalm 2:7 which reads: *'I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.'*
- 2) The word 'only' is translated from the Greek word 'monogenes' which means 'single of its kind'. Accordingly, several English and non-English translations use the word 'unique' instead or, at least, put it between parenthesis. e.g. AMP (AB), ALT, ISV, MCT, WET, BDS-IBS (French), ITA-IBS (Italian).
- 3) The uniqueness of the sonship of Jesus mentioned in John 3:18 could be interpreted to indicate that he is a prophet and therefore different than other servants of God. It also could be interpreted to indicate the unique way in which he was created and born, without a father, unlike all the other descendents of Adam. Since Trinitarians take the term 'only son' literally, why don't they take the term 'firstborn son', in Exodus 4:22 (refers to Israel) and Jeremiah 31:9 (refers to Ephraim) literally as well?
- 4) John 3:16 actually contradicts the Trinitarian belief! It states that God (not the Father) gave his only son. This would mean, according to the Trinitarian belief, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave their only son. This would make Jesus a son of himself and a grandson of the Father!

1-1-3 "I and the Father are One."

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." [John 10:25-30].

Trinitarians claim that Jesus meant to say in John 10:30 that the father and him are one God although Jesus said, "one" and didn't say "one God". Here is the answer to this argument:

- 1) When Paul wrote to the Corinthians about his ministry there, he said that he had planted the seed and Apollos had watered it. Then he said, *"Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor."* [1 Corinthians 3:8, KJV]. In the Greek texts, the wording of Paul is the same as that in John 10:30, yet no one claims that Paul and Apollos make up "one being." Furthermore, the NIV translates 1 Corinthians 3:8 as *"The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose..."* Why translate the phrase as "are one" in one place, but as "have one purpose" in another place? In this case, translating the same phrase in two different ways obscures the clear meaning of Christ's statement in John 10:30: Christ always did the Father's will; he and God have "one purpose."

- 2) Christ uses the concept of “being one” in other places, and from them one can see that “one purpose” is what is meant. In John 17:11,21 and 22, Jesus prayed to God that his followers would be “one” as he and God were “one.” ***"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one..."*** [John 17:20-22]. It is obvious that Jesus was not praying that all his followers would become one being or 'substance' just as he and his Father were one being or 'substance'! The meaning is clear: Jesus was praying that all his followers be one in purpose just as he and God were one in purpose.

- 3) The context of John 10:30 shows conclusively that Jesus was referring to the fact that he had the same purpose as God did. Jesus was speaking about his ability to keep the “sheep,” the believers, who came to him. He said that no one could take them out of his hand and that no one could take them out of his Father’s hand. Then he said that he and the Father were “one,” i.e., had one purpose, which was to keep and protect the sheep.

1-1-4 'I am in the Father and the Father is in me'

Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. [John 14:10-11].

Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father. [John 10:37-38].

The previous verses are sometimes used to prove the Trinity, but they prove nothing of the kind. The same language about being “in” is used by Christ many times of people other than Christ. When the same language is used both of Christ and of others, it needs to be understood the same way. When used in the sense of “in God,” or “in Christ,” the word “in” refers to a close communion and a tight fellowship.

"On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you." [John 14:20].

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. [John 17:20-23].

I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them. [John 17:26].

An important fact is that the word 'in' in John 10:38 & 14:10,11 is a translation for the Greek word 'en' which is a primary preposition denoting several meanings. It can mean 'with'. Here are some examples where 'en' was translated into 'with':

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son..." [Matthew 1:23].

"...the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones..." [Jude 1:14].

"...and be at peace with each other." [Mark 9:50].

"...a man with an evil spirit came..." [Mark 5:2].

"...and his tomb is with us to this day." [Acts 2:29, NKJV].

1-1-5 'Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father'

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" [John 14:5-9].

This statement is sometimes used by Trinitarians who misunderstand it. Here is the answer:

- 1) The statement in John 14:9 must not be taken literally because Jesus said, "***And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form...***" [John 5:37].
- 2) The context of John 14:9 shows that Jesus meant to say that whoever has known and understood him has understood the Father's message. He was figuratively answering Thomas and Philip who asked him to show them the way to the father.
- 3) Compare Christ's statement in John 14:9 with what he said in Luke 9:48 which reads: "***He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.***"

1-1-6 Did Jesus Accept Being Called God?

And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." [John 20:26-29, NKJV].

Trinitarians claim that Jesus Accepted being called God, and they consider the previous verses a proof for this claim. This claim can be answered by the following:

- 1) The expression used by Thomas 'My Lord and my God' seems to be an exclamation. He does not seem to be addressing Jesus. This exclamation reveals Thomas's astonishment and newly acquired faith in the resurrection of Jesus. That was the thing he doubted. There was never a question of whether or not Jesus was God. There was only a question of whether or not he was alive. This is what Thomas saw with his own eyes and felt with his hands, and this is what those who did not see Jesus still believed. There is no blessing for those who believe something else (such as that Jesus is God). There is only a blessing for those who

- believe him to be living. Jesus does not accept Thomas's acknowledgment of him as God, because Thomas never acknowledged him as God. He only acknowledged him as living.
- 2) The expression 'And Thomas answered and said to him' is the phrasing of the writer of the Gospel of John. Nothing in the words of Thomas indicate that he was addressing Jesus.
 - 3) Even if we assume that Thomas was addressing Jesus in John 20:28, we can compare it with other passages from the Bible and the following can be concluded:
 - a) The word 'Lord' appears frequently in the Bible as a polite form of address from an inferior to a superior e.g. Numbers 36:2, Genesis 42:10, Judges 4:18.
 - b) The word 'God' in the Bible sometimes refers to a representative of God and not to God himself. e.g. We are told in Genesis 32:28 that Jacob wrestled with God and defeated him, but in Hosea 12:5 we are told that it was an angel who wrestled with him. This meaning for the word 'god' is also found in Exodus 7:1 which reads: *And Jehovah said to Moses, "See, I have made thee God to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet."*[JND].

1-1-7 Did Jesus Accept Being Worshipped?

Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." [Matthew 14:33, NIV].

Trinitarians wrongly think that this verse proves that Jesus accepted being worshipped. Actually, they mistranslate and misunderstand the verse. Here is the answer:

- 1) The word used in the Greek manuscripts which was translated into 'worshipped' in the above verse is 'prosekunesan'. It is derived from 'proskuneo', which literally means bow, crouch, crawl, kneel or prostrate.
- 2) Examples of different translations of this verse clarify its original meaning.
- 3) *and those in the boat having come, did bow to him, saying, `Truly -- God's Son art thou.'* [YLT].
- 4) *But those in the ship came and did homage to him, saying, Truly thou art God's Son.* [JND].
- 5) *Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God."* [NAB].
- 6) Prostrating to people as a sign of doing homage to them is not something unusual in the Bible. It does not indicate declaring that they are Gods.
- 7) *While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet arrived. And they told the king, "Nathan the prophet is here." So he went before the king and bowed with his face to the ground.* [1 Kings 1:22-23, NIV].
- 8) *And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.* [Acts 10:25, KJV]

As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. [Acts 10:25, NIV]. Notice how the NIV translators selected different translations for the same word 'prosekunesan' here and in Matthew 14:33.

1-1-8 'I am from Above'

But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. [John 8:23]."

The previous statement should not be taken literally. It has a figurative meaning. He was saying that unlike them, he works for the life of the other world and not the life of this world. This can be proved by the following passages:

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." [John 15:18-20].

"I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." [John 17:14-18].

1-1-9 'In the Beginning was the Word'

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.' [John 1:1-3, NIV].

'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...' [John 1:14, NIV].

'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...' [John 1:14, KJV].

Trinitarians use John's opening verses to prove Christ's Deity and antecedent eternity, in which they believe. Actually, these verses have been misunderstood and mistranslated. The following points answer the concerning John's opening verses:

- 1) The Greek word 'logos' was translated into 'word' in English translations of the Bible. It has several meanings which include: utterance, conception, order, teaching and reason. A Greek philosopher named Heraclitus first used the term 'Logos' around 600 B.C. to designate the divine reason or plan which coordinates a changing universe. This word was well suited to John's purpose in John 1. In the Old Testament several statements about God's word are given indicating its relation with God's act of creating things.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. [Psalm 33:6].

For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. [Psalm 33:9].

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. [Genesis 1:3].

John Wesley's commentary note on Psalm 33:6 reads: *"The word - God made this admirable structure of the heavens, and all its glorious stars; not with great pains and time, but with one single word."* It is not an accident that the Gospel of John begins with the same phrase as the book of Genesis. In Genesis 'In the beginning' introduces the story of the old creation; in John it introduces the story of the new creation i.e. the creation of Jesus. In both works of creation the word of God is significantly mentioned."

In conclusion, 'God's word' can be interpreted as his command by which he creates things: "Let there be...". Accordingly, Jesus Christ can be figuratively called 'God's word' because he was created in a unique way (without a father, unlike the other descendents of Adam). Another acceptable interpretation is that 'God's word' means his knowledge, wisdom, purpose or plan etc. God's knowledge, wisdom and purpose are eternally antecedent. Indeed, it would be illogical to assume that every occurrence of the term 'word' in the Bible denotes Jesus Christ.

- 2) The Greek text of John 1:1 reads: “EN ARCHE EN HO LOGOS KAI HO LOGOS EN PROS TON THEON KAI THEOS EN HO LOGOS”. The Greek language uses the word “god” (Greek = *theos*) to refer to the Almighty as well as to other authorities. These include the Devil (2 Cor. 4:4), lesser gods (1 Cor. 8:5) and men with great authority (John 10:34 and 35; Acts 12:22). At the time the New Testament was written, Greek manuscripts were written in all capital letters. The upper and lower case letters were not blended as we do today. Thus, the distinction that we today make between “God” and “god” could not be made, and the context became the judge in determining to whom “*THEOS*” referred.

Although context is the final arbiter, it is almost always the case in the New Testament that when “God” refers to the Almighty, the definite article appears in the Greek text i.e. God = HO THEOS or TON THEON (in case of expressing possession); god = THEOS. Since the definite article is present in the first occurrence and missing from the second occurrence of ‘THEOS’ in the Greek text of John 1:1 the usual meaning would be “god” (with small g) or “divine”.

Furthermore, it can be seen that there is a definite article with “LOGOS”, but not with “THEOS”. When in Greek two nouns are joined by the verb “to be,” and when both have the definite article, then the one is fully intended to be identified with the other; but when one of them is without the article, it becomes more an adjective than a noun, and describes rather the class or sphere to which the other belongs. Here are some examples for nontraditional translations for the last phrase in John 1:1 that took into consideration the previous facts:

“...and what God was, the Word was.” [New English Bible].

“...and the Word was a god.” [New World Translation].

“...and the Word was divine.” [Moffatt Bible].

- 3) The pronoun in verse 3 can legitimately be translated as “it.” It does not have to be translated as “him,” and it does not have to refer to a “person” in any way. A primary reason why people get the idea that “the Word” is a person is that the pronoun “he” is used with it. The Greek text does, of course, have the masculine pronoun, because like many languages, including Spanish, French, German, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic *etc.* To demand that “the Word” or “logos” is a masculine person and therefore a third part of a three-part Godhead because the pronouns used when referring to it are masculine, is poor scholarship. Indeed, if one tried to build a theology based on the gender of the noun in the language, great confusion would result. Here are examples of ancient translations for John 1:3 that used “it” to refer to “the word”:

All things were made by it, and without it, was made no thing, that made was. [William Tyndale’s Version, 1526].

All things were made by it: and without it, was made nothing that was made. [Bishop’s Bible, 1568].

All things were made by it, and without it was made nothing that was made. [Geneva Bible, 1587].

- 4) It is important to understand that the Bible was not written in a vacuum, but was recorded in the context of a culture. In the first century, there were many competing beliefs in the world (and unfortunately, erroneous beliefs in Christendom) that were confusing believers about the identities of God and Christ.

The opening of the Gospel of John was a powerful polemic against primary heresies of the day. Gnostics were teaching that, in the hierarchy of gods, the god *Elohim* and the god Christ were actually opposed to each other. Docetists, who were teaching that Christ was a spirit being

and only appeared to be flesh. The opening of John's Gospel shows that in the beginning there was only one God, not many gods. It also shows that this God had reason, wisdom, a plan or purpose within Himself, which became flesh in Jesus Christ. Thus, God and Christ are not at cross purposes as some were saying, and Christ was not a spirit being as others were saying.

5) In the NIV, the Greek verb "egeneto" which comes from the word "ginomai" was translated into "became" in John 1:14. On the other hand, this same verb was translated into "were made" in John 1:3. This distorts the original meaning and shows how the translator's beliefs can affect the accuracy of a translation. When observing this fact and the context of John 1:14, the KJV seems to be more accurate in translating this verse.

Conclusion:

The opening of the Gospel of John does not prove that Jesus is God or part of a triune god. It does not prove that Jesus is eternally antecedent. It does not prove that all things were made by or through Jesus.

This opening seems to state that the knowledge, wisdom, purpose and will of God is eternally antecedent. There was not another god existing with God, especially not a god opposed to God. The word, power, decision, command etc. only belonged to God. God's word, wisdom, power, will, command etc. was divine. Everything was made by God's word (command, purpose, wisdom). Accordingly, Jesus was uniquely made by God's word i.e. he was created without a father. This opening doesn't prove any pre-existence for Jesus except a figurative pre-existence (in God's knowledge and plan).

1-2 GOD IS ONE

1-2-1 Proof from the OT

Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other. [Deuteronomy 4:39].

You were shown these things so that you might know that the LORD is God; besides him there is no other. [Deuteronomy 4:35].

See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand. [Deuteronomy 32:39].

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me. [Deuteronomy 5:6,7].

"You shall have no other gods before me. [Exodus 20:3].

"Be careful to do everything I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips. [Exodus 23:13].

"There is no one like you, O LORD, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. [1 Chronicles 17:20].

1-2-2 Proof from the NT

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."
"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. [Mark 12:28-32].

Jesus Christ also said:

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. [Matthew 6:24].

Further proof:

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. [James 2:19].

Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. [Romans 3:29,30].

1-3 GOD AND CHRIST ARE TWO NOT ONE

In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me." [John 8:17-18].

By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. [John 5:30].

"I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. [John 8:49-50].

For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say." [John 12:49-50].

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." [Matthew 26:39].

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." [Luke 22:42].

"Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." [Mark 14:36].

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." [Luke 23:34].

But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ. [Matthew 23:8-10].

"...Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." [John 6:27].

Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. [John 17:3].

'For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus...' [1 Timothy 2:5].

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings. [James 1:1].

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness. [Titus 1:1].

1-4 GOD IS GREATER THAN CHRIST

"You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. [John 14:28].

Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. [John 8:54].

A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. [Matthew 10:24].

I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. [John 13:16].

By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. [John 5:30].

Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. [Acts 4:27].

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. [Acts 3:13].

For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. [1 Corinthians 15:27,28].

1-5 MIRACLES DON'T PROVE THE DEITY OF JESUS

1-5-1 Parallel Miracles Attributed to Others

There is no major miracle (including ascension to heaven) attributed to Jesus which does not have some parallel in the Bible.

If you look at the Old Testament, 2 Kings 2:11-12 tells us: "... *and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out ... And Elisha saw him no more ...*". Also, Genesis 5:24 tells us that Enoch was taken away by God. That this means 'taken up into Heaven' is confirmed in the New Testament [Hebrews 11:5], where it says: "*By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*"

Elijah made a dead person live again [1 Kings 17:21-24] and so did Elisha [2 Kings 4 :34-37]. Elisha also made blind people become sighted [2 kings 6:17 & 2 kings 6:20].

1-5-2 The Testimony of Jesus:

By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. [John 5:30].

"I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me. [John 5:36].

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go." [John 11:41-44].

Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!" "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. [Mark 11:20-24]. See also [Matthew 21:20-22].

1-5-3 The Testimony of Others:

The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." [John 9:30-33].

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." [John 3:1-2].

"Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. [Acts 2:22].

1-6 THE BIBLE DENIES THE DEITY OF JESUS

1-6-1 God is not a Man, nor a Son of Man

God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill? [Numbers 23:19].

He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind. [1 Samuel 15:29].

You saw no form of any kind the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire. Therefore watch yourselves very carefully, so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, whether formed like a man or a woman, or like any animal on earth or any bird that flies in the air, or like any creature that moves along the ground or any fish in the waters below. [Deuteronomy 4:15-19].

Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. [Romans 1:22-23].

Praying to God, Solomon said:

"But will God really dwell on earth with men? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!" [2 Chronicles 6:18].

Jesus states that he is a man:

"... As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God." [John 8:40].

Jesus regularly calls himself 'the Son of Man':

"The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." [Matthew 26:24].

In the Bible, others also call him a man:

Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. [Acts 2:22].

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. [1 Timothy 2:5].

Jesus, like all human beings, felt thirsty [John 19:28], hungry [Matthew 21:18], ate and drank [Luke 7:34], and slept [Mark 4:3].

He will not let your foot slip- he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. [Psalm 121:3,4].

1-6-2 God does not Change

"I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed." [Malachi 3:6].

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. [James 1:17].

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. [Luke 2:52].

Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered. [Hebrews 5:8].

1-6-3 God is Immortal and Self-existent

"... God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen." [1 Timothy 6:15-16].

Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. [Romans 1:22,23].

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen. [1 Timothy 1:17].

But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King ... [Jeremiah 10:10].

Jesus said:

Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. [John 6:57].

I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say. [John 12:50].

1-6-4 God has no Instructor

"All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?" [Daniel 4:35].

"But he stands alone, and who can oppose him? He does whatever he pleases.[Job 23:13].

"... I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please." [Isaiah 46:10].

Who has understood the mind of the LORD , or instructed him as his counselor? Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding? [Isaiah 40:13,14].

"Can anyone teach knowledge to God, since he judges even the highest?" [Job 21:22].

Jesus said:

By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. [John 5:30].

The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him. [John 8:29].

For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. [John 12:49].

Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him." [John 7:16-18].

The Temptation of Jesus:

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. [Matthew 4:1].

1-6-5 God is The Almighty

And David became more and more powerful, because the LORD Almighty was with him. [1 Chronicles 11:9]. See also [2 Samuel 5:10].

"... Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty..." [Revelation 15:3].

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. [Ephesians 3:20-21].

Angel Gabriel said:

"For nothing is impossible with God." [Luke 1:37].

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." [Matthew 19:26].

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." [Mark 10:27].

Jesus said:

"... By myself I can do nothing ..." [John 5:30].

He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. [Mark 6:5].

An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. [Luke 22:43].

1-6-6 God is All-Knowing

In Hannah's prayer he said: *"Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed."* [1 Samuel 2:3].

I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. [Isaiah 46:10].

Can anyone teach knowledge to God, since he judges even the highest? [Job 21:22].

"... For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything." [1 John 3:20].

Jesus is not all-knowing according to the Bible:

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." [Mark 13:32 & Matthew 24:36].

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. [Mark 11:12-13]. See also Matthew 21:18-19.

1-6-7 God is the God, King, and Judge of the Entire Universe

God is the God of the Jews and the Gentiles:

Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. [Romans 3:29-30].

Jesus was sent only to the Israelites:

He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." [Matthew 15:24].

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. [Matthew 10:5-6].

'but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel...' [Luke 24:21].

God is the King over the Entire Universe:

How awesome is the LORD Most High, the great King over all the earth! [Psalm 47:2].

For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise. [Psalm 47:7].

Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard and said: "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you..." [2 Chronicles 20:5-7].

"...God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen." [1 Timothy 6:16].

"Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages." [Revelation 15:3].

"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble." [Daniel 4:37].

Jesus denied being a king (in this world) and denied having total authority:

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

[John 18:36].

Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself. [John 6:15].

"I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." [Matthew 26:29].

"...but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared." [Mark 10:40].

God is a righteous judge over all people:

God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day. [Psalm 7:11].

He summons the heavens above, and the earth, that he may judge his people. [Psalm 50:4].

And the heavens proclaim his righteousness, for God himself is judge. [Psalm 50:6].

Jesus denied being a judge:

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" [Luke 12:13-14].

I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. [John 8:50].

Jesus denied his deity:

"We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God." Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came--and the Scripture cannot be broken-- what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?" [John 10:33-37]. Notice how Jesus denied claiming to be God, and that the expression "the one whom the Father set apart as his very own" indicates that Jesus is not timeless.

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good--except God alone. You know the commandments..." [Mark 10:17-19].

A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good--except God alone. You know the commandments..." [Luke 18:18-20].

1-7 JESUS BELIEVED IN AND WORSHIPPED A GOD AND COMMANDED OTHERS TO WORSHIP THAT GOD

1-7-1 Proofs from the Sayings of Jesus

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." [Mark 12:28-31].

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." [Luke 10:25-28].

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him. [Matthew 4:8-11].

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." [Matthew 6:6].

Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" [John 20:17].

"...Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent..." [John 17:3].

"You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks..." [John 4:22-23].

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven..." [Matthew 7:21].

1-7-2 Further Proofs

Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. [Mark 6:45-46].

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. [Mark 1:35].

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. [Luke 5:16].

'The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus...' [Acts 3:13].

1-8 THE BIBLE STATES THAT JESUS IS A PROPHET AND TEACHER

1-8-1 Jesus States that he is a Prophet

And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor." [Matthew 13:57].

Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor." [Mark 6:4].

"I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown." [Luke 4:24].

After the two days he left for Galilee. (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.) [John 4:43-44].

He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. [Matthew 10:40-41, NKJV].

1-8-2 Jesus never Objected to being Called a Prophet or Teacher

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee." [Matthew 21:10-11].

They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people." This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country. [Luke 7:16-17].

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet." [John 4:19].

After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." [John 6:14].

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him;" [Luke 24:20].

Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" [Mark 4:38].

He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." [John 3:2].

1-8-3 Further Proofs

'Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry...' [Luke 3:21].

They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet. [Matthew 21:46].

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. [John 1:17].

1-9 WHAT DO THE TERMS 'HOLY SPIRIT' AND 'SPIRIT OF GOD' MEAN?

1-9-1 Linguistic Causes of the Misconception

Trinitarians believe in a triune God, and that the 'Holy Spirit' is the third person in that Trinity. The misconception about the 'Holy Spirit' was influenced by the following:

- 1) The variable meanings and usage of the word 'spirit' (Hebrew: ruah, Greek: pneuma) in the Bible, including the metaphoric usage.
- 2) The repeated association of the adjective 'holy' (which also has several linguistic definitions) with the word 'spirit', and the usage of the term 'spirit of God'.
- 3) The selective usage of capital letters by the Bible translators, although they don't exist in the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.
- 4) The selective usage of the definite article 'the' with the words 'holy spirit' by the Bible translators, although in a large number of cases the term appears without the definite article in the original Greek text.
- 5) The biased mistranslation of the neuter Greek pronouns referring to "pneuma" (a grammatically neuter word) into masculine English pronouns in most cases by the KJV translators. One Instance where they did not mistranslate, is found in Romans 8:16. *"The Spirit itself (not himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."*

1-9-2 Examples Indicating Different Meanings of the Term 'Holy Spirit'

1- The Term Meaning God:

Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them. [Isaiah 63:10].

So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did." [Hebrews 3:7-9].

2- The Term Meaning a Holy Angel:

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. [Matthew 1:18].

Compare the previous verse with the following verse:

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. [Luke 1:26-27].

We can find another example when reading the story of the baptism of Jesus:

‘and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”’ [Luke 3:22]. When reading the same story in Mark 1:9-11 and John 1:32-33, the term ‘the Spirit’ is used, while in Matthew 3:13-17 the term ‘the Spirit of God’ is used. From Luke 4:1 and Matthew 4:1 we find that the same spirit that descended from heaven led Jesus in the desert. The spirit mentioned in this story is an angel, and this can be proved by the following:

- a- From Exodus 23:20-23 we find that God sent an angel to lead the Israelites in the desert. Compare with Luke 4:1 and Matthew 4:1.
- b- Angels come down from heaven. See Judges 13:3-20 and Matthew 28:2 for example.
- c- In both the old and new testaments sometimes angels are called spirits: ***‘Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?’*** [Hebrews 1:14]. See also 1 Kings 22:21 and 1 Samuel 16:14.
- d- In the Bible sometimes angels are called ‘holy angels’. See Luke 9:26, Acts 10:22, and Revelation 14:10. Therefore angels are ‘holy spirits’.
- e- In the Bible, an angel sometimes is called ‘the angel of God’ or ‘an angel of God’. See Genesis 21:17 & 31:11, Exodus 14:19, Judges 6:20 & 13:9, Acts 10:3 and Galatians 4:14. Therefore an angel can be called ‘the spirit of God’.
- f- The Bible states that it would be corrupt and foolish to think that God has the form or image of a bird or any other creature. See Deuteronomy 4:15-19 and Romans 1:22-23. Therefore the spirit that descended on Jesus ‘in bodily form like a dove’ is obviously neither God nor a part of God.
- g- Other passages state that the angels attended Jesus [Matthew 4:6 and Mark 1:13] and that an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him [Luke 22:43].

3- The Metaphoric Usage of the Term:

Jesus himself clarified the metaphoric usage of the word 'spirit' when he said: ***‘The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life’***. [John 6:63]. This statement proves that the word 'spirit' can be used metaphorically to mean the words, teachings or commands etc. of God, because it is only by following those teachings that a human being can live a valuable life on earth and in the hereafter. This can be proved by further evidence from the Bible:

‘I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.’ [John 12:50].

‘For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.’ [1 Thessalonians 4:7-8].

‘...take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.’ [Ephesians 6:16-17]. Notice how faith is called a shield, salvation is called a helmet, the spirit is called a sword, and the word of God is called the spirit.

John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire...” [Luke 3:16]. Here, ‘the holy spirit’ (God’s words and teachings) is paralleled with water and fire because of their purifying and refining characteristics.

“But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” [Matthew 12:28].

Compare the same statement by another Gospel writer:

"But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you."
[Luke 11:20].

In the following examples, the term indicates a nonphysical principal character or quality:
'Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.' [Acts 6:3].

'They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit...' [Acts 6:5].

'The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD –' [Isaiah 11:2].

'And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.' [Luke 2:40]. Compare this passage with the three previous examples.

Notice that the word 'holy' has more than one meaning; It can mean: divine, sacred, consecrated, saintly, devoted to the service of God etc.

1-10 JESUS NEVER MENTIONED THE TRINITY

1-10-1 Jesus Didn't Teach Anything in Secret

If Jesus believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, then why didn't he ever emphasize, explain, teach or even mention it to the people of his time? Certainly he didn't explain the trinity to his followers in secret; if he did so this would have contradicted his sayings:

Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said." [John 18:19-21].

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he." [John 4:25-26].

He said to them, "Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don't you put it on its stand? For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." [Mark 4:21-23].

"So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs." [Matthew 10:26-27].

1-10-2 Jesus Never Disapproved of the Unitarian Jewish Belief in God

Jesus lived among the Jews, and he never disapproved of their Unitarian and none-Trinitarian belief in God. On the contrary, his sayings indicate that he approved this belief.

"You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks." [John 4:23].

Even the book of Acts confirms this.

'The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus...' [Acts 3:13].

1-10-3 Indirect Denial of the Trinity

"If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels." [Luke 9:26]. Why isn't the glory of the 'Holy Spirit' mentioned here?

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." [Mark 13:32]. See also Matthew 24:36. Why isn't the Holy Spirit mentioned here? Are the angels expected to have more knowledge than the 'Holy Spirit'?

But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me. In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me." [John 8:16-18]. In 1 John 5:6-7 it is stated that 'the Spirit' testifies. Why didn't Jesus mention here the testimony of the 'Holy Spirit' instead of mentioning his own testimony? Remember that Jesus said: *"If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid."* [John 5:31]. Jesus could have said that there are three witnesses who testify for him; two witnesses and himself.

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." [Matthew 6:6]. Jesus commands that prayer must be to the Father, and that the Father is the one who rewards. The Son and the Holy Spirit are not mentioned here.

1-10-4 Answering a Common Argument

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [Matthew 28:18-20].

Trinitarians often point to these verses to prove that God is triune. Here is the answer:

- 1) This verse does not state that the three mentioned comprise the godhead.
- 2) The ending of Matthew 28:19 is not included in any of the Greek manuscripts.
- 3) The early church fathers quoting Matthew 28:19 word it "baptizing them in my name" indicating that the modern ending was not acknowledged by earlier writers.
- 4) None of the other gospels or epistles use this phrasing. Compare with Mark 16:15-16 which read: *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."*
- 5) The apostles didn't obey this 'command'; their practice endorsed baptism only in the Name of Jesus. See Acts 10:48, 2:38, 8:16, 19:5.
- 6) An individual 'name' isn't even assigned to the spirit making the command impossible to obey.
- 7) God always has all the authority in heaven and on earth and no one gives it to him. Jesus denied in Mark 10:40 that he has total authority.
- 8) Compare the statement *"And surely I am with you always..."* with Mark 14:7 which reads: *"The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me."* See also John 7:33 and John 13:33.

2 PROPHET MUHAMMAD IN THE BIBLE

2-1 JESUS IS NOT THE FINAL PROPHET

2-1-1 How Many Personalities Were the Jews Awaiting?

The Jews before the appearance of Jesus were expecting the arrival of three great personalities. These were Elijah, Christ and the last prophet. It was a custom of the Jews, therefore, to enquire of each messenger who came unto them as to whether he was Elijah, Christ or the last prophet. The Bible reports the questioning of John the Baptist by the Jews before the coming of Jesus Christ.

(19) Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

(20) He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

(21) And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?"

(22) He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

And he answered, "No." [John 1:19-22, NKJV]

'Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible' (Published in 1871) is a well know Christian commentary. Its commentary on John 1:21 reads:

"Elias--in His own proper person.

that prophet--announced in De 18:15, &c., about whom they seem not to have been agreed whether he were the same with the Messiah or no."

Also another passage in the NT, shows that the Jews at the time of Jesus were awaiting more than one personality.

Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." [John 7:40-42].

2-1-2 By Their Fruits You Will Know Them

(15) "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. (16) You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? (17) Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. (18) A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. (19) Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (20) Therefore by their fruits you will know them. [Matthew 7:15-20, NKJV]

"(1) Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (2) By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, (3) and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world." [1 John 4:1-3]

The claim that Jesus (pbuh) is the final prophet contradicts the Bible. When observing Matthew 7:15-20, it can be easily understood that Jesus was teaching the people how tell true

prophets from false prophets. If Jesus meant to say that no true prophets will come after him, he would have clearly stated that.

Also, it is very clear from 1 John 4:1 that the word 'spirit' is used synonymously with the word 'prophet'. Since Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, the two succeeding verses (1 John 4:2-3) prove that Muhammad (pbuh) is a prophet of God. Believing in Jesus (pbuh) and teaching people to believe in him (which prophet Muhammad [pbuh] did) is one of the 'good fruits' mentioned in 1 John 4:1-3.

2-1-3 The Promised 'Parakletos'

John is the only evangelist to report the episode of the last dialogue with the Apostles. It takes place at the end of the Last Supper and before Jesus's arrest. It ends in a very long speech reported in four chapters in John's Gospel (14 to 17). These chapters of John nevertheless deal with questions of prime importance and fundamental significance to the future outlook.

This very touching farewell scene which contains Jesus's spiritual testament, is entirely absent from Matthew, Mark and Luke. How can the absence of this description be explained? One might ask the following. did the text initially exist in the first three Gospels? Was it subsequently suppressed? Why? It must be stated immediately that no answer can be found; the mystery surrounding this huge gap in the narrations of the first three evangelists remains as obscure as ever.

The dominating feature of this narration is the view of man's future that Jesus describes, his care in addressing his disciples, and through them the whole of humanity, his commandments and his concern to specify the guide whom man must follow after his departure. The text of John's Gospel is the only one to designate him as *Parakletos* in Greek, which in English has become 'Paraclete'.

The word *Parakletos* is mentioned only five times in the Bible (John 14:16; 14:26; 15:26; 16:7; 1 John 2:1). Bible scholars have translated the word *Parakletos* into different meanings e.g. Comforter, Counselor, Helper, , Advocate, Intercessor, Mediator etc. .

2-1-3-1 Jesus Was a Prophet and a 'Parakletos'

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Parakletos), that He may abide with you forever." [John 14:16, NKJV].

"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate (a Parakletos) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." [1 John 2:1].

It can be clearly concluded from John 14:16 and 1 John 2:1 that there is more than one *Parakletos* and that Jesus was a *Parakletos*. Other passages in the Bible state that Jesus was a prophet (e.g. Matt. 10:40-41; 21:10-11, Mark 6:4, Luke 7:16-17; 24:20, John 4:19; 6:14). Therefore, the *Parakletos* can be a prophet.

It is also instructive to note that the promised *parakletos* is "*allos*," another *parakletos* of the same kind. John could have written "*heteros*," another *parakletos* of a different kind.

2-1-3-2 'Holy Spirit' and 'Spirit of Truth'

The Adjective 'Holy':

When the adjective 'holy' precedes a noun, this doesn't necessarily mean that this noun denotes God or part of a 'Godhead' (See 2 kings 4:9 & Mark 6:20 in which the term "holy man" is used). The word 'holy' can mean dedicated, devoted, or belonging to God. Accordingly, any prophet of God is Holy.

A Prophet is Called a 'Spirit':

"(1)Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (2)By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, (3)and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world." [1 John 4:1-3].

It is very clear from 1 John 4:1 that the word 'spirit' is used synonymously with the word 'prophet'. Also, Since Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, the two succeeding verses (1 John 4:2-3) prove that Muhammad (pbuh) is a spirit (prophet) of God. Therefore, Muhammad (pbuh) can be called a holy spirit according to the Bible.

Notice also that Trinitarian Christians believe in only one "Holy Spirit" and not several "Holy Spirits", but the verses denote that more than one spirit can pass or fail the test.

'The Spirit of Truth':

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." [John 16:13].

It has already been established that. Biblically, the word "Spirit" is used synonymously for "Prophet," by the same author in 1 John 4: 1 (as seen earlier). Hence the "Spirit of Truth" would be the Prophet of Truth or a prophet in whom Truth is personified. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was given even from his pagan fellow countrymen his two famous noble designations of *as-Saadiq* (the Truthful One) and *al-Amin*, (the Honest or the Trustworthy) even before he became a prophet. His life, his personality, his teachings are the veritable proof of Muhammad (pbuh) being the embodiment of truth (the Spirit of Truth).

2-1-3-3 Masculine Gender Emphasized

In Greek, as in Latin and many other languages, every noun has a certain gender. Greek grammar demands that the nouns and their accompanying pronouns must agree in gender. Almost in all instances of the noun *pneuma* (spirit in Greek) in the NT, it is accompanied by neuter pronouns. However, there are only four verses in the NT in which the masculine pronoun *ekeinos* (he) is used referring to the neuter noun *pneuma* (spirit) in the same sentence or context (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; 16:14).

There is a debatable claim that the masculine pronouns refer to the comforter (*parakletos*, which is grammatically masculine). However, in John 16:13 there is not any other word in the sentence that *ekeinos* could refer to except the word *pneuma* (spirit) in the phrase "the Spirit of Truth." Note also the genitive masculine singular of the reflexive pronoun *heautou* (himself) in 16:13, in closest proximity to the neuter *pneuma*.

This uncommon grammatical structure is seemingly intentional to emphasize that the word *pneuma* mentioned on this occasion denotes a different meaning than the same word when used in the rest of the NT. In particular, the text seems to emphasize the masculine natural gender (which differs from the grammatical gender) for the spirit (*pneuma*) mentioned here. In other words, the promised *parakletos* actually seems to be man and not literally a spirit.

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He (ekeinos) will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." [John 14:26, NKJV].

"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He (ekeinos) will testify of Me." [John 15:26, NKJV].

"Howbeit when he (ekeinos), the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself (heautou); but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." [John 16:13, KJV].

"He (ekeinos) will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." [John 16:14, NKJV].

2-1-3-4 Conditional Advent of the 'Parakletos'

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (parakletos) will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you." [John 16:7, NKJV].

According to the Bible, the Holy Spirit was already present on earth during and even before the ministry of Jesus. It was present before Christ's birth according to Luke 1:15; 1:41; 1:67. It was also present during Christ's lifetime according to Luke 2:26; 3:22; Matthew 12:28. The disciples of Jesus even received the Holy Spirit when he breathed on them according to John 20:22. Since there is only one "Holy Spirit" according to the doctrine of the Trinity, it cannot be the promised *parakletos*. This is because Jesus made his own departure a pre-condition for the advent of the *parakletos*.

2-1-3-5 What will the 'Parakletos' Do?

He will not Speak on His Own authority:

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." [John 16:13, NKJV].

This description closely resembles the description of the prophet prophesized by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:18-19, ***"I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him."***

The Quran is a compilation of the "Divine Revelations" that were received by Prophet Muhammad, over a period of 23 years, through Angel Gabriel. The Prophet used to accurately recite whatever he used to hear. His companions used to accurately write down whatever he recited. Prophet Muhammad's own authorship or phrasing were not involved in any way in the Quran. He made a clear and firm separation between the Quran and his own sayings which are known as Hadeeth. As the Quran itself describes:

"He (Muhammad) does not speak of his own desire; it is no less than a revelation sent down to him." [Holy Quran 53:3-4].

On the other hand, it would never be unusual for a deity to speak on his own authority. Therefore, the 'Holy Spirit', which Trinitarian Christians believe in his deity, does not meet the description given in John 16:13.

He will tell you what is yet to come:

According to John 16:13, the promised 'parakletos' will tell about certain events which will come afterwards before they come. "... **He will tell you things to come.**" [NKJV]. At least two facts prove that this description fits Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

First, Muhammad (pbuh) gave a lot of information about the hereafter. A large portion of the Quran and the Hadeeth (Sayings of Prophet Muhammad) are extensively devoted to explain information about the fate of believers and disbelievers in the hereafter. No other present scripture of any religion contains this amount of detailed information regarding the hereafter, the day of judgement, Paradise and Hell.

Second, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) prophesized about many things which "**came to pass**" in the minutest detail, meeting the criterion given by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:22 to distinguish between the true prophet and the false prophets.

He will glorify Jesus and testify of him:

"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." [John 16:14].

"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." [John 15:26].

The Quran glorifies Jesus, his mother Virgin Mary, and his miraculous birth. It confirms that Jesus was a messiah, a righteous prophet of God, a spirit from God and a word of God (e.g. 3:45-51; 4:171). The Quran attests the miracles performed by Jesus and acknowledges that these miracles and signs were performed with the leave of God by his righteous servant and messiah, Jesus. The same is also attested in the Book of Acts 2:22.

He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you:

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." [John 14:26].

"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." [John 16:14].

The Quran and Hadeeth declare Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) a Prophet of God like Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. All prophets of God according to Islamic scripture taught the same belief in the one and only God (e.g. Holy Quran 21:25). Note that John 16:14 alludes that the true teachings of Jesus will be lost or forgotten, and that the 'Parakletos' (Prophet Muhammad) will restore these teachings about the true belief in God. The Quran declares that Jesus believed in only one God and even quotes him (e.g. 5:72).

He will abide with you forever:

Each one of the prophets of God before Muhammad (pbuh) was sent specifically to a certain people. Therefore the message of each of them was limited to a certain time until the next prophet was sent and so on. Even the Bible quotes Jesus saying that he was only sent to the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 15:24).

Prophet Muhammad is the only exception. He was sent with a universal message addressing all human beings and all generations to come. The book revealed to him, the Quran, was accurately recorded and preserved until this day. God promised to preserve the Holy Quran forever (Holy Quran 15:9). The Quran and Prophet Muhammad's teachings will remain forever because he was the last prophet of God, the only universal messenger to unite the whole of humanity under God and on the path of preserved truth.

He will guide you to all truth; He will teach you all things:

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth ..." [John 16:13].

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." [John 14:26].

This can be explained by the following:

- 1) Prophet Muhammad guided the people to the true belief in God which was originally preached by all previous prophets of God.
- 2) Prophet Muhammad's teachings included detailed and comprehensive codes of law. His teachings were related to all aspects of life.
- 3) It was Muhammad, the Spirit of Truth, that demonstrated the birthrights of Ishmael, the innocence of Lot, Solomon and many other prophets, as well as Version Mary, and cleared their name of the slur cast upon them by some of the writers of the Old Testament and the Talmud.
- 4) In John 16:12 Jesus says, *"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."* Then, in the following verse, he says *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth..."*. This denotes that Jesus isn't the final prophet, and that the advent of another prophet was necessary to complete God's message to mankind.

2-1-3-6 Answering Common Arguements

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." [John 14:16-17].

Many Christian apologists refer to the verses above to try to prove that Muhammad (pbuh) is not the person spoken about in these verses. They often use the following arguments:

- 1) *"He may abide with you forever..."* A human being doesn't live forever.
- 2) *"... He dwells with you and will be in you."* A human being cannot be within others.
- 3) *"... whom the world cannot receive..."* Muhammad was not only received, but founded a great empire.
- 4) *"... because it neither sees Him nor knows Him..."* A human would be visible and would be known by others.
- 5) Jesus was addressing his disciple, and Muhammad never met them.

Answer:

- 1) Immediately after prophesizing about the 'Parakletos', Jesus explicitly stated (in John 16:25) that he was speaking in a figurative language.
- 2) Jesus certainly spoke in a figurative language when he said, *"... He may abide with you forever..."* and *"... He dwells with you and will be in you."* In order to properly understand this statement it should be related to John 15:4-7 which quotes Jesus saying, *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."* Here Jesus states that when he abides in his disciples this means that his words abide in them. He also states

that he abides in his disciples and that his disciples (who are humans) abide in him. Accordingly, human beings can abide in each other in a figurative sense.

3) In the beginning of Prophet Muhammad's advent, he was rejected by most of the people around him. This rejection lasted for more than twenty years. He started his mission by reciting the Quran, preaching, teaching and practicing the true religion. However, when the powers of darkness opposed him with arms, he was commanded by God with the believers to draw their swords against the hostile unbelieving enemy. These events explain John 16:8-9 which states that the Parakletos will convict the world of sin.

4) When Jesus said that the world neither sees nor knows the Parakletos, again he certainly was speaking in a figurative language. As mentioned above, Jesus stated that he has spoken in a figurative language in John 16:25. The verbs 'see' and 'know' are used figuratively in other passages of John's Gospel to denote the meanings of belief and understanding. For example, in John 14:5-9 Jesus states that whoever has seen him has seen the father. However, in John 5:37, he tells the people who see him that they have never seen the father. Another example is John 14:7 which quotes Jesus saying, "***If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.***"

5) Although Jesus was addressing his disciples, he was actually addressing all humanity through them. If 'the helper' concerned only the disciples, this would mean that he would never live with or help any Christian who would come in a later age. This would also contradict the phrase "***...that He may abide with you forever...***" mentioned in John 14:16, since the disciples have died and didn't abide forever.

2-2 PROPHETHOOD WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE ISRAELITES

2-2-1 The Departure of the Scepter from Judah

Prophet Jacob, the grandson of Prophet Abraham, is lying sick in his deathbed. He summons his twelve sons and their families to his bedroom; and he blesses each son and foretells the future of his descendents. He says in Genesis 49:10:

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. [KJV].

The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs (footnote: Or until Shiloh comes ; or until he comes to whom tribute belongs) and the obedience of the nations is his. [NIV].

The scepter or leadership shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh [the Messiah, the Peaceful One] comes to Whom it belongs, and to Him shall be the obedience of the people. [AMP].

How do Christian apologists interpret this prophecy?

Christian apologists give various interpretations to this prophecy claiming that it foretells the coming of Jesus. Their interpretations can be categorized into two contradicting concepts:

Concept 1: Some consider that according to this prophecy the scepter will remain forever in Judah's line and will be received by one of his descendents named Shiloh. They claim that Shiloh is another name for Jesus Christ. This is their claimed evidence:

- 1) The context of the prophecy indicates that it is in favor of Judah and not against him.

- 2) They compare the grammatical construction of this passage with that of other Biblical passages such as Genesis 28:15, which reads: “...***I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you***”. In this statement God does not mean that he will leave Jacob after doing what he promised him.

Concept 2: Most classical commentators consider that this prophecy foretells that the scepter will cease to exist in Judah. However, they insist that the prophecy foretells the coming of Jesus Christ although he is a descendent of Judah. To harmonize those two ideas which don't seem to agree, apologists have given various interpretations which can be summed up in the following:

- 1) In the early years of the Roman occupation of Judea, the Jewish people still had a king in their own land and were to a large extent governed by their own laws. But during the year when Jesus was twelve years of age and appeared publicly in the Temple, (Luke 2:41-52) Archelaus, the king of the Jews was dethroned and banished. Coponius was appointed Roman Procurator, and the kingdom of Judea was formally debased into a province of Syria. At this time the Sanhedrin lost its power of passing the death sentence (see John 18:31).
- 2) At the time of Christ's death, the Jews expressly admitted, "***We have no king but Caesar***" (John 19:15). With this statement, the people voluntarily subjected themselves to the occupational force of the Roman Caesar.
- 3) In 70 CE all semblance of Jewish national sovereignty disappeared when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by the armies of the Roman General Titus.
- 4) In the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. all the tablets with the register of lineage were destroyed. And even if Jewish families still have a personal knowledge of their lineage, they can't prove it anymore.
- 5) Following the second destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., Israel was dispersed into all the nations of the world.
- 6) When Jesus was born, Gentiles came and asked: "...Where is he that is born King of the Jews?..." (Matthew 2:2).
- 7) After Christ's death, many Gentiles joined the Israelites in believing in Jesus. Thus, different nations became one people under one head.

Answering Concept 1:

- 1) Although the prophecy foretells the departure of prophetic succession from the line of Judah, it still is in favor of Judah. It foretells that prophetic succession will remain in the line of Judah for a very long time, and many prophets will come from his line until Shiloh comes.
- 2) The grammatical construction of this passage (Gen. 49:10) can be compared to that of the following Biblical passages:
 ... ***Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."*** [1 Sam 16:11, NIV]
 ... ***this city will not be rebuilt until I so order.*** [Ezra 4:21, NIV].
The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he fully accomplishes the purposes of his heart. ...[Jeremiah 23:20, NIV].
- 3) In some translations of Gen. 49:10, as shown above, the term 'Shiloh' is translated into a proper noun, while others translate it into a meaningful phrase such as "he to whom it belongs". Furthermore, this verse can be compared to Ezekiel 21:27 (KJV) which reads, "***I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.***" Accordingly, the former translation of Gen. 49:10 seems to be a deliberate attempt to conceal a significant part of the original meaning.

- 4) Although some claim that Shiloh is another name for Jesus meaning 'the peaceful one', there isn't a single passage in the entire Bible in which Jesus is explicitly called 'Shiloh'.

Answering Concept 2:

- 1) Interpretations which claim that the departure of the scepter symbolizes the fall of the Jewish kingdom or losing independence or authority are unconvincing for the following reasons:
 - a) In about 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar's army besieged Jerusalem. The last king from the tribe of Judah, Zedekiah, was taken captive to Babylon. His sons were killed and he was kept in close confinement till his death (2kings 25:5-7). The temple and the palaces were consumed, and the walls of the city were leveled with the ground (2kings 25:8-10). Most of the people were taken captives to Babylon (2kings 25:11). Following the return to Zion from the Babylonian exile in about 537 B.C., the Jews were continually subject to foreign domination – Persian, Greek, Roman – with only a brief interlude of independence during the Maccabean period (165 B.C.E. to 63 B.C.E.), whose rulers were members of the tribe of Levi. Thus, there was a period of some six hundred years, prior to the birth of Jesus, during which the kingdom of Judah had lost its national sovereignty.
 - b) There was no major turning point in the history of Judah specifically (or even the Jews in General) regarding their royalty or national sovereignty during Christ's lifetime. Any related events which occurred during that period can't be considered more significant than corresponding events which had occurred before.
- 2) The chief priests' statement, "We have no king but Caesar," wasn't a faithful one. They said that because they wanted Jesus to be executed. Besides, they had already lost their independence a long time before saying that statement.
- 3) Interpretations which claim that the departure of the scepter symbolizes the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem are unconvincing for the following reasons:
 - a) This was the second time for the temple to be destroyed. It had been destroyed before in about 587 B.C. (Isa 64:11, 2chr. 36:19, 2kings 25:9-17).
 - b) The temple wasn't peculiar to Judah alone. It concerned all the tribes of Israel.
 - c) The destruction occurred in 70 A.C. . The prophecy says, "until Shiloh comes" and not, "until Shiloh leaves".
- 4) The destruction of the tablets with the register of lineage cannot be symbolized by the departure of the scepter for the following reasons:
 - a) There is no proof in the Bible that the scepter symbolizes some tablets with the register of lineage. Regarding a prophecy, the scepter is expected to be something of greater significance.
 - b) Any prophecy in the Bible which foretells the coming of a prophet from a certain lineage does not at all stipulate that that prophet should prove his lineage by documents.
- 5) Claiming that the departure of the scripture symbolizes the dispersal of Israel into all nations of the world following the second destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., is a big mistake. The NT states that the Jews were already dispersed during Christ's lifetime (John 7:35). Moreover, the OT proves that dispersion had occurred centuries before Jesus (2kings 18:21, Isa. 30:7, Jer. 24:9, 29:18, Deut. 4:27, 28:64).
- 6) Even if some people called Jesus (pbuh) "the king of the Jews", this actually doesn't make him a king. Besides, during his lifetime, the Jews didn't have an independent

kingdom. In addition, Jesus himself denied being a king in this world (John 18:36, 6:15).

- 7) If we interpret the gathering of the people as the belief of many people from different races in Jesus (pbuh) after his death, then this would similarly apply to Muhammad (pbuh).

Does this prophecy fit Mohammad (pbuh)?

The synonymous words *scepter*, *staff* and *rod* are used in the Old Testament to denote several meanings. Although the scepter sometimes denotes royalty (Esther 4:11), the usage of the word is not always restricted to that meaning in particular. For example, the staff was used by judges as a symbol of leadership (Judges 5:14). In some other passages, those words denoted leadership, authority, dominance, power or punishment (Ezek 19:14, 19:11, 2Sam 7:14, Job 9:34, 21:9, Ps 2:9, Isa 11:4, 14:15, 9:4). The use of the scepter possibly originated in the idea that the person in authority was a shepherd of his people; A shepherd's duty was to gather, guide and protect the sheep with his rod (Ps 23:4, Mic 7:14, Gen 49:24, Ezek 34:4). Accordingly, it is logically acceptable to interpret the scepter or staff in Gen 49:10 as religious leadership or prophetic succession.

The prophecy mentions indirectly that the scepter will remain in Judah for a long time before it departs. Actually, most of the prophets of Israel mentioned in the Bible were from the line of Judah. Examples are: David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, Micah, Naham, Zephaniah, Daniel and Zechariah. Jesus (pbuh) who directly preceded Mohammad (pbuh) was the last prophet from Judah.

The word *depart* indicates that the scepter will leave Judah and go to a certain destination. This destination was another line of Abraham, the line of Ishmael. This was to fulfill God's promise to make Ishmael a father of a great nation (Gen 17:20, 21:18). For this reason, the foretold Ishmaelite prophet was described in Gen 49:10 as "*he comes to whom it belongs*" (NIV).

Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) during his lifetime prevailed over his main enemies, who were infidels from the different tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. Almost all of these tribes converted to Islam and were united under Prophet Mohammad's leadership. It should be noted that the word *people* or *nations* in Gen 49:10, which is a translation of the Hebrew word *amim* can sometimes mean tribes. This is clear in verse 16 of the same chapter (the word *am*, singular for *amim*, is translated into *people*) which reads, "*Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.*"(KJV)

2-2-2 "Who's Son Is He?"

(41)While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, (42)saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"

They said to Him, "The Son of David."

(43)He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying:

(44)"The LORD said to my Lord,

"Sit at My right hand,

Till I make Your enemies Your footstool!"

(45)If David then calls Him "Lord,' how is He his Son?" (46)And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

This dialogue is mentioned three times in the Bible (Matt. 22:41-46 ; Mark 12:35-37 ; Luke 20:41:44). It has been taken for granted by Christian Scholars that Jesus (pbuh) was asking about

his own father in that dialogue. However, the truth is that Jesus was actually speaking about the final prophet, Muhammad (pbuh), and stating that he will not be a descendent of David (the Jews were expecting the final prophet to be a descendent of David). This interpretation can be proved by the following:

- 1) The word 'Lord' appears frequently in the Bible as a polite form of address from an inferior to a superior (e.g. Numbers 36:2, Genesis 42:10, Judges 4:18).
- 2) The title 'Christ' (Greek: Christos ; Hebrew: Messiah) literally means 'anointed' and its meaning in the Bible is not restricted to Jesus alone. The title is sometimes assigned to the prophets of God (1Chron. 16:22). Some of them were physically anointed with oil when consecrated (1Kings 19:16). Also, a person who has been spiritually purified by God has been (figuratively) anointed according to the Bible (2Cor. 1:21 ; 1John 2:20;27).
- 3) In all the three instances reporting this dialogue in the Bible, Jesus was speaking about 'The Christ' in third person and not in first person. In other words, Jesus said, "Who's son is he?" and not "Who's son am I."
- 4) The Bible states that Jesus is the son of David (Matt. 1:1). Besides, no clear objection by Jesus on being addressed by this title has been reported in the Bible. The Bible has never reported any clear objection by Jesus on being repeatedly addressed by "the son of David" (See Matt. 9:27 ; 15:22 ; 20:30-31 ; Mark 10:47-48 ; Luke 19:38-39).
- 5) In all instances reporting this dialogue in the Bible, Jesus never gives an answer to the question which he asks, although he tells the Jews that their answer is wrong. Surprisingly, even the Jews don't ask him about the correct answer. Instead, they become stunned and don't even dare to ask him any other question! The only possible explanation is that they were strongly disappointed when they were informed that the final prophet will not be a descendent of David.
- 6) All of the audience who answered the question chose the same answer, "son of David". None of them answered, "son of Mary" or "son of Joseph" although if they had done so, it wouldn't have been unusual (see Luke 4:22 ; John 1:45 ; 6:42). This denotes that Jesus was asking about the lineage of the awaited prophet and not about his own father.
- 7) The prophecy tells about someone whose enemies will become his footstool. This is a figurative expression which denotes that this person will be victorious and will powerfully defeat his enemies. This doesn't apply to the life story of Jesus. Instead, it fits Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who, during his lifetime, prevailed over his main enemies who were infidels from the different tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. Almost all of these tribes converted to Islam and were united under Prophet Muhammad's leadership.
- 8) The expression "sit at my right hand" should not be taken literally. It is a figurative expression that denotes privilege and distinction. The same terminology has been used several times in the Bible, and in each case its meaning is obviously figurative (e.g. 1Chron 6:34 ; Ps 121:5 ; Ps 109:30,31).

2-2-3 Further Proofs

The following passages are further prophecies from the Bible that foretell the departure of prophetic succession from the Israelites to another nation (the descendants of Eshmael) which was victorious against all super-powers of its time as prophesized by Jesus (Matt. 21:44).

2-2-3-1 The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers

(33)"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. (34)Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. (35)And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. (36)Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. (37)Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' (38)But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' (39)So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

(40)"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

(41)They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

*(42)Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:
"The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
This was the LORD's doing,
And it is marvelous in our eyes'?"*

(43)"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. (44)And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." [Matthew 21:33-43, NKJV].

2-2-3-2 The Ax is Laid to the Root of the Trees

(7)But when he (John the Baptist) saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (8)Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, (9)and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. (10)And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (11)I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (12)His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." [Matthew 3:7-12, NKJV].

2-3 PROPHETHOOD WILL APPEAR IN THE LINE OF ISHMAEL

2-3-1 The Inclusion of Ishmael in God's Convent with Abraham

2-3-1-1 The Settlement of Ishmael and Hagar in Arabia

A Comparison Between the Biblical Version and the Muslim Version

According to the Bible, Abraham was first married to Sarah who happened to be a barren woman and bore him no children (Gen 16:1). In a later chapter in the Book of Genesis (Gen 16), we are told that Sarah gave Abraham a handmaid (Hagar) to be his wife, in the hope that she may bear a child to Abraham. Hagar did bear Abraham's first child whose name, Ishmael, meaning "God hears" was given by angels (Gen 16:11). For the following fourteen years, Ishmael was Abraham's only child. In his old age, Sarah was to bear him another child, Isaac (Gen 21:5).

On the occasion of the weaning of Isaac, Ishmael was misbehaving and mocking (21:9, 10); and Sarah, discovering this asked Abraham to expel Hagar and Ishmael. Influenced by a divine admonition, Abraham dismissed Hagar and her son with no more than a skin of water and some bread. Hagar ran out of water and was worried about the life of her son Ishmael. Then, unexpectedly, she had access to water, which she gave to her son to save his life. (Gen 21:14-19). Ishmael settled in the land of Paran, and God was with him, and he became a great archer. (Gen 21:20-21). He became a great desert chief, but of his history little is recorded.

There are several similarities between the Muslim and Biblical versions of the story. However, there are some basic differences. According to the Muslim version, Hagar and Ishmael were taken away because of a specific divine instruction given to Abraham as a part of the divine plan and not for any misbehavior nor inferiority. This incident took place before the birth of Isaac and not after Isaac's birth and when Ishmael was a baby. This is a further confirmation of the real reason for Hagar and Ishmael's apparent exile.

Analysis of the differences

According to Gen 16:16 Abraham was 86 years old when Ishmael was born, and according to Gen 21:5 Abraham was one hundred years old when his younger brother Isaac was born. It follows that Ishmael was fourteen years old when his younger brother Isaac was born. According to Gen 21:8-19, the incident took place after Isaac was weaned. Biblical scholars tell us that the child was weaned about the age of three. It follows that when Hagar and Ishmael was taken away Ishmael was a full-grown teenager, seventeen years old.

On the contrary, the profile of Ishmael in Gen 21:14-19 (KJV) is that of a small baby and not a teenager. The following observations prove this statement:

- 1) According to Gen 21:14, *"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba."* How would a mother carry a seventeen-year-old teenager upon her shoulder?
- 2) In Gen 21:15 we are told that Hagar *"cast"* the child under one of the shrubs.
- 3) In Gen 21:16 we are told that Hagar sat away so that she may not see the death of the child before her own eyes. Is that a profile of a husky seventeen-year-old teenager who probably was capable of being worried about his mother dying before his eyes? Or is it obviously a profile of a small helpless baby or at most a small child?
- 4) According to the Gen 21:17, the angels told Hagar *"arise lift up the lad"*.
- 5) In Gen 21:19, we are told that Hagar went to fill the bottle with water *"and give the lad a drink."* One would expect a strong young man of seventeen to go and bring water to his mother instead.

Conclusion

The above analysis leads to the inevitable conclusion that while the Bible contains some truths, there is also evidence of human additions, deletions, and interpolations, which only a subsequent authentic revelation (the Qur'an) could clear. The only Islamic version of the story is fully consistent and coherent from A to Z. Ishmael was a baby and Isaac was not born yet when this incident took place. This coherence and consistency are confirmed by centuries-old traditions and even actual locations in Makkah (Mecca) where Hagar and Ishmael settled. This clearly implies that the real reason behind their settlement in Arabia was not due to dictation, jealousy, ego or sense of racial superiority on the part of Sarah. It was rather God's plan, pure and simple.

2-3-1-2 Ishmael was Indeed a Legitimate Son of Abraham

According to the commentators of the *Interpreter's Bible*:

"Ishmael, like Isaac, is a descendant of Abraham; but Isaac is the child of ultimate promise, born to Sarah the *true* wife while Ishmael is born of the slave girl. Though he came of the stock of Abraham, yet it was *right* that he should be separated from the *legitimate* son."

If she were not a "true" wife like Sarah, what kind of wife was she? In Gen 16:3, Hagar is described as Abraham's *wife*. If Hagar was a legitimate wife of Abraham, there are no grounds whatsoever for questioning the legitimacy of her son Ishmael. Indeed the Bible refers to Ishmael as Abraham's seed and son (See for example Gen 21:13 and 16:15).

Even if Hagar was a bondswoman, does that affect the rights and privileges of her son Ishmael? The answer can be found in the Bible itself. In Hebrew traditions, the first-born son was to have double portions of honor, even inheritance, and that right could not be changed due to the status of his mother. In the *Interpreter's Bible*, we read the following commentary on Duet. 21:15-17:

"However, the law of the first-born had ancient sanction, and so long as it was accepted, *justice* demanded that mere favoritism not be allowed to *deprive the eldest son of his rights.*"

2-3-1-3 Isaac is not Alone the Son of Promise and Covenant

Sometimes reference is made to the following verses in the book of Genesis:

"But my covenant will I establish with Isaac..." (Gen 17:21)

The Hebrew text reads, *"V'et b'risee a-keem et Yitzchak..."*. A closer look at the Hebrew text shows that there is a serious ambiguity here. There is no free-standing word for "but" in this verse, only a single-letter prefix. The letter is the Hebrew letter "vav", which is notoriously ambiguous in meaning. It sometimes means "but", and it may, on occasion, have as many as a half-dozen meanings in various contexts. However, most of the time it means "and", a word conveying a very different meaning. For the critically-exclusive "but", Hebrew has other words such as "aval" and "kee eim".

Even if we assume that there was no mistranslation, Gen 17:21 does not conclusively exclude Ishmael from the promise and covenant of God. Both verse could be understood to refer to the relatively "near" future extending over centuries during which the covenant of God and the seeds of prophethood were to be mainly in the Israelite branch of Abraham's family.

Ishmaelites were included in God's promise and His covenant with Abraham: God's covenant with Abraham was made before the latter had any children. ***"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"*** (Gen 12:2-3). After the birth of Ishmael and before the birth of Isaac, God's promise to bless the families of the earth through Abraham's family was repeated: ***"As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations"*** (Gen 17:4).

God also promised to make Ishmael a father of a great nation:

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." (Gen 17:20)

"And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." (Gen 21:13)

"And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation." (Gen 21:17,18)

It may be noted here that when God speaks of "greatness" He does not speak merely of numbers. "Greatness" in His own criterion is above all founded in faith, spiritual heritage and religious leadership. Notice also that although Abraham had other sons from a third wife called Keturah, none of them were promised to be fathers of a great nation. ***"Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah."*** (Gen 25:1,2)

God's promise to bless the descendants of Abraham was indeed realized. Through Abraham's second son Isaac came many Israelite prophets, including Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, and Jesus (peace be upon them all), the last Israelite prophet.

After the blessing of the descendants of Isaac, the Israelites, for centuries with the spiritual leadership, and after many lapses and rebellion against God on their part, a final chance was given to them through the mission of the last Israelite prophet, Jesus. When Jesus too was rejected, it was now time in God's plan to fulfill His promise to the Ishmaelites branch as well, the branch, which remained obscure until it was made a "great nation" (Genesis 17:20,21:18) through the mission of the well-known Prophet Muhammad, a descendant of Abraham through Ishmael.

That shift of prophethood and spiritual leadership to the Ishmaelite branch of Abraham's descendants brought to completion, the centuries old promise of God to bless the families of the earth through Abraham, the father of monotheism and patriarch revered by Jews, Christians and Muslims.

2-3-2 The Holy One from Mount Paran

(1)Now this is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. (2)And he said:

***"The LORD came from Sinai,
And dawned on them from Seir;
He shone forth from Mount Paran,
And He came with ten thousands of saints;
From His right hand
Came a fiery law for them. [Deuteronomy 33:1-2, NKJV].***

***God came from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of His praise. [Habakkuk 3:3].***

Deuteronomy 33:1-2 combines references to Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. It speaks of God (i.e. God's revelation) coming from Sinai, rising from Seir (probably the village of Sa'ir near Jerusalem) and shining forth from Paran. According to Genesis 21:21, the wilderness of Paran was the place where Ishmael settled (i.e. Arabia, specifically Makkah).

One of the signs of the prophet to come from Paran (Makkah) is that he will come with "ten thousands of saints) "Deuteronomy 33:2 KJV .(That was the number of faithful who accompanied Prophet Muhammad to Paran (Makkah) in his victorious, bloodless return to his birthplace to destroy the remaining symbols of idolatry in the Ka'bah. Read the whole history of the wilderness of Paran and you will find no other similar event. Also, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) gave the fiery law to the world, which reduced to ashes all other laws.

Habakkuk 3:3 speaks of God (God's help) coming from Te'man (an Oasis North of Medina according to J .Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible), and the holy one (coming) from Paran. That holy one who under persecution migrated from Paran (Makkah) to be received enthusiastically in Medina was none but prophet Muhammad

2-3-3 Sing to the Lord a New Song

*(9)Behold, the former things have come to pass,
And new things I declare;*

Before they spring forth I tell you of them."

*(10)Sing to the LORD a new song,
And His praise from the ends of the earth,
You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it,
You coastlands and you inhabitants of them!*

*(11)Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voice,
The villages that Kedar inhabits.*

*Let the inhabitants of Sela sing,
Let them shout from the top of the mountains.*

*(12)Let them give glory to the LORD,
And declare His praise in the coastlands.*

*(13)The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man;
He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war.
He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud;He shall prevail against His enemies.*

*(14)"I have held My peace a long time,
I have been still and restrained Myself.
Now I will cry like a woman in labor,
I will pant and gasp at once.*

*(15)I will lay waste the mountains and hills,
And dry up all their vegetation;
I will make the rivers coastlands,
And I will dry up the pools.*

*(16)I will bring the blind by a way they did not know;
I will lead them in paths they have not known.
I will make darkness light before them,
And crooked places straight.
These things I will do for them,
And not forsake them.*

*(17)They shall be turned back,
They shall be greatly ashamed,
Who trust in carved images,
Who say to the molded images,
"You are our gods." [Isaiah 42:9-17, NKJV].*

A new song may be a reference to a new scripture in a language other than the language of the Israelite scriptures. This explanation seems to fit closely with the second half of the same verse (Isaiah 42:10), which speaks of the praise of God "*from the ends of the earth.*" Only in the case of

Islam do we find this prophecy realized in amazing accuracy. In all ends of the earth five times every day the praise of God and of His last messenger Muhammad, is chanted from the minarets of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of mosques around the world. Additionally, frequent praise of God and Muhammad by millions of devout Muslims is made on daily basis. It is even part of the required five daily prayers to include the praise of Abraham and his descendants, and of Muhammad and his descendants. This is known as "As Salaatul Ibrahimiyah."

This person to come is connected with the Arabs, and specifically with the descendants of Ishmael (who settled in Makkah and its environs). Verse 11 of the 42nd chapters of Isaiah leaves absolutely no doubt about the identity of the awaited prophet. According to the book of Genesis, Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen.25:13). The only known prophet who came from Ishmael's descendants is Muhammad. His enemies (who were of his own clan!), who were misled by their leaders or mighty men (as described in Isaiah 21:17) ultimately embraced Islam.

God did reveal in the Land of Kedar, through prophet Muhammad - a direct descendant of Kedar, a "New Song" - The Qur'an (Koran). This happens to be the only Scripture to be revealed in the language of the Kedarites. During the annual Islamic Pilgrimage called "Hajj", Muslims from all over the world, assemble in Mecca and shout Glory to the Lord from the top of Mount Arafat. The pilgrims continuously give Glory to Allah on their ways, to and from Mecca.

"I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, And crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, And not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16). Muhammad is the only prophet through whom the Kedarites received a revelation (scripture) at the time when the darkness had covered the earth.

History records that Prophet Muhammad did put the pagan idolaters to great shame when he demolished before them, their 365 idols that were installed in Ka'bah(Mecca), the most respected place of pilgrimage in the whole of Arabia.

2-3-4 The Burden upon Arabia

(13) The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim. (14) The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled. (15) For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war. (16) For thus hath the LORD said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail: (17) And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken it. [Isaiah 21:13-17, KJV].

This prophecy mentions two major incidents which occurred during the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). These are the 'Hijra' (migration) and the battle of Badr. Furthermore, the period separating between the two incidents, which is one year, is actually mentioned in Isaiah 21:16.

Prophet Muhammad and his followers were persecuted by their own people, '*the mighty men of Kedar*', who sought to destroy Islam and intimidate their own folks who embraced Islam. He migrated with his people from Makkah (which was a desert land) to Madinah (which was an agricultural land and therefore is called '*the forest of Arabia*' in verse 13). They fled from the drawn sword and the bent bow. They were enthusiastically received by the people of Madinah, who brought water to the thirsty, and with their bread met those who fled. Tema (Tayma' in Arabic) is the name of a location north of Madinah.

Within the period of one year (which is exactly the period mentioned in Isaiah 21:16) Prophet Muhammad and his followers met the disbelieving army at place called Badr. The few ill-armed faithful miraculously defeated '*the mighty men of Kedar*'. According to the book of Genesis, Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen.25:13).

2-4 SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AWAITED PROPHET AND HIS HOMELAND

2-4-1 A Prophet Like Moses

(15) "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, (16) according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, "Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die."

(17) "And the LORD said to me: "What they have spoken is good. (18) I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. (19) And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. [Deut. 18:15-19, NKJV].

It is often contended that the prophet like Moses was Jesus. Reference is often made to John 5:46-47 in which Jesus states that Moses wrote about him. However, John 5:46-47 doesn't state that Deut. 18:15-19 in particular is about Jesus. Furthermore, there is no proof in the Bible that this prophecy is about Jesus except for Acts 3:22; 7:37. Nevertheless, most biblical scholars agree that the Book of Acts was written at least 60 years after Jesus by a Christian evangelist (probably Luke).

'From Your Brethren'

The word *brethren* in Gen. 18:15 & 18:18 indicates that the prophet will come from the brethren of the of the Israelites. The Bible refers to Ishmael as a brother of the Israelites in Gen. 16:12 & 25:18. In general, it isn't unusual in the Bible that the descendents of two brothers in the Bible are called 'brethren' or 'brothers' (e.g. Judg. 1:3; 20:23, Deut. 2:4; 23:7, Num. 20:14).

'From Your Midst'

The original Hebrew word *qereb* mentioned in Gen 18:15 and translated into *midst*, according to *Strong's Hebrew Dictionary*, has several meanings of which one is 'the nearest part'. Accordingly, the phrase 'from your midst' on the English translations doesn't necessarily mean that the prophet must be an Israelite. Indeed the Ishmaelites are near to the Israelites in terms of lineage and geographical location.

An interesting fact is that when Gen 18:15 was quoted twice in the NT (Acts 3:22; 7:37), the word *midst* is not mentioned. An explanation for this can be that the writer of the Book of Acts decided to ignore the word due to the ambiguity of its meaning.

No Israelite Prophet Like Moses

(10) And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, (11) In all the signs and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, (12) And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel. [Deut. 34:10-12].

Some may argue that Deut. 34:10 was speaking specifically about the time during which it was written, and that it doesn't apply to the time of prophet Jesus. However, Deut. 34:12 emphasizes that no Israelite prophet after Moses showed in the sight of Israel "that mighty hand" and "great terror" as Moses did. Indeed, Jesus (an Israelite prophet) didn't show neither a "mighty hand" nor "great terror" in the site of Israel.

Which Prophet Resembles Moses More?

Criteria for an Objective Comparison:

Several points of comparison have been noted by both Christian and Muslim scholars in an attempt by each to prove that Jesus or Muhammad is the prophet like Moses mentioned in the prophecy. However, in order to compare objectively between the three prophets, the following criteria should be respected:

- 1) Any of the features of the three prophets used in the comparison should be restricted to the period during which each of them began his mission as a prophet (Jesus began at the age of 30 according to Luke 3:23).
- 2) The comparison should focus only on the personal features of the prophets and the characteristics of their messages. Features peculiar to the peoples of these prophets or the environments in which they lived shouldn't be considered.
- 3) As explained above, there is a controversy between Christian and Muslim scholars over the meaning of the word 'brethren' in Gen 18:15 and Gen 18:18. Therefore, it would be irrelevant to include in the comparison the fact that both Moses and Jesus were Israelites sent to the people of Israel.

Similarities between Moses and Jesus which don't Apply to Muhammad:

Christian apologists mention several points of similarity between Moses and Jesus. Out of these points, nearly only the following agree with the criteria mentioned above:

- 1) Both Moses and Jesus have shown their peoples many physical miracles. Compared to them, the physical miracles of prophet Muhammad were very little in number.
- 2) Many Christian scholars believe that both Moses and Jesus were not illiterate. Prophet Muhammad was illiterate (pbut).
- 3) According to the Bible, both Moses and Jesus were called aloud by God's voice in public (See Exod. 24:16 & Luke 3:22. Notice that this point can be considered part of point one mentioned above).

Similarities between Moses and Muhammad which don't Apply to Jesus:

- 1) Unlike any other prophets from the lineage of Abraham, the revelation given to Moses and Muhammad contained comprehensive and detailed codes of law, in addition to spiritual and moral elements of their teachings. The teachings of Jesus, were almost entirely spiritual. Indeed Jesus never claimed to bring a new law, nor even to abrogate the existing Old Testament Law (Matthew 5:17). He simply added a spiritual and human touch to the concept of the law.
- 2) The teachings revealed to Moses were available in a written form in his lifetime. The Quran revealed to Muhammad was fully written down in his lifetime and under his supervision. The teachings of Jesus, was not committed to writing in his lifetime. Even the earliest Gospel was written down many years after him.
- 3) Both Moses and Muhammad were not only prophets and spiritual teachers in the usual sense, but they were also "heads of states" whose mission included the establishment of a "state" founded on the teachings of their faiths. No such opportunity presented itself to prophet Jesus. Moreover, he denied being a king in this world (John 6:15; 18:36). He even denied being a judge or arbiter between his people (Luke 12:13-14).

- 4) Both Moses and Muhammad lead their people to victory in some military encounters with their enemies. No such encounter was reported in the case of Jesus.
- 5) Both Moses and Muhammad were married and begot children. There is no similar record of marriage and offspring in the case of Jesus.

Comparison Results:

In fact, there are some similarities between Moses and Jesus that don't apply to Muhammad. However, the similarities between Moses and Muhammad that don't apply to Jesus are of greater significance because they are related to their religious teachings and their characters and lives as prophets. Accordingly, the prophet "like Moses" could have been no one but prophet Muhammad.

2-4-2 The Servant of the Lord

*(1) "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold,
My Elect One in whom My soul delights!
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.
(2)He will not cry out, nor raise His voice,
Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.
(3)A bruised reed He will not break,
And smoking flax He will not quench;
He will bring forth justice for truth.
(4)He will not fail nor be discouraged,
Till He has established justice in the earth;
And the coastlands shall wait for His law."* [Isaiah 42:1-4, NKJV].

Surely, all prophets were indeed servants, messengers and elects of God. Yet no prophet in history is as universally called by these specific titles, as is Muhammad. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) prevailed against his enemies and brought judgment to the Gentiles. He came from and lived among a non-Jewish nation, and his message addressed all humanity. The prophecy doesn't refer to Jesus since he clearly stated that he was sent specifically to the Israelites (see Matthew 15:24; 10:5-6).

The only prophet who came after this prophecy was made (Isaiah's time), with a complete and comprehensive code of law, was Prophet Muhammad. The law revealed to him spread to all corners of the earth, even in many remote isles and coastlands and to the farthest deserts.

2-4-3 The Valley of Baca

*Blessed is the man whose strength is in You,
Whose heart is set on pilgrimage.
As they pass through the Valley of Baca,
They make it a spring;
The rain also covers it with pools.* [Psalm 84:5-6, NKJV].

Makkah is the holiest place on Earth for Muslims. During the annual Islamic Pilgrimage called 'Hajj', Muslims from all over the world assemble in Makkah (Mecca) and perform the religious ceremonies. They drink from the spring of Zamzam, which is located inside the holy mosque, which is located in a valley surrounded by mountains.

Bakkah (Baca in the Bible), which is another name for Makkah, was mentioned in the Holy Quran.

"(96)Behold, the first House (of Prayer) established for mankind is the one at Bakkah: it is full of blessing and a centre of guidance for the whole world. (97)In it there are clear signs and the station of Abraham; whoever enters it becomes secure. Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all who can make their way to it. As for those who refuse to follow His command, surely Allah does not stand in need of anything." [Holy Quran 3:96-97].