A Look of Faith at the Qur'an

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Two birds of the same species represent the Bible and the Qur'an

This book is translated by the author from the original Arabic text. It is addressed to all those who seek to liberate themselves from the yoke of fanaticism imposed by the various tarnished religious traditions and arbitrary prejudices. It is dedicated to all men of good faith, thirsty for truth and justice, in search of a fraternity.

"**Show me your proof if you speak the truth**."

(Qur'an 27; The Ant,64)

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DEDICACE

TO MARY,
OUR MOTHER THE VIRGIN
MOTHER OF THE MESSIAH

TO FATIMA,
MOTHER OF THE BELIEVERS,

AND

TO THE INDEPENDENT BELIEVERS
OF ALL RELIGIONS, RITES AND RACES.

1. Introduction

Most people believe that there is a difference between the Qur'an and the Bible. Nevertheless, the divine Inspiration is one in the Bible and the Qur'an. God, who inspired the Bible, Old and New Testaments, has equally inspired the Qur'an. The latter confirms the authenticity of the Bible. The difference therefore, is not in the Inspiration, but in **the interpretation**. God says in the Qur'an:

> "O people to whom the Book (*the Bible*) has been revealed, believe in what We have revealed (*the Qur'an*), **confirming** the truth of that which you already have before (*the Bible*) ..." (Qur'an 4; Women,47)

This book is a succinct study of the authentic concept of the divine Inspiration. It is an invitation to open oneself, with faith, to the Qur'anic Inspiration. And through this, to the Gospels and the Torah[1], attested by the Qur'an.

It is a look of faith at the divine Inspiration in general, to assemble believers together by discovering **the unity, of the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration**. In fact, the Qur'an confirms its two predecessors, the Torah and the Gospel, and testifies that God is the only and unique Source of the Bible and Qur'an:

> "Our God and yours is One God, and to Him we submitThe word "submit" is the translation for the Arabic word "Muslim". Islam means Submission (to God).." (Qur'an 29; The Spider,46)

Yet we find that religious confessions have divided Christians and Muslims from age to age, through their inherited traditions. This division, due to the same human traditions, is not limited to the Muslim and Christian communities, but has won over the hearts of each of these two sisterly communities, separating Christians from Christians and Muslims from Muslims. It is why I advise readers to be open with objectivity to the contents of this book, raising themselves above the mentality of the rites that he or she belong to; to leave behind all narrow and confessional mentalities, as the aim of this study is to liberate oneself from the spirit of confessional clans and spiritual racism, which has unconsciously infiltrated into each one of us. We cannot free ourselves from this unhealthy spirit, except through the **knowledge** of what God has **really** revealed in the inspired Books. This knowledge only, can liberate us from the chains of tradition and prejudice, which deviate us from the teachings of the Bible and Qur'an.

These traditions and prejudices have penetrated, with time, men's veins, and are passed down from father to son, and accepted without their authenticity or rectitude being discussed. Some "believers" hold on to them so tightly, to the point of killing any and all opposition, because they consider these vain traditions as untouchable truths, without even making sure of their truthfulness. We have all suffered from this state of affairs, not knowing that these traditions do not have any divine foundations.

It is therefore important to convince oneself of the necessity of reverting to the Bible and the Qur'an to be able to render count of the truth or the falseness of these rumors, spread by some to provoke intrigue, as the Qur'an correctly notes:

> "It is He who sent down the Book (*the Qur'an*) upon you. In it are verses precise in meaning: these are the very heart of the Book. Others are **ambiguous**. Those in whose heart is waywardness pursue what is ambiguous therein, seeking **discord** and seeking to unravel its interpretation. But **none knows its interpretation save God**, while those

[1] The Qur'an employs the word "Torah" for the whole collection of the Books of the Old Testament.

> deeply rooted in knowledge say: 'We believe in it (*the Qur'an*). All is from our Lord'. Yet none remembers save those possessed of minds." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,7)

Certain religious leaders have given themselves the right to monopolize the interpretation of the Divine Inspiration. And yet, the Inspiration is the monopoly of no man. According to the verse mentioned above: "none knows its interpretation save God", and it is He, "God who guides" his chosen, as the Qur'an also says in chapter XLII; Deliberation,52.

In fact, scholarly religious Jews have granted themselves the right to interpret, and they alone, the Bible, preventing believers from applying the messianic prophecies -though very clear- that they find, to Jesus.

Some religious leaders and Christian theologians equally monopolize the right to interpret the Gospels, refusing to apply explicit prophecies therein to denounce the unjust Israeli entity, the obvious target of these prophecies. This guilty attitude -which is a counter testimony to Jesus- is due to the Christian solidarity with Israel and international Zionism, although denounced by St John as the Antichrist to emerge (1 John 2:22).

Likewise, many Muslim leaders and scholars monopolize the right to interpret the Qur'an in favor of a strict tradition which suits them. They expose personal, and not divine, interpretations which allows a fanatic and separatist spirit to show. By doing so, people are prevented from understanding the Qur'anic verses independently of their narrow conceptions, so distant from the divine intention. They stop at "ambiguous" verses, and interpret them in their favor "to sow discord".

The Qur'an imposes on believers to open up to the sacred issues, starting from knowledge of the "**Luminous Books**", God having inspired them as a guide. Man should not therefore thoughtlessly follow any recommendations of the nature that cause dissension without the recourse to a "**Luminous Book**", as the Qur'an commands:

> "Among people is one who argues about God, without knowledge, and follows thereby every rebel demon... Among people is one who argues about God, without knowledge, without a Luminous Book." (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,3 & 8)

This is why, in our discussion, we have recourse to two "Luminous Books", the Bible and the Qur'an, so that our faith is not built on a quicksand of rumors that render us prey to "every rebel demon", and fanatic. We want to build our faith on the rock of knowledge and certitude. Then, we flourish, because we would be exposed to the rays that spring from the divine source, and not be submissive to mere human fables and traditions. The latter is a type which condemns, and have no foundations whatsœver in the "Luminous Books". It is the reason why they were a failure, by producing the bitter fruits of division between brothers. The Divine Intention, on the contrary, is to assemble believers together through a Unique Inspiration; not to separate them with traditions which God disapproves of.

> "Lord, Expand my heart..." (Qur'an 20; Ta Ha,25)

However, the heart can only bloom whence liberated from the yoke of ignorant faith, the fruit of deadpan traditions. If we aspire for salvation, we must strip ourselves of this unhealthy faith, to embrace real faith, built on knowledge of the "Luminous Books". This knowledge will be our guide in our discussions on divine matters.

To understand the genuine spiritual part of Islam, we must be aware of the enormous abyss that separates the Qur'an from the Muslim majority. This abyss has an equal too: the separation between the Bible and the vast majority of Jews and Christians. The responsible for this drift are followers of rituals and of worshiping traditions, anxious in safeguarding a religious heritage

that is human, a material cult at the expense of worship "in spirit and truth", prescribed by Jesus (John 4:24).

The Prophet Muhammad says in his "Noble Discussions":

> "The time will come for men when the only thing left of the Qur'an will be its picture and from Islam its name. They claim to belong to Islam, yet they are most far from it."

The late Sheikh Muhammad Abdo also says of it:

> "What we are currently seeing of Islam is not Islam. We have retained from the works of Islam save a semblance of prayers, fasting and pilgrimage, and a few words **deviated** in part of their meaning. People have arrived to the point of stagnation of which I have mentioned, because of the heresies and fables that have contaminated their religion, considering them as religion. May God protect us from these people and their calumnies on God and His religion, for all who reproach Muslims today, do not belong to Islam. It is something else which they have called Islam." (Excerpts of his book: "Islam and Christianity")

The Messiah, likewise, poses a question to his Apostles on faith in the last days:

> "But when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8)

He warns us that the love of God will disappear from the hearts of many, because of injustice and impiety which will prevail at the end of times (Matthew 24:12). This is why He warned believers in saying:

> "It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord', who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but the person who does the Will of my Father in Heaven. When the day comes many (*false believers*) will say to Me (*in seeing my anger at them*): 'Lord, Lord did we not prophesy in your name, cast out demons in your name, work many miracles in your name?' Then I shall tell them to their faces: I have never known you; away from Me, you evil men!" (Matthew 7:21-23)

The Apostle Paul, he too, certifies this in his letters:

> "... that in the last days there are going to be some difficult times. People will be self-centered and avaricious; boastful, arrogant and rude... heartless... They will keep up the outward appearance of religion but will have rejected the inner power of it..." (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

Thus, Divine Inspiration warns us against vain and superficial practices everywhere, to which many believers are attached. This illusionary worship is fruitless in the eyes of the Divine Judge, who dœs not accord his mercy because of such acts which come from pagan inspirations, but is touched by the goodness, love, and effort He sees us providing, to come to know truth and practice justice.

In the Evangelical Inspiration, the criteria of faith at the end of times is the apparition of a "Beast" announced by the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation. This "Beast", the Antichrist, is the incarnation of the evil forces and injustice in the world. It appears in Palestine; up to the heart of Jerusalem (Revelation 11:2 & 20,7-9), where it assembles its army and its subjects "to make war", not peace. The criterion of faith resides in the degree of enthusiasm set in fighting this Beast. The stronger the faith, the more dœs spiritual discernment grow in recognizing the identity of this monster, and intensifies one's commitment to fight to the death. On the contrary, an unsteady or absent faith leads man to submit themselves to the Beast by saying, before its apparent power:

"Who can compare with the Beast? Who can fight against it?" (Revelation 13:4). The Evangelical Inspiration announces the Good News to believers of their victory over the Beast, the Antichrist.

I have revealed and demonstrated in my book: "The Revelation unmasks the Antichrist", that the Israeli entity is this "Beast", which has amassed its Zionist troops from the four quarters of the earth... for war... in Palestine. The State of Israel, this "substitute", created from many bits and pieces, built on crime and blood, symbolizes injustice and evil. It is on the road to ruin.

Today, real believers are those who discern the identity of the "Beast" of Revelation and understand that it is the incarnate of "absolute evil", according to the expression of Imam Moussa Sadr, who adds: "To collaborate with Israel is a sin". Nowadays, a believer is one who rises against God's enemy, the Zionist post in Palestine, which occupies all its territory and spreads its injustice up to the South of Lebanon.

This Apocalyptic "Beast" is the redoubtable measure through which God probes the hearts of believers. It condemns those who collaborate with it, and forever bless the noble and courageous hearts who fight against it with faith. Thus, the unity among all believers today involves their unity against Israel, the enemy of God and Jesus, His Messiah. The fight against the State of Israel is equivalent to a new baptism.

The Qur'anic Inspiration has equivalently announced the apparition of a **Beast** at the end of times:

> "When the Decree falls upon them (*the unbelievers*), We shall bring up a Beast from the earth who will speak to them. But mankind is not convinced by Our signs." (Qur'an 27; The Ant,82)

It is also the "Beast" of Revelation (chapters 13 & 17). Muhammad announced in his "Noble Discussions" of the apparition of the Antichrist and his like in Palestine, "pouring in from everywhere", as is the case with the Jews. The Prophet continues in saying that they would cross the Lake of Tiberius, and that these "charlatans" will mislead many believers. The true believers will fight them and will triumph. I demonstrate in my book "The Antichrist in Islam", the relationship between this "Charlatan Messiah" and the Israeli entity, backing my arguments by the "Noble Discussions", collected from the works of Sheikh Sobhi Saleh, "Manhal el Waridin".

Many false doctrines have infiltrated amidst the ranks of believers, implanting themselves as indisputable and unquestionable traditions. Among those are:

1. the claim -to which a large number of Christians believe- that the Qur'an contradicts the Gospel
2. the claim -to which a large number of Muslims believe- that the Gospel is falsified and that there is contradiction between the four Gospels.

Some Muslims do not lend their faith to the Gospel under the pretext that it was written after the Messiah's Ascension. They ignore that the Power of God's Inspiration stops neither at the physical presence of the Messiah in the world, nor in a specific time or place. All these ideas demonstrate the ignorance and infantilism of people capable of believing in such nonsense.

We wanted, in this study, to enter the world of Inspiration through the door of the Qur'an. Through it, we reach the Bible. It is so, that we discover the unity of the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration. It is the reason why we do not understand why those who believe in one of the two Books, fight those who believe in the other. It is illogical to accept one without the other.

2. The Qur'an is an Arabic text of the Bible

The trap, into which both Christians and Muslims fell into, was to consider that the Qur'an's religion opposes that of the Bible. The Qur'an is not responsible for this misunderstanding. On the contrary, it presents itself as a resume of the Biblical message, inspired to Muhammad, in "manifest Arabic Speech", addressed to the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, as they did not have -like the people of the Bible- holy messengers to inform them. The Qur'an says:

> "the Qur'an is indeed a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds, brought down (*from Heaven*) by the Trustworthy Spirit, upon your heart (*Muhammad*), so that you may be a warner, in **manifest Arabic speech**. It (*the Qur'an*) **is also in the Books** (*the Bible*) of the Ancients (*the Jews and Christians*)". (Qur'an 26; The Poets,192-196)

It should be noted that the Qur'anic Inspiration is already found in the Bible, which precedes the Qur'an. The Qur'an, therefore, dœs not differ from the Bible, since it emanates from it. The only difference is that it was revealed in "manifest Arabic":

> "So also did We send it down as an **Arabic** code of law" (Qur'an 13; Thunder,37)
>
> "We revealed to you a Book (*the Qur'an*) in **Arabic language** so that you may warn **the mother of villages** (*Mecca*) **and its surroundings**." (Qur'an 42; Deliberation,7)
>
> "Rather, it (*the Qur'an*) is the Truth from your Lord, to warn a people to whom **no Warner had been sent before you**, that they may be guided." (Qur'an 32; The Prostration,3)

In spite of these clear verses, some fanatics, desiring to convert humanity into a fundamentalist Islam, rise "to defend" the Qur'an, proclaiming that it is not only for Arabs, but for the whole world. They should rather refer themselves to the Qur'anic texts where Inspiration is addressed to the **Arabs of "the Mother-city**". Nevertheless, and in a very different spirit, we support that the Qur'an is effectively a light for the whole world, and its message is nothing but the Biblical one. This is apparent in the aforesaid verse:

> "It (*the Qur'an*) is also in the Books of the Ancients" (Qur'an 26; The Poets,196)

Muhammad, like all the prophets, was sent as a universal guide, well beyond the religious confessions of today.

The word "Qur'an" in Arabic means a reading, this Holy Book being an Arabic "reading" of the Bible of which the original is in Hebrew (for the Old Testament) and in Greek (for the New Testament). The Arabs of Muhammad's epoch were ignorant of these two languages. They justified their ignorance of the Bible on the pretext of their incapacity to read. They also claimed, with pride, that if they had known the message of the Bible, they would have been -because of their superior intelligence- more erudite than the Jews and the Christians. To cut these arguments short, God thus inspired the Qur'an "in manifest Arabic language", to inform them of the content of the "Books of the First". In fact, God says:

> "Lest you should say: 'The Book was only revealed to two communities before us (*the Jews and the Christians*), and we were unschooled in their religious learning'; or lest should you say: 'If only the Book had been sent down upon us, we would have been more rightly guided than they are', manifest proof (*the Qur'an*) has now come to you from your Lord, a guidance and a mercy. What greater sinner than he who calls the lie to the revelations of God and turns away from them? We shall recompense those who disdained Our revelations with a wretched torment in return for their disdain." (Qur'an 6; Cattle,156-157)

The verses of the Qur'an -which is an Arabic version of the Bible- have been "molded" with precision, in an Arabic style and mentality, adapted to the Arabs:

> "Behold a Book (*the Qur'an*) whose verses are made distinct (*or displayed*): an **Arabic** Qur'an (*a reading*), to a people who have knowledge... Nothing is being said to you (*Muhammad*) **that was not said to messengers (*biblical*) before you**... Had We revealed the Qur'an in a foreign tongue, they (*the Arabs*) would have said: 'If only its verses were made clear! What? Foreign **and Arabic?** (*so to understand it*)' Say: 'To those who believe (*so, the Arabs*), it (*the Qur'an in Arabic*) is Guidance and Remedy'..." (Qur'an 41; Made Distinct,3 & 43-44)

Just as the Qur'an is a Biblical reading fashioned for the Arabs, this work which I have translated from the Arabic is aimed at presenting to the West, the Qur'anic message shaped for the Western mentality.

The Qur'an, which is an Arabic reading of the Bible, dœs not add anything new or contrary to the latter, since God reveals to Muhammad that "nothing is being said to you that was not said to messengers before you", as reported in the verses above.

The Qur'an, however, **dœs not entail the whole Biblical message**, as God says to Muhammad:

> "We sent messengers before you, **some of whose stories** We narrated to you, and some We have not..." (Qur'an 40; Forgiver,78)

The prophets and Apostles who are not mentioned in the Qur'an are mentioned in the Bible. It is the reason why I said that the Qur'an presents itself as a **summarized Inspiration** of the Bible, and dœs not differ from it in its essence.

This is why, during the time of Muhammad, some Muslims asked some Christians to become Muslims, whence the former answer that they are Muslims before the Qur'an; the word Muslim in Arabic means: resigned to God:

> "They to whom We brought the Book (*the Bible*) before this present Revelation (*before the Qur'an*) believe in it. And when it is recited to them, they say: 'We believe in It; It is the truth (*that comes*) from our Lord. **We had indeed been Muslims before it**. These shall be **paid their wages twice**..." (Qur'an 28; The Narrative,52-54)

Notice the expression "We had indeed been Muslims before it". This means that the Christians did not hesitate in declaring themselves Muslims, submitted to God, **before the revelation of the Qur'an**. The attitude of the Qur'an and of Muhammad, was to grant a "**double reward**" to these believers who, without renouncing their Christianity, recognize, and without restraint, Muslims just as Christians. The logical conclusion that comes out from these verses, is that Islam, in the Qur'an's view, is nothing save another name for Christianity. This is confirmed by the Qur'an Itself:

> "He (*God*) chose you and did not burden you in religion; it is the religion of your father Abraham, and it is he (*Abraham*) who gave you the name of **'Muslims' once upon a time, and right here** (*in the Qur'an*), so that the Prophet may be a witness against you..." (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,78)

During a visit to a so-called Muslim society, I was engaged in a discussion in which I say: "I am a Muslim before the Qur'an". One of the fundamentalist religious leaders present became very angry and says: "These words are blasphemy!" I answer: "The difference between the Qur'an and yourself, is that you judge my words as blasphemy, whereas the Qur'an, on the contrary, blesses me for proclaiming this and grants me a double reward". This is just one of a multitude of examples I experienced in various places, so-called Christian or Muslim. These experiences have taught me to discern between what is authentic faith and religious chauvinism.

As a witness to the unity of Islam and Christianity, let us quote these examples:

- The Qur'an considers the Apostles of Jesus as Muslims, who came into the world seven centuries before it:

  > "When I inspired the **Disciples** to have faith in Me and in My Apostle, and they said: 'We believe, so witness that we are **Muslims** (*submitted*Translations of the Qur'an sometimes mention "submitted", sometimes "resigned" for the Arabic word "Muslims").'" (Qur'an 5; The Table,111)

- Abraham, who came twenty seven centuries before the Qur'an, is considered a Muslim by the Qur'an:

  > "Abraham was neither Jew nor a Nazarene (*Christian*), but a man of pristine faith, a **Muslim** (*submitted*)..." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,67)

- The prophet Muhammad says in the Qur'an:

  > "And I am the first of **Muslims**." (Qur'an 6; Cattle,163)

The official interpretation reported by "Al Jalalein" explains that Muhammad is the first Muslim **among the Arabs**[2].

The Qur'an consoles the heart of every true believer in the quoted verses of chapter XXVIII, The Narration, which relates the openness of the Christians of that time to the Qur'an, and the **double** blessing poured on to them by it. Where can we find, today, in a fanaticized world of various cults and rituals, such a grandeur of the soul from one side or the other? If a Christian dares to affirm today, that he is a Muslim before the Qur'an, he would arouse against him the anger of many Christians, and traditional Muslims. Here appears the abyss between God's original design, and deviant human traditions.

The Qur'an commands Muslims:

> "Do not argue with the People of the Book (*the Bible*) except with the best (*of arguments*), save the wicked among them, and say: 'We believe in what has been sent down upon us (*the Qur'an*), **and sent down upon you** (*the Bible*). **Our God and yours is One God**, and to Him we are Muslims (*submitted*)." (Qur'an 29; The Spider,46)

A Muslim therefore, **must** believe in the Bible. He must strive, incessantly, with a pure heart, in discovering the "**best of arguments**" to support this faith. This is the "Straight Path" (Qur'an 1; Al-Fatiha,6).

To be Christian or Muslim is thus two names for the same truth. Because, to be Christian means to witness that Jesus is truly the Messiah, and this is what the Qur'an attests; to be Muslim, is to give oneself to God, to submit to Him, and this is the attitude that every true Christian should have.

We regret, and are astonished, of the behaviors of some Muslim countries which ban the Bible within their borders. Do they not know that the Qur'an condemns them? The Qur'an dœs not preach another religion, nor dœs it reveal another God other than the One of the Inspiration, who is found in the Bible. Those who are able to understand this simple truth do a giant leap in the Way of God.

Some think that the Qur'an dispenses the Bible and gœs so far as to despise it. Others suffice themselves with the Bible and disdain the Qur'an. Each one or the other has their arguments and

[2]The Al Jalalein interpretation of the Qur'an is officially admitted to be the authoritative interpretation in the Muslim and Arabic worlds.

pretexts. All thus fall into the trap of religious racism, breaching God's commandments in all the inspired Books.

The Qur'an has never claimed of being a substitute of the Biblical Scriptures, but brings closer, Jewish and Christian readers to the latter:

> "O People of the Book (*Bible*), you follow no religion unless you practice the Torah and the Gospel." (Qur'an 5; The Table,68)

The Qur'an pushes the Arabs themselves in knowing the Bible; God says to Muhammad:

> "Time was when you knew not what the Book was (*the Bible*), nor faith, but We brought it forth as a light by which We guide whomever We will." (Qur'an 42; Deliberation,52)

In spite of the testimony, repeated numerously, of the Qur'an in favor of the Bible, several Muslim scholars have interpreted the Qur'anic verses without recurring to the Bible. For this reason, their interpretations are alien to the spirit and logic of the Inspiration, carrying the seeds of dissension and separation between believers. The Qur'anic Inspiration is found in the "Books of the first", and hence is not isolated from the Biblical Inspiration. The Prophet Muhammad did not know "the Bible and the faith", so God revealed to him the Qur'an to instruct him on the Biblical message in Arabic.

Whœver reads the Bible and the Qur'an with objectivity, without prejudices, will render count of the parity of the two messages and two Inspirations, and will grow in wisdom and insight.

Some narrations related in the Bible are found in the Qur'an. And the Qur'an uniquely reports, of Biblical narratives starting from creation, up to the last days, passing from Noah, Abraham, the twelve tribes, the breaking of the Covenant by the Jews, and the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary. Why then, must one further himself from one of the two Books, since the Bible contains an additional Light which explains the Qur'anic Inspiration?

A great number of people discuss religion, and devote themselves to it with enthusiasm, yet this ignorant enthusiasm is not enlightened with the substance of the Inspired Books; they thus entangle themselves in the nets of fanaticism. Such an attitude is an abomination in the eyes of God and his prophets.

Whœver wants to discuss religion should know how to lay back and closely consult the Bible and the Qur'an before launching himself into a dialogue, which a fanatic transforms into a contest and a fight. Divine Inspiration, on the contrary, commands us to discuss with the "Best of Arguments" and comportments. How many religious leaders trample over this Qur'anic commandment, ignoring the Books, and digress from the Inspiration, even in its name? They thus sow discord amidst the ranks of believers, brothers.

Following these reflections, we thus understand the essence of Islam from the definition that the Qur'an gives. We thus strip it of the traditionalist ideas -added like parasites throughout the ages and events- which have disfigured the purity of its traits.

We have perfectly understood that, in the eyes of the Qur'an, the Muslim:

> "Whoso surrenders his face to God, and acts righteously, has held fast to a Handle most secure." (Qur'an 31; Luqman,22)

Such is the essence of Qur'anic Islam. Now, it is for good that we submit to the Bible, as God is found in it just as in the Qur'an. Happy are those, whomever they may be, who submit to God by reading his Books and believe in them. They "held to a handle most secure".

Here, it is for us to raise the following fact: it was impossible for the Arabs, before Muhammad, to study the Bible because it was written in Hebrew and in Greek. Today, the Bible is translated

in Arabic and many other languages understood by Arabs (like English). They no longer have any pretext to ignore it.

In the spirit of what was said to the people of the Bible, we tell the people of the Qur'an today: "You will attain nothing until you observe the Torah and the Gospel", because without them you will be unable to grasp the Divine Spirit in the Qur'an (see Qur'an 5; The Table,68).

Indeed, the plenitude of the Qur'anic Spirit cannot be understood without referring to the Bible, which is the source.

We believe that the Judaism of the Torah, the Christianity of the Gospel, and the Islam of the Qur'an have one and the same essence. We do not hesitate to proclaim our faith in Islam and its noble Prophet Muhammad. We owe it to them, to affirm our testimony to God, the Messiah and the Gospel.

We want, through this study to instill, and without compromise, the spirit of mutual understanding and harmony between true believers of all confessions, in exposing total agreement between the Bible and the Qur'an.

My companions and myself, well aware of the difficulties and persecutions that we will face from the extremists of different confessions, have nevertheless took an oath to go forward with patience and determination. In the name of God, we tread our path, ignoring all the narrow and fiery interpretations made by troublemakers. We have sought tirelessly, to search for the "Best of Arguments", and not to lose sight of it, so to satisfy God alone and our conscience, treading along this "Straight Path" of spiritual salvation.

Believers from all spiritual currents and all religions who will be able to free themselves from prejudices against the Holy Books, will discover with joy that they are sons of the same God, that they are brothers and friends, after having long thought that they were mortal enemies.

3. The Principles of the Study

Our study of the Divine Inspiration is based on the following unchanging principles:

1. Reference to the Qur'anic text itself.
2. Research of the spiritual meaning of the text.
3. The divine pedagogy in the Inspiration.
4. Unity of the Inspiration.

By respecting these principles in the study of the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration, we are able to enter the divine intention and finally discover the unity of the two revelations.

3.1 The reference to the Qur'anic text

God demands believers to be prudent in their search of spiritual truths. He asks them to always refer to the Inspired Books and ignore rumors propagated by troublemakers. God warns us by saying:

> "Among people is one who argues about God, without knowledge, without guidance, without a Luminous Book." (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,8)

The Luminous Book that we have as a reference to understand the spirit of the Qur'an is the Qur'an itself, supporting our arguments by this Inspired Book and by the Bible, in order to manifest the unity that exists between the Inspired Books. It is intentional that we do not pay any attention to the vain protests of those who dwell on superficial controversies, wasting their time and ours.

This necessity of referring to a Luminous Book was sensed by the Apostles of the Messiah themselves, to convince the Jews that Jesus was truly the Messiah announced by the prophets of the Old Testament. In fact, the Evangelical Inspiration says that the Jews who believed in the Messiah have

> "... welcomed the Word (*announced by the Apostles*) very readily; **every day they studied** the Scriptures to check whether it was true." (Acts 17:11)

The Messiah had acted in the same way with His Apostles after His resurrection:

> "Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages **throughout the Scriptures** that were about Himself." (Luke 24:27)

Sensible believers must therefore constantly refer to the luminous books if they seek solid guidance in order to base their faith on knowledge, following the Apostles' example, their predecessors.

3.2 The search for the spiritual sense of the text

God commands us to always search for **the spiritual meaning** of the inspired texts, putting us on guard against the trap of literal and restricted interpretations that deviate from the divine intention. Divine Inspiration's goal is to inflame our hearts and to stimulate our interest for eternal spiritual life, and which gœs beyond corporal life. That is why the Qur'an, after the Gospel and the Torah, incites us and increases our awareness to tie ourselves **to the spirit** through the letter. In fact, the Qur'an says:

> "Among people is one who worships God **to the letter**. If good befalls him, he grows content with it. But if an ordeal befalls him, he turns his face about, losing this world and the next. This is the most manifest bereavement." (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,11)

We find the same warning in the Gospel, in a different style:

> "God has given us the qualifications to be the administrators of this new covenant, which is not a covenant of written letters but of the Spirit: **the written letters bring death**, but the Spirit gives life." (2 Corinthians 3:6)

The Messiah advises us not to understand Inspiration literally, not to stop on the literal sense, but to elevate ourselves to the Divine Intention that manifests itself by prophetic words:

> "It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are life." (John 6:63)

The Old Testament too, invites us to go beyond the letter to rejoin the Spirit. We cite as an example, circumcision and fasting. The prophet Jeremiah (VIth century BC) says with regards to circumcision:

> "Circumcise yourselves for Yahweh, apply circumcision **to your hearts**." (Jeremiah 4:4)

This great prophet had thus understood that the divine intention on circumcision was aimed at the purification **of the heart**, not the removal of the foreskin; a spiritual act, not physical, which washes the soul of all impure thoughts and tendencies. That is why St Paul says again about this:

> "To be circumcised or uncircumcised means nothing: what does matter is to keep the commandments of God." (1 Corinthians 7:19)

Indeed, those who observe God's commandments

> "In Him have been circumcised, with a circumcision not performed by human hand, but by the complete stripping of your body of flesh." (Colossians 2:11)

Such is the spiritual circumcision done by the hand of God to purify the soul through repentance and grace. This cannot be compared to the physical circumcision, performed by human hands, incapable of cleansing the soul of its impurity.

Circumcision, fasting, sacrifices, pilgrimage, etc. are all "**ambiguous**" symbols that evoke spiritual realities; they make up part of the "**ambiguous**" which should be interpreted spiritually, not literally, as is continually done

> "those in whose hearts is waywardness **pursue what is ambiguous therein**, seeking discord and seeking to unravel its interpretation. **But none knows its interpretation save God**, while those deeply rooted in knowledge say: 'We believe in it. All is from our Lord.' Yet none remembers save those possessed of minds." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,7)

Interpretation of the "ambiguous" is known by God alone, as the Qur'an reveals. How then, do some people dare to interpret them in a manner and a style which creates discord and division between brothers? As for us, we do not advance our own interpretation, but recourse to the Word of God in the Bible, and the Gospels in particular. There, we find the interpretation of God Himself concerning the "ambiguities", and by His proper "Word Which He cast to Mary" (Qur'an 4; Women,171). The Word of God incarnates itself in Her **to illuminate** the world on God's intentions in his Inspiration. This Blessed Word dœs not err; It surpasses and confuses all human interpretation. Only "the gifted with intelligence", who are freely open and without restraint when it comes to the whole Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration, will be able to learn from this Divine Word. All those who let themselves be entangled by the nets of fanaticism, can liberate themselves from this hellish slavery, if they allow themselves be guided by the whole Word of God. They will thus avoid God's severe judgment, and so glorify his Holy Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration by repeating with the Qur'an:

> "We believe in It. All is from our Lord." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,7).

As for fasting, the prophet Isaiah (VIIIth century BC) explained, a long time before, that divine intention was not aimed at drinking or eating, but on the works of justice:

> "Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me—it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks—to break unjust fetters and undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke, to share your bread with the hungry, and shelter the homeless poor, to clothe the man you see to be naked and not turn from your own kin?" (Isaiah 58:6-7)

Yes indeed, we believe that the real fast is to avoid language of vain speech, calumnies which harm people, to abstain from eating the property of others. Such is the food that should be avoided, as Christ had said:

> "Listen and understand. What goes into the mouth does not make a person unclean... But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and it is these that make someone unclean. For from the heart come evil intentions: murder, adultery, fornication, theft, perjury, slander. These are the things that make a person unclean..." (Matthew 15:10-20)

The Qur'an, inspired to confirm the Gospel, confirms these shocking words of Jesus. In fact, the words addressed by Jesus to the Jews are reported in the Sura of the Family of Imran:

> "I bring you a Sign from your Lord... I confirm what lies before me of the Torah and **to make it licit for you some of what had been made illicit**." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,49-50)

God's disciples understood that no food is forbidden or considered impure by God. The Torah and Qur'an do not mention these prohibitions, except to prepare the concept of what is pure and impure in the **actions and conducts of human beings**, addressing themselves to people who ignored God, good and evil. It is for this reason that God comes back to this subject, and clarifies his intention on pure and impure, in the Sura of "The Table", explaining that:

> "Today made **licit** to you are good and wholesome foods. The food of the People of the Book (*Bible*) is **licit to you**, and your food is licit to them." (Qur'an 5; The Table,4)

God also confirms this intention further down in the same Sura:

> "**O believers**, do not pronounce illicit the delectable foods that God has made licit to you, but do not transgress - God love not the transgressors. Eat of what God has provided for you, food licit and delectable..." (Qur'an 5; The Table,87-88)

We should notice that this commandment is addressed to **believers**, so that they put it into practice: "Oh thee believers", and not to unbelievers who transgress God's will and do not practice it. We are of those who believe the words of Jesus who declares "lawful a part, that was forbidden," of food, as previously explained. We are not transgressors. We also believe in Muhammad, his companion in this heavenly mission, who was sent to confirm the Gospel and the words of Jesus therein.

By virtue of this faith, which is ours, we are certain, not to forbid what God declares licit, as God also says in the Sura of The Table:

> "Upon those who believe and do good deeds, **no blame shall attach** in what they may taste, so long as they fear God, and believe, and do good works... for God loves the charitable." (Qur'an 5; The Table,93)

Do good deeds! This is what is pure which God prescribes. Do evil works! Here is the impure that God forbids. Also, in Sura VI, The Cattle, God asks Muhammad to say:

> "Say: 'Come, let me recite to you what your Lord **forbids** you: that you associate nothing with Him... that you do not come near indecencies... that you do not kill the soul which God has sanctified except in justice. This is what He has **charged you** with... and do not come near the property of an orphan... Be fair in weights measures... be just even... and fulfill the Covenant of God... Here then is My Path, made Straight, so follow it'..." (Qur'an 6; Cattle,151-153)

We should note that it is not a question of pure or impure food in these divine prescriptions of the Straight Path, and thus have to go beyond these culinary and materialistic prohibitions, to put into practice what Jesus says in Matthew's Gospel and the Sura of The Family of Imran. Only a heart, mature in sound faith, and who listens to God's directives, is able to liberate himself from the chains of the letter, and to launch himself onto this "Straight Path" of the spirit prescribed by the Qur'an.

This also applies to fasting in Ramadan. This fasting **is not obligatory** as fanatics claim, since the Qur'an itself prescribes: "Upon **those who can bear the fast, and do not**, a penance: the feeding of a poor person" (Qur'an 2; The Cow,184). The true fast is therefore not to "consume each other's wealth", as prescribed by the Qur'an further down. Those who lead a well-ordered life, and balanced in all things, are those who fast the duration of their life.

We have seen people who fast that devour food like wild beasts from over-stocked tables, and end up by vomiting after their Pantagruelian, excessive meals from dusk till dawn...

Happy are those who understand the Divine Intention and practice equilibrium and self-control in all things.

It is the reason for which the Qur'an prescribes:

> "There is no compulsion in religion." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,256)

This applies indeed, to fasting.

The Qur'anic Inspiration also underlines the fact that fasting is for oneself to refrain from listening to lies and in usurping people's money:

> "Those whom God wills not to cleanse their hearts - shame shall be their lot in this world, and in the next terrible torment. Ever willing to lend their ears to falsehood! Ever ready to **consume forbidden wealth**." (Qur'an 5; The Table,41-42)

God also says in his Holy Book:

> "**Do not consume** each other's wealth in falsehood, nor argue the matter with judges in order to **consume** a portion of people's **wealth** unjustly, knowing well what you are doing." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,188)

It clearly appears from these verses that the purification desired **is that of the heart**, and that the fast, is to refrain from listening to lies and "usurping" money unjustly, without ever being satisfied, and not in refraining from eating food for a limited time.

Moses gave the Jews a Law, the Torah. Some persist, even today, to understand this Law to the letter, and refuse to open up to the divine intention. This closure has isolated them from God; it is the main reason of the Jew's refusal of Jesus. They were expecting a military warlike Messiah, an authoritarian politician and a brilliant economist. And yet, the Messiah came to speak to them of repentance, of love for the other, not of armed conflict, of scorn for money, not of its importance. He also explained the **spiritual** concept of ablution (physical purification by water), of fasting, of the sabbatical rest, and of the Law of Moses in general. But the fanatic Jews held on fast to the letter of the Law, not to its spirit, and refused to recognize the Messiah who invited them to cleanse themselves in the springs of the spiritual Waters, non-material, the source of repentance, solely capable of purifying the heart from its real impurities.

That is why God invites us in the Qur'an, to a serious examination of conscience. This justifies or condemns each one of us:

> "Say: 'Have you considered what bounty God has caused to descend upon you, which **you then divided into illicit and licit**?' Say: 'Did God give you leave (*to say that*), or did you fabricate lies **upon God**?' What will they think, those who fabricate lies upon God, on the Day of Resurrection? God is bountiful to mankind, but most mankind will not render thanks." (Qur'an 10; Jonah,59-60)

These striking verses reveal that it is man who, by his foolishness marks, "against God", what is prohibited and what is permitted. What will the answer of each of us be to this question posed by the Qur'an: Is it God who distinguishes between what is prohibited and what is permitted in the goodness He Himself provides us with, or is it the narrow spirit of wicked believers who attribute these lies to God?

Moreover, and in all cases, the Qur'an reveals that **God is free to erase** whatever He wants from the revealed Books:

> "For every period decided there is a Register: God **erases or ratifies** what He wills. With Him is the Archetype of the Book." (Qur'an 13; Thunder,38-39)

Thus, we have seen that the Messiah declares "all foods clean" (Mark 7:19). Furthermore, with regards to **all animals**, God repeats to Peter, on three occasions:

> "What **God has made clean, you have no right to call profane**." (Acts 10:15-16)

Paul, on his turn, clarifies the question of pure and impure in these terms:

> "Do not wreck God's work over a question of food. Of course **all foods is clean**..." (Romans 14:20)

He also confirms this truth to his disciple Titus:

> "To all who are pure themselves, everything is pure; **but to those who have been corrupted and lack faith**, nothing can be pure—the corruption is both in their minds and in their consciences. They claim to have knowledge of God but the things they do are nothing but a denial of him. . . " (Titus 1:15-16)

There is a permanent conflict between the literal and spiritual interpretation. God is not asking us to simply have faith in His Inspiration, but **the good faith**: the one who submits himself to His Intention. God is Spirit and desires the elevation of our spirit. Without this we cannot, whatever we do to purify the body, rise towards God. Physical ablution makes up a part of the "ambiguities", and is but a **symbol** for the necessity of a spiritual purification, and is unable of producing it. This purification is obtained through faith and good works.

Believers who are in search for the spiritual meaning of Inspiration will reach the summit of spiritual life; on the other hand, those who remain attached to the letter are dwarves, as mentioned in the Qur'an in the following verse:

> "Among people is one who worships God to the letter (*harf*). If good befalls him, he grows content with it. But if an ordeal befalls him, he turns his face about, losing this world and the next. This is the most manifest bereavement!" (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,11)

The word "harf" in Arabic has a premier, specific meaning of the "letter". But, some translate this word as "edge", which is its secondary sense. If the divine intention was "edge", the more precise Arabic word would have been "haafat". Divine intention clearly targets believers who think in fear, attached to "the letter", who fear punishment, without seeking to understand the intention of the Holy Spirit through the love of God. For "the written letter brings death", says the Gospel, "but the Spirit gives Life"(2 Corinthians 3:6).

How can, a believer who is attached to the letter, not "fall" head over heels, be confused and shaken, when two passages of the same inspiration are contradictory? In truth, this contradiction is only apparent when placed at the level of the letter. But these same texts agree at the spiritual level and in the divine intention.

So, to climb toward the spiritual intention is necessary for salvation, without which, we plunge into the quagmire of the letter, soiling ourselves in the impurities of fanaticism and ignorance, as, alas, is the case of many. The necessity to go up to the divine intention and spiritual meaning of the texts appears in two passages on the creation, which are quite different:

> "It is He Who created the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, in **six days**, then sat firmly on the Throne." (Qur'an 25; The Criterion,59)

In this text, the creation was achieved in six days. But we find in another chapter:

> "Say: 'You are blaspheming against Him who created the earth in **two days**. . . '" (Qur'an 41; Made Distinct,9)

The interpretations which attempt to literally reconcile the creation in six days and that of two days are comical and whimsical. They become more obscure through detours and contortions, and fail to convince a thoughtful person, endowed with a mature and sensible mentality. They certainly move away from God's intention in His Inspiration.

We also find in the Old Testament two narratives on the creation. The first, talks of the creation in six days, where God created man and woman on the sixth day, after having created the animals and the plants (Genesis 1). The second recounts, recites the exact contrary: God created Adam first; He then placed him, **alone**, in paradise, then created the rest of the animals, and finally,

created Eve from Adam's rib. The narrative dœs not even mention the number of days of the creation (Genesis 2).

So, is there a contradiction in the Inspiration? No! Divine Inspiration dœs not contradict itself: we have to understand that God, through his narratives, wants simply to reveal to the polytheistic man, the existence of a unique Creator. This modest truth, and from it alone, provoked a lot of hatred against those who preached it. The purpose of the texts is to reveal to man, knowledge of the unique Creator, and to put an end to the vain adoration of idols and worship offered to the multiple gods of mythology.

This unique God invites us, by these various narratives on the creation, to go beyond the letter and to rise to reach the spirit. It is not important to know **how** the universe was created, but to know that there is but one God, Creator to worship. It is not about satisfying a scientific curiosity, by searching for numerical and temporal truths (number of days of the creation, etc.) in the sacred texts, but to understand the **spiritual** message: the Existence of one God and of the right way to worship Him. This is what the Inspiration wants to reveal us.

3.3 The divine pedagogy in the Inspiration

God, like a father with his children, has always acted pedagogically in His Inspiration to guide believers, leading them **gradually** from where they are, to the psychological and spiritual maturity in which He wants them. Any sensible and discerning believer will find that, in the Qur'an, God uses pedagogy with the Arabs of the VIIth century after Jesus Christ. God applied this same pedagogy toward the Jews and Christians in the Old and New Testaments respectively.

The Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula had no knowledge of spiritual life because of their ignorance of the revealed divine truths. Before the apparition of the Prophet Muhammad, they worshiped at Mecca where more than three hundred and sixty congregated at the "Kaaba", a cubic monument which houses the "Black Stone", which the Arabs believe came down from Heaven.

These gods of Arabian mythology ate, married amongst themselves, and procreated. The Arabs therefore believed in a mythology comparable to that of the Greeks, before the diffusion of Christianity in Europe.

It was not possible to give the Arabs the fullness of light in a single stroke, because of their absolute distance from the Divine Truth. Likewise, it is impossible for the human eye, which had remained in darkness for a long time, to all of a sudden be opened up to sunlight without being overwhelmed, stunned, blinded. In the same way, the Divine Light must be given gradually to those who remained in darkness for so long.

God, as always, acts with wisdom when he revealed Himself to the Arabs, not only "in a clear Arabic tongue", but also in progression. He is like a teacher who instructs his students at school, leading them from primary to secondary school, up to college.

The Creator ensued in the same way with Abraham, Moses and the Jews in the Torah, followed by the Christians in the Gospel, revealing little by little the essence of His unique and spiritual Being. This pedagogy can be found in the Qur'an where God reveals to the Arabs, the Biblical truths with infinite finesse and delicacy, like a father educates his child towards maturity. To illustrate this, we will expose two examples of the divine pedagogy, one on animal sacrifice, and the other on marriage.

The sacrifices

Since the time of Moses, the Jews contaminated themselves with idolatry in Egypt. They worshiped Egyptian gods and offered them sacrifice after sacrifice. To draw them away from these pagan practices, which became a habit that spanned for more than four centuries, and in order to gradually bring them closer to the unique God, Moses, in the Torah, gives them a cult. This latter consisted of sacrifices offered, not to Egyptian gods, but to the unique God whom they had

forgotten. The purpose of these sacrifices was not to please God, but to move the Jews away from worshiping idols. That was the first step to move them closer to true worship.

Moses was neither capable of annulling the practice of sacrifices abruptly and conclusively, nor of convincing the Jews of their inaptitude in obtaining divine mercy. They could not understand at that time, that the principle of repentance was to approach God through forgiveness, not sacrifice. Therefore, God permitted for these sacrifices as a first step for them to get closer to Him.

The second step took place more than five centuries later, after the Jews left Egypt. God, then inspired his prophets on the vanity of animal sacrifice and holocaust, declaring that the only sacrifice desired by God is the spiritual sacrifice of oneself. The real offering that pleases God is a repentant soul who is totally resigned to the divine will. David, the prophet king, addresses God in Psalm 51(50) thus:

> "Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will speak out your praise. Sacrifices give You no pleasure, burnt offerings you do not desire. The sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, a broken, contrite heart you never scorn." (Psalm 51:17-19)

In another Psalm, God also says:

> "Am I to eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Let thanksgiving be your sacrifice to God, fulfill the vows you make to the Most High; then if you call to Me in time of trouble I will rescue you and you will honor Me." (Psalm 50:13-15)

In the Bible, God declares through the prophet Jeremiah (VIth century BC) that He never demanded sacrifice and holocausts, but that we follow his commandments. In fact, Jeremiah says to the Jews with irony:

> "Yahweh Sabaoth, the God of Israel, says this, 'Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat all the meat. **For when I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, I said nothing to them, gave them no orders, about burning offerings and sacrifices**. My one command to them was this: Listen to my voice, then I will be your God and you shall be my people. In everything, follow the way that I mark out for you, and you shall prosper.'" (Jeremiah 7:21-23)

The prophet Micah, he too, in the VIIIth century BC, denounced the vanity of animal sacrifice and continues in saying:

> "You have already been told what is right and what Yahweh wants of you. **Only this**: to do what is right, love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

The Qur'an, in its turn, invites us to go beyond the sacrifice of animals and to understand the real intention of God. Speaking of sacrifices, it says:

> "**Their flesh and their blood shall not reach up to God**; rather, it is your piety that will reach Him." (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,37)

In spite of this, we see "believers" rushing in the millions towards pilgrimage sites, where an incalculable number of muttons and others are offered in sacrifice to God, who is touched "neither by their flesh, nor their blood". This custom is a social one rather than spiritual, mostly aimed at pleasing a hypocritical society, and which gœs against any real piety in everyday life.

Marriage

Polygamist marriage with the Arabs of Antiquity was chaotic, so was divorce. Dominated by the whims of men and their instincts, marriage exposed a woman to the greatest insecurities and a number of dangers: because divorce was free, a woman did not receive any indemnities. The unworthy role of women in the harems of Ancient Arabia was well known.

The Qur'an comes therefore, as a first step, to limit the number of wives and to impose a law on divorce, according to which man must compensate the divorced woman. Marriage is limited to four legitimate wives, provided however, that he is equitable towards them, otherwise, the man must marry **only one**. Here, divine pedagogy appears, as, a limitation in marriage is in itself a great evolution for an Arab man of the time, an evolution through which the people of the Bible had already undergone: The Qur'an says:

> "If you fear you will not be fair towards orphans, so too with marriage. Marry whomever pleases you among women - two, three, or four; but if you fear that you will not fair (*to them*), **then one only**... Give women (*wives*) their dowry, a free offering." (Qur'an 4; Women,3-4)

It is to be noted that the first verse commences by drawing man's attention towards orphans, thus opening a path to altruism. Then, in speaking of marriage, the Qur'an not only restrains, but also imposes on the man a dowry to be given to each woman. On one side, this dœs not encourage polygamy, and on the other, it elevates the woman's rank by imposing a dowry by the husband, not by the woman, as was practiced for a long time even in the Christian west. The Qur'an allows women to freely withdraw themselves from this dowry in favor of the husband:

> "Give women their dowry, a free offering. And if they willingly offer you any of it, then consume it in peace of mind and wholesomeness." (Qur'an 4; Women,4)

After having restrained marriage, the Qur'an recommends monogamy. Going back to the same subject, it presents monogamy as the unique and exemplary way of avoiding any injustice towards wives:

> "You **will not be able** to act equitably with your wives, **even if you apply yourself to do so**." (Qur'an 4; Women,129)

It is clear that God invites man, with this verse, to monogamy. After having progressively led him from the disordered union with woman, by passing through marriage with the condition of equality towards four wives, God finishes in prescribing monogamy to him **because he cannot treat** several wives **impartially**, "however hard he tried". Every sincere believer, who seeks to please God, not his own proper desires, understands this divine pedagogy, if they have matured in faith.

So, it is with a lot of finesse and delicacy, that the Creator introduced monogamy into the Arab mentality. Nevertheless, the first impression, which still remains predominant with many Muslims, is that polygamy is permitted by the Qur'an. In truth, this is only tolerated until man reaches a certain psychological and spiritual maturity. God thus gives man, this creature which He knows to be fragile, enough time to realize, through experience, the importance of monogamy for spiritual and worldly life.

At observing modern Arab society, we remark the success of God's pedagogic plan in the practice of monogamy. Arabs, the greater majority, have but one wife nowadays, and polygamy is rather discredited. Likewise, divorce is scorned by the majority of Arab families; generally, it is considered as a last recourse in very serious cases. Great is the difference between the Islamic society of today, and the pre-Islamic society, after the passage of the vivifying breath of the Qur'an.

The Gospel too, adopts the same pedagogical attitude with marriage and divorce: the Pharisees, who freely practiced divorce, question the Messiah on this subject to embarrass Him:

> "'Is it against the Law for a man to repudiate (*to divorce*) his wife on any pretext whatever?' He answered, 'Have you not read that the Creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said: This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide'. They said to him, 'Then why did Moses command that a writ of dismissal should be given in cases of divorce?' He said to them, 'It was because you were so hard-hearted, that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but it was not like this from the beginning...'" (Matthew 19:3-8)

We should stress that this attitude shook the Apostles themselves when hearing the words of the Master and they ask him:

> "'If that is how things are between husband and wife, it is not advisable to marry'. But he replied, 'It is not everyone who can accept what I have said, but only those to whom it is granted. There are eunuchs born that way from their mother's womb, there are eunuchs made so by men and there are eunuchs who have made themselves that way for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let anyone accept this who can!'" (Matthew 19:10-12)

Two important facts are to be considered from this story: first, it is Moses who permitted to give a letter of divorce, not God. Moses authorized this as a pedagogical step, a temporary concession, because of the psychological immaturity of men at that time. A concession that had to be overcome later, to return to the original state desired by God, as Jesus had explained. But the Jews, attached to human tendencies, devoted themselves to the letter of the Law, refusing to elevate themselves to the divine intention.

The second point to retain is that the Messiah, in his discourse on marriage and divorce, went further, praising the chastity of those who "have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven". This expression dœs not implicate a surgical operation, nor an everlasting celibacy, but a faithful marriage filled with profound and spiritual feelings. It is no longer a question of satisfying purely sexual instincts, but of mastering them, until the meeting of a companion chosen by God. They are thus made *spiritual* "eunuchs", that is to say chaste and **faithful** in the **unique** marriage all their lives.

The Qur'an also speaks of chastity saying:

> "And let those who find not the means to marry have recourse to chastity until God shall enrich them from His bounty (*by sending a spouse*)." (Qur'an 24; Light,33)

The Arabs of the periods of anarchy despised continence and chastity before marriage. This virtue was ignored, even despised, to the point that those who practiced it were accused of a lack of virility. It is the case, still today, in so-called Christian countries.

The Qur'anic teachings have produced their good fruits in the hearts of many Arabs. The Qur'an is the instigator of the evolution of the Islamic society, even though some of its teachings remain fruitless to many Muslims who have closed themselves to the Qur'anic spirit. Likewise, the Gospels did not bear fruit in the hearts of many Christians, who scorn the chastity and the holiness of marriage.

3.4 The Unity of the Inspiration

The Inspiration in the Bible and the Qur'an is one. It emanates of one and the same God who revealed Himself, manifesting His existence in the Books of the Old and New Testaments, and the Qur'an. That is what the Qur'an affirms in addressing the people of the Bible:

> "Our God and yours is one God, and to Him we submit (*Muslims*)..." (Qur'an 29; The Spider,46)

From one God, emanates only one immutable Inspiration, without falsification. Whœver asserts otherwise is a blasphemer.

To discover the unity of Inspiration in the Biblical and Qur'anic verses, one should surpass expressions and different literary styles in order to grasp the deep spiritual meaning, thus penetrating God's Spirit. Having grasped this important point, we can then be the witnesses of monotheism, because it is neither logical, nor suitable to bear witness on the existence of a one and only God without being a witness to his unique Inspiration.

Fanatics seek to divide this Inspiration, spreading rumors so to stir up hatred and unrest. The principal rumors are the following:

- The Qur'an is not inspired by God
- The Qur'an abolishes the Bible
- The Gospel is falsified
- The Gospel contradicts itself because of the so-called differences between the four Gospels, etc.

These calumnies have no foundation in the Qur'an. Many honest scholars have denounced these rumors, as the likes of Sheikh Mohammad Abdo, former leader of the El-Azhar mosque in Egypt. He certifies the authenticity of the Biblical text more than once.

In order to discover the unity of the Inspiration, two principles should be respected:

1. To place the Inspiration in its historical, geographical and social contexts
2. To discuss using "the best" of arguments, as demanded by the Qur'an.

The **best** interpretations of the Qur'an are those that **confirm** the Bible. Such is the "Straight Path" (Qur'an 1; Al-Fatiha,6). On the other hand, the Qur'anic interpretations that contradict the Biblical spirit must be rejected, because they are in contradiction with the Qur'an, which authenticates the Biblical Scriptures that descended before It. These false interpretations represent the tortuous path taken by "those who have incurred God's wrath" (Qur'an 1; Al-Fatiha,7).

Placing the Inspiration in its Context

In order to understand an inspiration, whether Biblical or Qur'anic, one should know **the prophet** to whom God inspired the message, **the reason** for which this message was given, as well as its social and historical **context**. Indeed, God says in the Qur'an:

> "We sent no messenger **except with the language of his people**, that he may enlighten them." (Qur'an 14; Abraham,4)

This is why, one must know the people, the time, the language of every prophet and the society into which he was sent, as well as the historical context so to understand the scope of the inspired message.

In the case of the Qur'an, the Inspiration was given in the Arabian Peninsula to inform its inhabitants of the existence of a unique God and the nonexistence of their mythological gods. The Qur'an announced to the Arabs that this same God has already made Himself known to the people of the Bible and that, through the Qur'an, presents Himself to them and presents them this Bible in "a tongue" or "**clear Arabic text**", so that they would follow **the same path** as their predecessors (Jews and Christians):

> "God wishes to make clear to you and to guide you along the path of those who came before you..." (Qur'an 4; Women,26)

The path of Islam is therefore that of the Bible. Also, God invites the Arabs to believe not only in the Qur'an, but in the Bible too. Here manifests the unity of the Inspiration:

> "O believers, believe in God and in His Messenger (*Muhammad*), and in the Book He revealed to His Messenger (*the Qur'an*) and the Book He revealed before (*the Torah and the Gospel*)..." (Qur'an 4; Women,136)

To believe in the Bible and in the Qur'an, is a condition of the monotheistic faith and the realization of the Inspiration's unification. It is by believing in the authenticity of the Bible, that we are able to discover the correct interpretation of the Qur'an, since the latter confirms the authenticity of the Bible.

How then, do some claim that the Bible, and the Gospels in particular, are falsified, when the Qur'an itself explicitly says to the contrary? In fact, the Qur'an points out:

> "Those to whom we revealed the Book (*the Bible*) **recite it as it should rightly be recited**. They believe in it. But those who repudiate it **they are truly lost**." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,121)

Our belief in the unity of the Divine Inspiration and in its protection by God, insists that we have faith in the Bible and the Qur'an from which they emanate. Adepts of the falsification of the Bible contradict the Qur'an. Indeed, as we have just seen, God says:

> "Those who repudiate it, they are truly lost." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,121)

We draw the readers' attention to the fact that the Qur'an testifies in favor of the "correct" reading of the Gospel, ie "as it was inspired", according to the Qur'anic interpretation of "Al Jalalein". The fact that the Arabic prophet Muhammad always referred to "those who read the Scriptures" (*the Bible*), when in doubt of his mission, augments even further, our faith and attachment to these Holy Scriptures. God Himself guided him towards "the people of the Bible":

> "If you (*Muhammad*) are in doubt concerning what We have revealed to you, ask **those who have read the Book before you**. Truth has come to you from your Lord so do not be among those who doubt." (Qur'an 10; Jonah,94)

We have tried to suffice ourselves with the Qur'an in our search for the Truth, yet it urges us to refer to the Gospel saying:

> "Say: 'O People of the Book (*the Bible*), you follow no religion **unless you practice the Torah and the Gospel**...'" (Qur'an 5; The Table,68)

From the Qur'an's testimony in favor of the Bible, we set for ourselves the goal of demonstrating the unity of the Inspiration in these two inspired books. We have tirelessly endeavored to find the points in common between the Qur'an and the Bible and, with God's grace, have reached it.

Discussion by the "best" of Arguments

During our study, we have reached the following conclusion: any Qur'anic interpretation contrary to the Bible is in opposition with the spirit of the Qur'an and has to be discarded, since the Qur'an came to confirm the Bible, and not to contradict it.

There are fifteen verses in the Qur'an which reveal that the Qur'an was inspired **to confirm** the Bible. Here are two examples:

> "Believe in that which I have revealed, **confirming** what you possess (*the Bible*)." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,41)
>
> (see also Qur'an 2; The Cow,89 / 91 / 97 / 101)
>
> "He sent down to you the Book with the Truth, **confirming** His previous Scriptures (*Bible*), and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel, beforehand: A guidance to mankind..." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,3)
>
> (also see Qur'an III; 81 / IV; 47 / V; 48 / VI; 92 / X; 37 / XII; 111 /XXXV; 31 / XLVI; 12 / 30)

Our line of conduct is inspired from the luminous Qur'anic commandment: "Discuss by the Best of Arguments" (Qur'an 29; The Spider,46). The "best" of arguments is that which demonstrates that the Qur'an confirms the Bible, and resides in the discovery of the **unity of the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration**. Such is the "Straight Path" (Qur'an 1; Al-Fatiha,6), and "the firm Handle" (Qur'an 2; The Cow,256) of the chosen. Also, we have tried to treat the topics with love and the foremost circumspection, in order not to fall into the trap of controversies by the worst of arguments, like many do. These are responsible of distancing many people from the Qur'an because of their fanatic and senseless ways. They disfigure the true face and purity of Islam and bear the responsibility for the diversion of souls and division of ranks. They will have to answer to their guilty attitude on the Day of Judgment before the Throne of God, because they chose the tortuous path taken by "the lost souls who incurred God's wrath".

3.5 Commentary

The Qur'an repeats with force, the Biblical commandment addressed to the people of the Bible, Jews and Christians, to spread the knowledge of the Bible and not to suppress it:

> "Remember when God made a Covenant with those formerly entrusted with the Book (*Bible*): 'That you should **proclaim your Revelation to mankind** and **not conceal it**.' But they cast it behind their backs and bartered it for a paltry sum - wretched indeed is what they bought!" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,187)

The leaders of the people of the Bible neglected to spread its Divine Light. They kept the divine message hermetically shut, unexplained, so much so that people believe blindly, with no understanding **the reason for their faith**, ignoring the prophecies, and even their existence. The Qur'an, of course, after the Bible, condemns these leaders, traitors, Jews and Christians, and reveals their negligence.

However, what to think of the Islamic and Arab leaders who banish the Bible within their borders, while the Qur'an, fortunately, is welcomed everywhere? The Qur'an, however, demands -and they are supposed to know it- that the Biblical Message must also be clearly divulged everywhere, and to everyone, and to spread all over the world, threatening those who have suppressed the Light of the worst punishments:

> "Those who suppress what We brought down as evident signs and Guidance, after We have made it clear to mankind in the Book, those God shall curse, and all who curse shall curse them. . . " (Qur'an 2; The Cow,159)
>
> "Those who suppress what God has revealed of the Book, and sell it for a paltry profit, those shall eat only fire in their bellies. God shall not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor shall He cleanse them. A painful torment awaits them." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,174)

Any other commentary is superfluous.

4. The litigation points

In this chapter, we examine the most important litigation points, the objects of discussion between the different confessions. The latter tackle the pursuit for the unity of the Biblical-Quranic Inspiration with no sincere effort. We regret to find, that there are religious leaders who are zealous to speak of the revealed truths without knowledge from their part, in an infantile and superficial manner, and devoid of any modesty or spiritual maturity.

The principal arguments and prejudices to which some fanatic Christians refer, to reject the Qur'an and its noble Prophet are the following:

- The Qur'an contradicts certain evangelical truths
- The life of Muhammad (Polygamy and wars) demonstrates that he is not a prophet.

We are going to demonstrate that the Qur'an dœs not attack a single evangelical doctrine. A great number of Christians have been led to believe these errors, because of the false interpretation of certain Qur'anic texts presented by some Muslims.

Starting from the principles of interpretation mentioned in the first chapter, we will demonstrate in the pages to follow, the full agreement and unity of the Biblical and Qur'anic Inspirations. Christians therefore, do not have any justifiable reason to refuse the Qur'an, just as Muslims do not in scorning the Bible. We will then present the great moments of Prophet Muhammad's life, exonerating him of all the false accusations conveyed against him.

We have briefly mentioned the reasons which drew away a good number of Christians from the Qur'an. Here now, are the prominent points to which certain Muslims base themselves on, to attack Christianity:

1. The Divine Trinity, the three aspects of the One and Only God
2. The title of Son of God attributed to the Messiah
3. The Divinity of the Messiah
4. The crucifixion and putting to death of the Messiah
5. The falsification of the Bible (Old and New Testaments)

What is important in these points, is to know what Divine Inspiration says about them, as our discussion rests on the solid base of an "Enlightened Book", as the Qur'an advises. If we come across these points again in the Inspired Books, we will believe in them, otherwise, we reject them. After having responded to each one of these points, we will have, by this fact, refuted the arguments presented by certain Christians to refuse the Qur'an, as well as the arguments of certain Muslims to reject the Bible and its teachings.

4.1 The Divine Trinity, the three Aspects of the One and Only God

God revealed Himself in the Torah, in the Old Testament, as the unique Creator, no other god but Him. The Gospel confirms this truth by adding a nuance that is even more profound. God is unique, and yet is not, so far as being isolated from Himself, or in solitude. In company of His Own Person, He unveils Himself as One-in-Three "Aspects": The Father, his Word or the Son, and his Spirit. In fact, Saint John says in the beginning of his Gospel:

> "In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and **the Word was God**. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things came into being, not one thing came into being except through Him... The Word became flesh, He lived among us." (John 1:1-14)

Such are the words of the Evangelical Inspiration. They inform us that God has a Word, which is God Himself. God and His Word are therefore one and the same essence, just as man and his word are one person. The Word that became flesh is Jesus the Messiah, known in the Qur'an as the "Word of God".

In the Gospel, the Messiah recommends his Apostles to baptize believers **in the Name** of the Father, the Son (the Word of God) and Holy Spirit:

> "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them **in the Name** of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19)

Remark that the Messiah did not say to baptize "in the names" in the plural, but in the singular, "in the Name". God is unique and his Name is mentioned in the singular, not in the plural. Any believer concludes from these words, that God is Father-Son-Holy Spirit, or in other terms: God-His Word-His Spirit.

The Messiah, before leaving this world, seeing his Apostles turn gloomy in thinking of this separation, tells them that He will send the Consoler Spirit, who will replace Him as a permanent Companion:

> "I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Consoler to be with you for ever, **that Spirit** of Truth (*the Holy Spirit*) ... I will not leave you orphans; **I will come back to you**." (John 14:16-18)

The believers understood by these words that the Consoler that should come, after Jesus' Ascension, was **the Spirit** of God, who is also the Spirit of Jesus: God Himself. It is why the Messiah had said: "I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you", which is to say, under the form of his Consoler Spirit. He wanted to make them understand that this Spirit and Himself are one. This is why the Messiah is recognized in Islam as the "Word of God", and the "Spirit of God":

> "The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, is the Apostle of God and **His Word**, which He cast to Mary: a **Spirit** from Him." (Qur'an 4; Women,171)

Some believers think that this Consoler Spirit promised by the Messiah to his Apostles is none other than the prophet Muhammad. This interpretation is in disagreement with the Qur'an and the Gospel. In fact, the Evangelical Inspiration says that ten days after His Ascension, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit onto the Apostles, and "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages..." (Acts 2:4)

This verse and the rest of the evangelical and Qur'anic verses concerned with the Holy Spirit, cannot be applied to the prophet Muhammad. Moreover, the Gospels and Qur'an reveal that the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, the Virgin, so that she becomes pregnant with the Messiah:

> "The angel answered (*to Mary*), 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with Its shadow." (Luke 1:35)
>
> "The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was God' Apostle, and His Word which He cast to Mary: a Spirit from Him." (Qur'an 4; Women,171)
>
> "We sent her (*Mary*) Our Spirit, which appeared before her as an immaculate human." (Qur'an 19; Mary,17)

This Spirit cannot be Muhammad who was not born yet. This false interpretation, without any scriptural foundation, cannot be accepted.

In the Old Testament, God revealed the Trinity in a manner which could only be understood together with the Evangelical Revelation. The Book of Genesis relates the apparition of God to Abraham in the form of Three Persons:

> "Yahweh appeared to him at the Oak of Mamre while he was sitting by the entrance of the tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up, and there he saw **three People** standing near him. As soon as he saw **them** he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet **them**, and bowed to the ground. **'My Lord'**, he said, 'if I find favor with **You**, kindly do not pass **your** servant by. A little water shall be brought; **You** shall wash your feet and lie down under the tree. . . '" (Genesis 18:1-15)

The strange fact in this Biblical story is that Abraham speaks to these three "Persons", sometimes in the singular, and sometimes in plural, and appears confused in front of this Trinitarian vision of God. Many Christians created some confusion, at the dawn of Christianity, between "Trinity" (one God in three "Persons") and tritheism (three gods).

God invites us, by the Evangelical Inspiration, to discern between his Word and his Spirit in his Divine Essence. The Divine Being is God or the Father, the Word which emanates (or born) from Him and in Him -spiritually of course- is the Son, and God's Mentality -or His state of Mind- is the Holy Spirit. This Word and this Spirit are the Word and Spirit of God, not the word and spirit of other gods. This is the Holy Trinity, the one and only God in three "Persons". These **Persons** can be distinguished but not separated.

Some people wonder why there all these discernments and complicated terms? Our answer to them: "It is God who takes the initiative to make Himself known, to inform us of what He deems useful about his Divine Being. Our duty is to make an effort to understand, in order to recognize indeed, that it is not as complicated as we might think."

As for tritheism, it is a doctrine which totally differs from the Trinity, since it teaches the existence **of three gods**, in three different divine essences, each god having its own essence: such is the god of good, the god of evil, the god of punishment, the three gods being eternal, and separate of one another. This is, of course, a heresy condemned by the Apostles, by the Christian leaders of the first centuries and by the Qur'an. The Mormons as well as certain Hindu sects believe in tritheism.

Some ill-intentioned Jews fought Christianity from the start, by dividing its ranks with heresies of the likes of tritheism. Others have even claimed that Mary, the Mother of the Messiah, was one of the three divinities. This tritheism, an amalgam of corrupt Christianity and paganism, spread during the first centuries of our era. This is why the Qur'an condemns this apostasy by saying:

> "It is blasphemy they utter, those who say that God is the third of three! There is no God except the One God." (Qur'an 5; The Table,73)

(*Interpretation of "Al Jalalein": "God is one of these three, the two others are Jesus and His Mother.* ***Some Christians*** *think this".*)

Notice that only some of the Christians are mentioned by the Qur'an. The Qur'an further explains that the three gods worshiped by this Christian sect are God, Jesus and Mary:

> "Remember when God said to Jesus Son of Mary: Did you really say to people: 'Take Me and My Mother as two gods instead of God?' He said: 'Glory be to You! What right have I to assert what does not in truth belong to me.'" (Qur'an 5; The Table,116)

> "O People of the Book (*the Bible*), do not be excessive in your religion. Do not say anything about God but the truth. The Messiah, Jesus Son of Mary, is indeed God's Apostle and His Word which He cast into Mary and a Spirit from Him. So believe in God and His Apostles and do not say: 'Three!' (*God, Jesus and Mary: 'Al Jalalein'*). Desist (*saying this*), for this would be best for you. God in truth is One..." (Qur'an 4; Women,171)

Today, no Christian confession believes that Mary is a goddess, or that "God is third of three". These words are heresy. The Gospel has never said these, as there is but one God whose quintessence is God, His Word, and His Spirit. This dœs not mean three gods, but one God in three "Persons". All those who are able to differentiate between the Trinity and tritheism demonstrate that they have attained a great maturity in reflection, as every Christian agrees with the Qur'an to say:

> "It is blasphemy they utter, those who say that God is the third of three! There is no God except the One God." (Qur'an 5; The Table,73)

No Christian worthy of this name can say heretic words such as these. On the contrary, he must reject such thoughts. God is neither "third", nor "second", nor "first of three": God is One, there is none other but Thee, holy be thy Name! We are all with the Qur'an in rejecting tritheism. If the Qur'an had the intention of denying the Trinity, it would have said: "Infidels are all those who say: God is one in three". Let Christians know today that the Qur'an dœs not accuse them of blasphemy because of their faith, nor dœs it refer to them in the above-mentioned verses. That Muslims also know this of the Qur'an, and of their Christian brothers. Why then, is there this mutual repulsion when there is agreement among the Holy Scriptures?

Here is a simple clarification on the Trinity: a man and his word are one and the same essence, like a man and his spirit are. So, a man, his word and his spirit are one and the same essence. In a similar way God, His Word and His Spirit are One. The man who gives his word, gives himself, his whole self: his word, his soul, and his spirit. In adding a man to his word and to his spirit, we do not obtain three men, but one man in his three aspects. A man is thus, he too, a trinity and a lesser image of the Holy Trinity. This is not surprising since God created man in his Image.

There exists in man, a vital spiritual movement between him and himself. He consults himself, he examines his spirit and interrogates himself through reasoning. He agrees with his actions or rejects them; man is not isolated from his thoughts, unless he is in conflict with himself, suffering from psychological diseases which divide his personality, revealing symptoms of the imbalance. Man is a trinity. This spiritual movement related in man is perfectly harmonious in God.

Another example of the Holy Trinity: the Sun, its Light and its Heat are three aspects of the same Entity. **The Sun** represents God the Father, **its Light** represents His living and vivifying Word sent to enlighten the World, and **its Heat** represents His living Holy Spirit, felt in us. Those who profit not from the Sun nor from Life are those who willingly close the shutters in their homes.

The Evangelical Inspiration has taught us that the Creator is One, but not separate of His Personality. Open unto Himself, He is in company of His own Person, perfectly in peace with Himself, fully conscience of His Being. God loves Himself knowing that He is Beauty without blemish. All those who meditate on God with a purity of heart can feel the infinite harmony of the Divine Being, and discover the triple movement of His unique and infinitely lovable Essence.

God, the Thought that He has of Himself, and the Love of His Perfect Being are called in the Gospels: the Father (God), the Son (His Word or his Thought expressed in Himself), and His Spirit (the atmosphere of Love in which God bathes).

The Qur'an invites us to discern between the Trinity and tritheism. Those who respond to this call with dispossession, take a giant spiritual and psychological step forward, making them apt of adjoining themselves eternally to God, taking part in His Love and endless Life.

4.2 The Messiah and his Title of Son of God

Many are shocked by the title "Son of God" attributed to Jesus as, they say, God begets no children as men do. And yet, the quality of Son of God associated with the Messiah means that He has no human father. To the question: "Who is the mother of the Messiah?" The response is: "Mary". And "Who is his father?", the Bible and Qur'an agree on the fact that no man had known Mary; no one has the right to claim physical paternity of Jesus. The Gospel and Qur'an agree on this fact. Such is the intention of the Gospel in giving Jesus the qualification of Son of God, Joseph being his adoptive father.

This truth is confirmed in the Old Testament and by several prophecies. In the Xth century before our era, God sent the prophet Nathan to king David to announce him the birth of the Messiah from his lineage. God says of Him:

> "I shall be a father to him and **He a Son to Me**." (2 Samuel 7:14)

In the VIIIth century BC, the prophet Isaiah announced:

> "The young woman (*virgin*) is with child and will give birth to a son." (Isaiah 7:14)

These prophecies were only understood at the birth of the Messiah, Jesus, of the young Virgin Mary. The Gospel reports that the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to a son. She was astonished and asked him:

> "'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?'. 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you,' the angel answered, 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And **so** the child will be holy and will be called **Son of God**.'" (Luke 1:34-35)

We must pay close attention to the words of the Angel who reveals **the reason** for which the Messiah is called "Son of God", explaining that "the Holy Spirit" will come upon Mary "**so** he will be called the Son of God", no man being his father.

The Gospel of Matthew also reveals to us that the Angel appears afterward to Joseph to confirm Mary's virginity, as he had doubt. The Angel says to him:

> "'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you must name him Jesus...' Now all this took place to fulfill the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet (*Isaiah*): The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son." (Matthew 1:20-23)

God also inspires this fact in the Qur'an, attesting this miraculous birth of the Messiah from the Virgin Mary through a divine act, non-human. Mary responds to the Angel:

> "'How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me, nor am I an adulteress?' He (*the Angel*) said: 'Thus did your Lord speak', 'It is a matter easy for Me. We shall make him a wonder to mankind and a mercy from Us - a decree ordained.' So she conceived him and retired with him to a distant place." (Qur'an 19; Mary,20-22)

Thus, the Qur'an certifies to the Arabs that the mother of the Messiah is virgin, as she begot to the world a son without human intervention, but through a divine initiative and intervention. This unique case in human history earned the Messiah, and He alone, the title of "Son of God"; as every other man has a father and a mother. Unlike Adam, Jesus had a mother, whilst the former was created, says the Bible, from clay (or dust). Adam neither had a father, nor a mother.

How do we understand what the Qur'an reveals in the following Sura on the Unity of God:

> "Say: 'He is God, Unique, God, Lord Supreme! Neither begetting nor begotten, and none can be His peer.'" (Qur'an 112; True Devotion,1-4)

Our response: These words are addressed to the Pagans of Mecca regarding their mythological gods, and not to Christians regarding the Messiah. In fact, these pagans believed that their gods ate, married, and procreated children. The Qur'an came to tell them that God is not like their idols, but that He is eternal, not begotten, nor dœs He beget another god with the aid of a companion goddess, like him, who shares his divinity, as is the case in mythology.

The Qur'an itself spurs us to explain these verses as we have done: God has no concubines with whom he sleeps with to get children, as was the case with Meccan gods:

> "Marvelous Creator of the heavens and the earth! How can He have a son when **He has no spouse** and created all things? He is Omniscient" (Qur'an 6; Cattle,101)

This verse dœs not point to Jesus, but those who:

> "assigned to God the Jinn as partners, though He (*God*) created them, and fabricated for Him (*mythological*) **sons and daughters** without knowing (*that they are in error*). Glory be to Him! May He be far above what they recount!" (Qur'an 6; Cattle,100)

It is in the same way that we should interpret the following verses:

> "And yet they say: 'The All-Merciful has taken to Himself a son!' (*by partnering with a companion*) You have uttered a thing most terrible..." (Qur'an 19; Mary,88)

For this reason, Muhammad also says in the Qur'an:

> "Say: 'If the All-Merciful had a child, I would be the first to worship.'" (Qur'an 43; Ornament,81)

God's evident intention in this verse points to the children of these "Jinns" (spirits and gods of Arabian mythology), not the Messiah born from the Word of this Unique God, whom Muhammad was "the first to worship", thus being the "first Muslim" of the Arabian Peninsula as the Qur'an explains.

It was difficult for the Arabs of the pre-Islamic period to understand the spiritual evangelical truths. They were drowned in sensual pleasures and believed that their gods married, and had concubines and "sons and daughters" like themselves, as the Sura of "Cattle" reveals. The Qur'an came to explain them, in their language and mentality, by placing itself at their level, about the existence of a unique God who created all things. This God has no need of a consort to beget a son through a sexual act, as His spiritual power is such that, with one word, He creates whatever He wants.

The Arabs were not prepared to understand and accept a creation made by divine order. God came to present this fact through the Qur'an, explaining to them the difference between the behavior of their mythological gods and that of the unique true God Creator:

> "It is not for God to take a child (*by a physical act like the gods of Mecca*) - Glory be to Him! When He determines any matter, He merely says to it: 'Be!' and it is." (Qur'an 19; Mary,35)

The Qur'an also says in the Sura "The Groups":

> "Had God wanted to take a child, He would **have selected** whom He wished from His Creation." (Qur'an 39; The Groups,4)

Indeed, the Qur'an reveals that God did, in fact, **choose** Mary with **the purpose of having a son**:

> "Remember when the Angels said: 'God **has chosen you**, made you pure and **chosen you** above all women in the world.'" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,42)
>
> The angel said to Mary: "'I am but a messenger from your Lord, to **bestow upon you a son most pure**.' She said: 'How can I have a son when no man has touched me, nor am I an adulteress?' He said: 'Thus did your Lord speak'. 'It is a matter easy for Me. We shall make him a wonder to mankind and a mercy from Us - a decree ordained'. So she conceived him, and withdrew with him to a far-off place." (Qur'an 19; Mary,19-20)

This is exactly what arrived with the Messiah. The Qur'an declares, in fact, as we have seen, that God **chose** the Virgin Mary **in order to create**, in her womb, and **by His divine Word**, His Holy Messiah. It is here thus, in the womb of Mary, that God tells the Messiah: "Be!" and He was. On the spot, the chosen Virgin was pregnant with the **Word of God**, as the Sura of "The Family of Imran" reveals:

> "Remember when the Angels said: 'O Mary, God gives you glad tidings of **a Word from Him**. His name is the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. . . '" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,45)

The Qur'an thus confirms the evangelical revelation with regards to the Messiah:

> ". . . **The Word became flesh**, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that he has from the Father as only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

Let us finally report this final Qur'anic verse:

> "The Jews say Ezra is son of God while the Christians say Christ is the son of God. This is what they say, from their very mouths, thereby agreeing with the speech of the unbelievers who came before. May God strike them down! How they pervert the truth." (Qur'an 9; Repentance,30)

We must understand this verse taking into consideration the fact that the Qur'an comes to confirm the Bible, and not to invalidate it. To do otherwise, would be to let oneself deviate towards the worst of arguments, and not orient oneself towards the best of arguments, which is "the Straight Path" prescribed by the Qur'an. In this illuminated Path, we understand this verse in the following manner. They say: "Christ is the son of God. This is what they say, from their very mouths": it is not deeply rooted in their hearts and entails no positive spiritual consequence in their daily behaviors. They continue to live as pagans. If this word gushed from the heart, it would have changed their lives. And yet, they still behave in all things like these polytheistic pagans. They "repeat", alas, and use Christ's Name just as unbelievers did before them, regarding their deities who bore sons and daughters. These "stupid" pagans thus resemble each other in all things, and will suffer the same condemnation. Even today, we cannot but notice the moral decadence of the greater majority of the so-called Christians who "say from their mouths the Christ is Son of God", yet themselves behave, as children of the devil. The Christ had good reason to say:

> "Hypocrites! How rightly Isaiah prophesied about you when he said: This people honor Me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from Me. Their reverence of Me is worthless." (Matthew 15:7-9)

The Qur'an reproduces in its own tongue, the Messiah's words addressed to the false believers.

The intention of Divine Inspiration, in giving the Messiah the title of Son of God, is thus clear: it means that He has no human father. Such is the veritable spiritual meaning confirmed by the Bible and Qur'an. Whœver wishes to discuss this in an extremist way, divides the ranks amidst believers and bear full responsibility before the Throne of God. As for us, committed to the "Straight Path", we have demonstrated, grace to the Scriptures, the veritable divine intention, and the unity of the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration, thus employing the "best" of arguments and unite the believers' ranks.

4.3 The Divinity of the Messiah

No one imagined that God would lower himself to the point of taking on human form, appearing in this world and speaking to the man He created, within man. A human being, a prey to pride, often refuses to believe that his Holy Majesty would lower himself to the level of the created being.

What dœs the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration say about the Divine Incarnation?

The Old Testament gradually prepared believers of this truth in two stages. In the first stage, the Torah revealed the truth of the existence of the Unique God. In the second stage, God spoke to the prophets of the Messiah that He would send, presenting Him with exceptional supernatural traits.

In the first stage

Mankind before the Bible worshiped dictatorial mythological gods with fear and apprehension. The Bible presents a unique, kind, merciful God, Who forgives the sins of those who repent (Exodus 34:5-7). He appeared speaking to Abraham, Moses and the Prophets, whilst men who worshiped idols trembled before their gods in fear and crushed themselves before them in order to manifest their submission. In the Bible, to the contrary, God teaches man to love Him like a father who watches over his children; just as He teaches them that there is no need to fear Him, save the unjust:

> "Yahweh, Yahweh, God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in faithful love and constancy, maintaining his faithful love to thousands, forgiving fault, crime and sin, yet letting nothing go unchecked. . . " (Exodus 34:5-7)

The Qur'an, at its turn, confirms this truth, revealing:

> "God the Compassionate, the Merciful." (Qur'an 1; Al-Fatiha,1)

In the second stage

In the Bible, God promised to send the Messiah as a Sign of His Mercy, to pull out humanity from infernal ignorance, fanaticism, egoism, and pride. He announced to his prophets the coming of a humble Messiah; and yet in this humbleness his grandeur lies. God attributed symbolic names to the Messiah, revealing his true divine nature, and his exceptional human personality. Isaiah (VIIIth Century BC) describes him so:

> "The Lord will give you a sign in any case. It is this: the young woman (*virgin*) is with child and will give birth to a son, whom she will call Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)

The name "Immanuel" means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Thus, with the Messiah, it is God Himself who is with us. Isaiah also attributes other exceptional names to this child:

> "For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: 'Wonder Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace'." (Isaiah 9:5)

God has never given the names of "Mighty-God" or "Eternal-Father" to any other prophet. No reasonable man would dare to bear them. On the contrary, we find names in the Arab world such as: Abdallah ie "God's Slave", Abdul-Massih ie "Messiah's Slave", Abdul-Nabi ie "Prophet's Slave". By the divine names given to the Messiah, God reveals through the Old Testament, his personal coming in the person of the Messiah.

The necessity for God's incarnation appears in Isaiah's heartbreaking cry which he addressed to Him, inviting Him to come to earth **Himself** to earth:

> "Oh, that You would tear the Heavens open and **come down!**" (Isaiah 63:19)

Other prophecies, notably those of the Prophet Micah (VIIIth Century BC), announce the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem. Micah even predicted that his origins are **eternal**:

> "But you, (Bethlehem) Ephrathah, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born for me the one who is to rule over Israel; his origin goes back to the distant past, to the **days of Eternity**." (Micah 5:1)

How can the Messiah, born 750 years after Micah, have eternal origins? This prophecy cannot be understood but at its accomplishment. In fact, in a heated diatribe between Jesus and the Jews, He declares:

> "I tell you most solemnly, **before Abraham ever was**, I Am." (John 8:58)

We know that Abraham precedes the Messiah by two thousand years on our earth. How then, can He assert that He exists before Abraham, if not, as Micah says, that His origins are eternal? This eternity appears equivalently, when Jesus was praying openly in the presence of his Apostles, telling his Holy Father:

> "I have glorified You on earth... Now, Father, it is time for you to glorify me with that glory I had **with You before ever the world was**." (John 17:4-5)

Jesus addresses himself to his Father in an elevated voice, in order to teach in which spirit, one should resort to God: with tenderness and delicacy. At the same time, He reveals his divine essence, He who existed with God "before ever the world was". In the Evangelical Inspiration, several verses mention the eternity of the Messiah's Spirit, not of his human body of course, which, like all flesh, was created in the world.

Some people are startled by the Divine Incarnation, and question themselves in a totally materialistic mentality: "Since God has incarnated in the Messiah on earth, how can he then, manage the world and the stars from heaven?!" This is a naïve, childish, and limited view of God's Omnipotence. God has no need of leaving Heaven to appear on earth.

In our epoch, this fact is more understandable than it was in the past. In fact, psychology has discovered the unsuspecting and unknown powers of the human spirit. A spiritual person can passage with his spirit, and appear some thousands of kilometers away of his body. Likewise, certain persons can control, from a distance, other's thoughts, even guiding individuals and collectives from a distance. If such is the power of the human spirit, created, which has not yet discovered all its faculties, what then can we say of the Creator's Spirit, whose infinite Power we do not yet realize? God can, indeed, incarnate himself on earth without actually leaving heaven.

However, what interests us in the Inspiration is not what people say, but what God Himself revealed to his Prophets. We believe in the plan of God revealed by God, even if it is shocking to those who have a materialistic faith and dull spirit, preventing them of understanding the divine plans.

What dœs the Qur'an say about the Messiah? That He is the Word of God and His Spirit:

> "The Angels said to Mary: 'God bids you rejoice in a Word from Him: His name is the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary'." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,45)

Notice that the name of this Divine Word is "the Messiah Jesus", which comes back to say that the Messiah is the Word of God. The Word of God is permanently with Him, being of his Divine Essence, as this is revealed by St John's Gospel:

> "In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**... The **Word became flesh**." (John 1:1-14)

The Qur'an also reveals us that the Messiah is also the Spirit of God:

> "The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary was God's Apostle and His Word, which He cast to Mary: a **Spirit proceeding from Him**." (Qur'an 4; Women,171)

As we cannot separate a person from his word, we also cannot separate him from his spirit. The Word of God is God Himself, the Spirit of God is also God, it is the Holy Trinity reported in the Evangelical Inspiration.

Some interlocutors regarding these topics resort to futile arguments, saying for example, that we can find some religious leaders who carry the title of "Spirit of God" (Ruh-Allah) without having the divine essence. The response is that it is human traditions which have attributed such titles to men; Divine Inspiration has nothing to do with it. The Heavenly Books have never said of a prophet, however great they may have been, the Word of God or the Spirit of God. Here appears the deviance of human traditions, which we denounce.

God utilized the best means to gradually reveal to the Arabs the truth about the Messiah's nature, using, as is his habit, a wise pedagogy. Those who wish to delve deep into the inspired truths must recur to the Bible. They should read it, arming themselves with the Spirit of God, so as to not interpret it in a purely human or philosophical spirit, which clouds the spiritual truths. What is important is not to simply read the Inspired Books, but in **the spirit** which these Heavenly Books are read.

If the Qur'an dœs not deny the Messiah's Divinity, how then, do we interpret the following verse?

> "It is blasphemy they utter, those who say that God is Christ the son of Mary! For Christ had said: 'O Children of Israel, worship God, my Lord and your Lord'. Whoso ascribes partners to God, God proscribes the Garden to him, and his final refuge is the Fire. Wrongdoers shall have no champions." (Qur'an 5; The Table,72)

The Qur'anic points, here, considered a certain category of Christians as infidels because of their injustices. Notice that the verse dœs not say: "It is blasphemy they utter, **all those** who say that God is Christ", but "Blasphemers are those who say that God is Christ", that is, the known Christians like those who say "God, is Christ". The phrase should be understood as so: The Christians have blasphemed.

But why have they blasphemed? Is it for saying that God is the Messiah? If such was the Divine Intention, then the verse would have been inspired under an indisputable form, dissipating all

misinterpretation, like: "All those who say that God is Christ blaspheme", or, more so, "whœver says that the Messiah is God, blasphemes".

But the Qur'an dœs not consider **all Christians** as blasphemers. Well to the contrary, it praises the virtues of many Christians, knowing those who say: "God, is the Messiah". God also inspired Muhammad the following verse:

> "You will surely find that the nearest in amity towards the believers (*in the Qur'an, Muslims*) are those who say: 'We are Christians'. That is because there are priests and monks among them; and they do not grow proud." (Qur'an 5; The Table,82)

We should note that these priests and monks believe that God is the Messiah, and at the same time, the Qur'an praises them.

> "As for the believers, for the Jews, the Christians, and the Sabaeans who believe in God and the Last Day, and who do righteous deeds – these have their wage with their Lord. No fear shall fall upon them, nor shall they grieve." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,62)

> "They to whom We brought the Book (*The Bible*) before this present Revelation (*the Qur'an*) believe in it (*the Qur'an*). And when it is recited to them, they say: 'We believe in it; it is the truth (*that comes*) from our Lord. We had indeed been Muslims (*submitted to God*) before it!' These shall **be paid their wages twice** for their steadfastness; they ward off evil by doing good, and expend from what We provided them. If they hear idle talk they turn away from it..." (Qur'an 28; The Narrative,52-55)

We deduct that the Qur'an dœs not condemn, globally, all those who say "God, is the Messiah" for having said these words. Otherwise, God would have condemned, as one block, all Christians. God's real intention in these verses is to condemn a category of Christians who, because of their evil actions, have blasphemed and become infidels. Other Qur'anic verses where God praises faithful Christians for their good deeds, applies this interpretation. He reassures them in saying:

> "**No fear shall fall upon them, nor shall they grieve**... because among them are priests and monks, and they do not grow proud." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,62 / Qur'an 5; The Table,82-85)

The Qur'an distinguishes between two categories of Christians: those who follow the "Straight Path", and those who go astray. The latter are rightly accused, by the Qur'an, of being constituted as blasphemers.

The Qur'an says:

> "**They are not all alike**. Among the People of the Book is a group upstanding. They recite the revelations of God through the hours of the night and prostrate themselves. They believe in God and the Last Day; they command virtue and forbid vice; they hasten to do good works. These are among the righteous. What good they do will not be denied them; and God knows full well those who are pious." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,113-115)

> "**A group among the People of the Book** longs to lead you astray, but it is only themselves they lead astray, and they know it not!" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,69)

> "Among the People of the Book is one who, if you entrust him with a hoard of money, will give it back to you; and among them is one who, if you entrust him with a dinar, will give it back to you only if you keep standing over him." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,75)

The distinction made by the Qur'an between the two categories of people of the Book clearly emerges from these verses. The category of those who are led astray is denounced by the Qur'an,

not because of their belief in the Messiah's Divinity, but because of their evil deeds, especially the theft of other's possessions. For the Qur'an praises on the one hand priests and monks, while it castigates others:

> "O believers, many rabbis and monks consume the wealth of people unjustly..." (Qur'an 9; Repentance,34)

Now, to "consume the wealth of people unjustly" equivocates, according to the Evangelical Inspiration, to idolatry. Likewise, all evil action is considered by the Gospels as idolatry. And Jesus, the Messiah had said:

> "No one can be slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money." (Matthew 6:24)

Saint Paul also says:

> "For you can be quite certain that nobody who actually indulges in fornication or impurity or greed—**which is worshiping a false god**—can inherit anything of the Kingdom of God." (Ephesians 5:5)

In spite of this, many Christians claim to belong to the Messiah, while they are, in reality, nothing but idolaters who associate the worship of God with that of money and pleasures.

It is therefore not strange that the Qur'an, after the Gospel, denounces the impious category of Christians who say that God is the Messiah. These Christians are thus accused of idolatry because of their love for money and pleasures, and not because they say that God is the Messiah. Such is our interpretation.

Yes, we too, with the Qur'an, affirm: "Blasphemers are those who say, 'God is the Messiah'". Nonetheless, we are amongst those who say that "God, is the Messiah". We affirm it without apprehension, confident of "having nothing to fear or grieve" (Qur'an 2; The Cow,62), knowing that our good deeds will classify us amongst the blessed, not amongst those who disbelieve.

However -and to be more clear- we affirm: "Blasphemers are those who say that Muhammad is Prophet of God". Yet, we believe that Muhammad is a worthy Prophet of God. And we hope not to be classified, because of evil deeds, among the blasphemers. Many of those who say that Muhammad is Prophet of God have themselves, indeed, gone astray from the principles and noble commandments of the Qur'an, rejecting the spirit of openness of the Qur'an. They are counted as blasphemers. We refer our readers to what the Prophet Muhammad and late Sheikh Muhammad Abdo said about this subject in our introduction.

Likewise, we say: "Blasphemers are those who say that Moses is prophet of God". Yet, we believe that Moses is Prophet of God. But we denounce Zionism and its criminal followers who say that Moses is prophet of God.

The Divine Incarnation is the answer to an absolute necessity, seeing the profuse darkness which humanity has been plunged into. The Prophets themselves were incapable of saving man. This incapacity is reflected in the words of the Prophet Isaiah:

> "We had all gone astray..." (Isaiah 53:6)

Only God never gœs astray. He alone is capable of freeing man from darkness. It is why:

> "The Word became flesh, he lived among us." (John 1:14)

God had answered the heartbreaking cry of the Prophet Isaiah:

"Oh, that You would tear the Heavens open and come down!" (Isaiah 63:19)

4.4 The crucifixion of the Messiah

The Bible, in the Old Testament, announces that the Messiah will be despised and put to death by the Jews. The prophet Isaiah (VIIIth century BC) had said of the Messiah:

> "... a thing despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering, a man to make people screen their faces... And yet ours were the sufferings He bore, ours the sorrows he carried. But we, we thought of Him as someone punished, struck by God, and brought low. Yet He was pierced through for our faults, crushed for our sins. On him lies a punishment that brings us peace, and through his wounds, we are healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each taking his own way, and Yahweh burdened him with the sins of all of us. Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly, He never opened His mouth... Yes, He was **torn away from the land of the living**; for our faults **struck down in death**. They gave him a grave with the wicked, a tomb with the rich, though He had done no wrong and there had been no perjury in his mouth. Yahweh has been pleased to crush Him with suffering. If He offers His life in atonement, He shall see His heirs, He shall have a long life and through Him what Yahweh wishes will be done." (Isaiah 53:1-10)

Such is the Old Testament's description of the Messiah's calamity and putting to death, eight centuries before its accomplishment. If, today, we were to describe the sufferings of the Messiah, we could not have done it better than Isaiah.

What is the meaning of this divine prophecy: "He was pierced through for our faults. And we had all gone astray!" What are these faults, and how did the Jews go astray? It is about the crimes of Zionism and of its perdition. Indeed, the Zionist spirit had infiltrated among the Jewish people in the last centuries, and this spirit was strongly condemned by the prophets of the Old Testament and by the Messiah. "We had all gone astray", said the prophet Isaiah. This perdition lies in the **politicization of Judaism**. In fact, Zionists conceived Judaism as an Israeli State. On the contrary, God desires faith and repentance for all humanity. Here is why the Messiah had declared:

> "My Kingdom (*spiritual and universal*) is not a Kingdom of this world (*political and restricted*)." (John 18:36)

The Zionist Jews of today follow the steps of their ancestors and drive astray in the illusion of Zionism. After having occupied Palestine, most Israelis still dream of Greater Israel, an Israeli empire that extends from the Nile to the Euphrates. The tragedy of the Middle East is because of Zionism, and reproduces in the 20th century, the tragedy of Jesus, the Messiah, who denounced Zionism up to the Cross.

The Zionist evil had equally contaminated Jesus' Apostles themselves. They expected -like all the other Jews- a military Messiah who would lead a Zionist movement of liberation. They awaited that Jesus would engage in a violent and armed expansionist campaign against the Romans and neighboring countries of Palestine. The aim of this messianic military movement would have been the establishment of the Zionist empire. It is the reason for which the Messiah, far from speaking to them of military glory, gradually prepared them to the thought of him being put to death, thus substituting their political and racial ambitions, with a spiritual vision of Salvation.

In fact, Jesus, after being assured that his Apostles believed in Him as the Messiah, revealed to them his spiritual and non-political Messianism, by Him being put to death:

> "From that time Jesus began to make it clear to His disciples that He was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day." (Matthew 16:21)

The spontaneous reaction of the Apostles was disappointment; Peter rejected this non-political vision and was pressed to say:

> "Heaven preserve You, Lord, this must not happen to You!" (Matthew 16:22)

But Jesus rebuked him and went on repeating to the Apostles that He must be crucified and be put to death (Matthew 16:23 and Luke 9:22 / 9:44-45).

The Zionist spirit had so consumed the Jewish mentality, that the Apostles themselves felt an immense difficulty in getting rid of it. The Gospel mentions that Jesus, even after His death and resurrection, was to appear to two of His disciples in order to explain to them the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning His suffering. He said to them:

> "'You foolish men! So slow to believe all that the prophets have said! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer before entering into His glory?' Then starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, He explained to them the passages throughout the Scriptures that were about Himself." (Luke 24:25-27)

The Messiah has entered into His own Glory -a spiritual one, neither worldly nor political- through the door of martyrdom. The martyrdom for Justice is in the eyes of God, glory and dignity, not shame as certain people think. The Messiah did not despise martyrdom; and whœver considers it a shame is not guided by God's Holy Spirit. It took the Apostles quite a long time to understand this manner of thinking; some were even ashamed of what St. Paul, in his letter, calls "the scandal of the Cross" (Galatians 5:11).

Many have scorned Jesus because of His crucifixion. On the other hand, the Apostles did not blush with shame in him being put to death, as the Messiah, after His resurrection, explained to them the deep meaning of the Cross. They then understood God's intention and wisdom and thus submitted themselves. St Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians:

> "Here are we preaching a crucified Christ; to the Jews an obstacle that they cannot get over, to the pagans madness." (1 Corinthians 1:23)

God wanted, by the Messiah being put to death, to establish a criterion of faith, to separate true believers from Zionists. The latter refused to follow Him because of their attachment to politics and earthly glory. The Qur'an alludes to this latter who, after having believed in Him as the Zionist messiah, refused to follow Him **after His death**, having understood that He would not satisfy their dream of hegemony:

> "Among the People of the Book (*the Jews*) none there are but shall believe in Him (*the Messiah*) **before his death**, and on the Day of Resurrection He shall be a witness against them." (Qur'an 4; Women,159)

This Qur'anic verse clearly demonstrates that the Messiah was veritably put to death.

If such was the attitude of the people of the Bible -the Jews, scribes and Pharisees who were already introduced to the death of the Messiah by biblical prophecy- how much more could God have managed the Arabs of the time, incapable of assimilating the fact of the Cross? The Arabs of the pre-Islamic era, could not have conceived nor accepted, an apparently defeated Messiah, hanging on a cross and killed by men, the Jews, supposed to be his witnesses.

Why did the Messiah have to be put to death? To abolish the Zionist spirit from its followers' mentality. These, seeing Jesus in whom they believed as the political Messiah hanging on a cross, realized that Zionism was a mistake and an illusion which had to be given up definitively.

If the Messiah was not crucified, his disciples would have never understood their error and would have went on asking for the establishment of the Israeli Zionist kingdom. By the cross, the Messiah put an end to the concept of Zionism.

Jesus is Savior because He saves all those who believe in Him, not only from the chains of Zionism, but from all similar illusory ideals, from all materialistic mentalities, even when this conceals itself under a religious appearance. Such is the case of political and nationalist Islam and Christianity. All attempts to politicize religion -all religions- is another Zionism under the guise of another name. The Vatican, in proclaiming itself "State" in 1929, similar to other states, has fallen into the same trap as Zionists did.

As already mentioned, it was impossible for the pre-Islamic Arabs to understand the message of a seemingly defeated Messiah. It is why the Qur'an -a good pedagogy- gradually presents them the truths and evangelical facts. One must also hold count of the fact that at that time, Arabs evaluated a man by his physical strength, courage and skill in handling a sword, and not by qualities like tenderness, humility and the martyrdom for Justice.

This mentality still prevails today in many societies; the greater number have learnt nothing from Divine Inspiration and continue to scorn the meek and the kind, treating them as weaklings. Such behavior defines the Zionist spirit, vanquished by Jesus, on a humble cross.

The Qur'an has prepared the Arabs, with a lot of delicacy and finesse, to the comprehension of the wisdom behind the Messiah's martyrdom. This cannot be discovered, except by a meticulous and well-intentioned researcher. Because the Qur'an says of the Jews and condemns them:

> "Therefore, by renouncing their Covenant, by blaspheming against the revelations of God, by killing prophets unjustly... So also by their blasphemy and their terrible words of slander against Mary, and their saying: 'It is we who killed the Christ Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God' - they killed him not, nor did they crucify him, but so it was made to appear to them... but God raised Him up to Him." (Qur'an 4; Women,155-158)

Certain superficial believers are pressed to think that these Qur'anic verses deny the crucifixion and physical death of the Messiah. Carried away in their enthusiasm, they embark on a fully-fledged campaign against the Gospels, claiming that they -which report the crucifixion of Jesus- are falsified. By their hasty conclusions, they contradict the Qur'an that attests to the Gospels. By taking a step back and calmly consulting the Qur'an, without any fanaticism, they would discover that it speaks -in another verse- of the putting to death of the Messiah.

Here lies the importance in searching for the unity of the Inspiration, and the need to study the Qur'an in depth to reach the divine purpose. Thus, guided by an "Enlightened Book", we can avoid the trap of literal interpretation, which draws us away from the divine intention. The Qur'an Itself encourages us to follow this itinerary by a forthright declaration on the Messiah's death, where He, as a child, says:

> "Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day **I die**, and the day I am **resurrected, alive!**" (Qur'an 19; Mary,33)

The Qur'an speaks therefore, of the Messiah's death and his resurrection, attesting by this the Gospels. Certain superficial believers think that these verses speak of the Messiah's return at the End of Times. Only then would the Messiah be -according to them- put to death. The Divine Inspiration provides no foundation for these rants. We do not understand the reasons for which these "believers" accept the idea of the death of the Messiah at the End of Times, and totally refuse it at his first coming. The Qur'an equally mentions the Messiah's death in the following verse, where Jesus, speaking to God **after His death**, says of the Jews who renounced Him after His death:

> "I was a witness to them while I lived among them, but when You **caused me to die**, it was You who kept Watch over them. You are a witness over all things." (Qur'an 5; The Table,117)

We have already seen that the Qur'an condemns the people of the Book (the Jews) who ceased to believe in Jesus **after** His death:

> "Among the People of the Book none there are but shall believe in Him (Jesus) **before his death**, and on the Day of Resurrection He shall be a witness against them." (Qur'an 4; Women,159)

The Messiah's death is also reported in the following Qur'anic verse, referring to the incredulous Jews:

> "They schemed (*against Jesus, to kill Him*). But God schemed; and God is the best of schemers. Remember when God said: 'O Jesus, I shall cause You to die (*moutawaffica*) and make You ascend to Me. I shall purify you from those who blasphemed (*the Jews who denied you*), and I shall raise those who followed you (*the believing Jews*) above those who blasphemed until the Day of Resurrection.'" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,54-55)

NB: Here also, the word "moutawaffica", which means, "I will cause You to die", is badly translated by "I will take You". This is false. In fact, this word designates a deceased, physically, a putting to death, corporally.

How do we reconcile between the Qur'anic verses where God Himself declares the putting to death of Jesus, and those where Jesus Himself declares his proper death, with the verse of Qur'an 4; Women,157, which says:

> "They killed him not, nor did they crucify him, but so it was made to appear to them!"

Dœs the Qur'anic Inspiration contradict Itself? Certainly not!

Those who stop at the literal interpretation, stumble and, as says the Qur'an of those who worship God to the letter:

> "They turn their faces about, losing this world and the next. This is the most manifest bereavement!" (Qur'an, XXII; The Pilgrimage,11)

In elevating ourselves to the level of the Divine Intention in the Inspiration -to understand according to the Spirit and not the letter- we will not see in verse 157 of chapter Women (Qur'an IV), any negation of the crucifixion or the physical killing of the Messiah. The Divine Intention is to make us understand that the Jews, in putting the Messiah to death, did not put an end to the Messiah's message. "But so it was made to appear to them", that in killing him, they could abort his mission in its cradle. Yet His message, after His death, spread like wildfire, up to the confines of the earth.

The Jews feared the message of Jesus, opposed to Zionism, even more than his Person. And yet, his message, which they had in their sights by killing Him, is widespread in the world, **because of the same reason: this crucifixion**. Thus, God, "the best schemer", triumphed over the cunning of the Jews (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,54-55).

Some think that God's shrewdness bested that of the Zionist Jews because He raised the Messiah up to Him, evading Him of being put to death. But this interpretation contradicts the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration. Therefore, we cannot accept it. We believe that God's shrewdness triumphed over that of the unbelievers, because the Messiah's death caused Zionism's defeat. God, after the Messiah's death, resurrected Him and elevated Him to Him, whereas the Jews thought that they

had precipitated Him to the deepest confines of hell. Divine victory over the Jews dœs not stop at the elevation of the Messiah: The Creator confounds the Jews further still, by raising above them eternally, His Messiah's **disciples**:

> "I shall raise those who followed you (*the believing Jews*) above those who blasphemed (*the Zionist Jews*) until the Day of Resurrection." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,55)

Nothing can justify those who deny the Messiah's crucifixion on the pretext of glorifying Him. The martyr for the cause of God is not shameful. Also, God responds in the Qur'an, to all those who think of glorifying the Messiah by denying His crucifixion:

> "Say (Muhammad): Who can do anything against God's will should he wish to **extirpate the Christ** son of Mary and his mother, indeed all that is on earth?" (Qur'an 5; The Table,17)

As we have already seen previously, the Bible reveals to us through the prophet Isaiah, eight centuries before Jesus, that God had already decided of **destroying** the Messiah:

> "... He has **been cut off** from the land of the living, He has been **struck dead**... It was **Yahweh's good pleasure** to crush Him with pain." (Isaiah 53:8-10)

Our conviction is firm: No one can stop the arm of God Who acts according to His plan and His wisdom, so often misunderstood by men. God really physically destroyed the Messiah as was prophesied in the Old Testament, and as the Messiah Himself taught in the Gospels. The Qur'an only certifies it. Nevertheless, if God **wanted to extirpate** the Christ corporally, it was for the purpose of glorifying Him spiritually and eternally. This will be realized with the near and final destruction of Zionism, incarnate today in the State of Israel.

To believe that the Messiah was not put to death, means to believe in a political and military Messiah. This is another form of Zionism. The Messiah had to pass through death to change the mentality of good-intentioned men, who fall into the nets of materialism.

Following these reflections, a simple and true conclusion imposes itself: belief in the Messiah's crucifixion dœs not contradict the Qur'an when its verses are interpreted spiritually, according to our principles and is valid for all the inspired Books. On the contrary, the negation of the Messiah's crucifixion pushes interpreters of the Qur'an to look for contorted explanations, to adapt them to Qur'anic verses which speak of Him being put to death. They thus end up by contradicting the Gospel, instead of confirming it as the Qur'an intends. This culpable behavior is neither "the best of arguments", nor "the Straight Path" prescribed by the Qur'an.

To die as a martyr for God is an infinite glory: no one can take it away from the Messiah Jesus, the First of the martyrs. He who has grasped this truth will cease of wanting to remove from the Messiah the *"shame"* of the cross. To die for God, is to live eternally, as is revealed in the Qur'an:

> "Do not say about those who are killed in the cause of God that they are dead; **they are indeed alive**, but **you do not perceive them**." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,154)

The Qur'an is logical with itself. It dœs not consider the martyrs of God as dead, but alive. It is why, respecting its own principles, it dœs not stop at the Messiah being put to death, but as a martyr, declaring Him alive forever. The Jews had not put Him to death because God, "the supreme Contriver", brought Him back to life eternally, but "they are not aware of it". The Qur'an also says on this subject:

> "Do not imagine those killed in the path of God to be dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, enjoying His bounty." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,169)

We say, we who believe in the crucifixion, death and resurrection of the Messiah: The Messiah is alive, "they did not kill Him, nor did they crucify Him, but they thought they did".

4.5 The falsification of the Bible

The Qur'anic proofs of the Bible's authenticity

Along the centuries, some Jews spread rumors of the Bible's falsification, and the Gospels in particular, by Christians. Their goal was to convince the people that the prophecies on which the Christians rely on for believing in Jesus as the Messiah are falsified, and do not exist in the Old Testament, at least in the form presented by the Christians. Also, that the latter had manipulated the Biblical texts and adapted them to Jesus.

Many believed in this calumny and spread it up until our days, scorning the Bible, especially the Gospels. Some Arabs go so far as preventing the introduction of the Gospels into their countries and their homes when paradoxically, their doors are open to immoral books and reviews.

To claim that the Bible is falsified is a heresy inspired by the Devil who, as the Qur'an says:

> "whispers and recoils... in the hearts of mankind." (Qur'an 114; Mankind,4-5).

We find no verse in the Qur'an that warns believers against the falsification of the Bible. To the contrary, the Qur'an says that it comes to **certify** the Bible (Qur'an 4; Women,47). Would the Qur'an authenticate a falsified Biblical text?

How can the Qur'an warn against the Bible, when the Inspiration is one? God is Almighty to protect His Inspiration, and would not allow the falsification of a Book which He has inspired. Otherwise, how could we ever recur to a "Luminous Book" to guide us in the right path? And what reference would we have? Whœver defames the Bible by claiming that it is falsified, defames by the same fact the Qur'an as well, which confirms its authenticity.

One of the fundamental differences between the Qur'anic Inspiration and the many traditional Muslims is the fact that the Qur'an attests the Bible; whereas they slander it. The Qur'an says:

> "Those to whom We (*God*) revealed the Book (*the Bible*) **recite it as it should rightly be recited**. They believe in it. **But those who repudiate it, they are truly lost**." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,121)

The explanation given by "Al Jalalein" for the expression "read it as it ought to be read" is the following: "They read it as It was inspired". We adopt this correct interpretation, which has the merit of expressing the Lord's Intention.

The Qur'an's witness in favor of the authenticity of the Old and New Testaments, makes all discussion futile to us. We ask ourselves how do some claim to believe in the Qur'an, while they assert the Bible's falsification. In slandering the Bible, they demonstrate that they do not believe in the Qur'an, since it explicitly says of the Bible:

> "those who repudiate it, they are truly lost." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,121)

The Qur'an bears witness to the Gospel by saying, again:

> "So let those who follow the Gospel judge in accordance with what God revealed in it. Whoso judges not in accordance with what God revealed, these are the dissolute." (Qur'an 5; The Table,47)

The Qur'an therefore urges the people of the Gospel to judge in virtue of what God has inspired to guide them. Is not this Qur'anic attestation in favor of the Gospel, a sure witness of its authenticity and of one's duty to recur to it? Despite this, Jews, Muslims and Christians, in their

great number affirm the contrary. What will the judgement of these "infidels" be, as the Qur'an qualifies them?

Those who claim that the Gospels are "falsified" do not manifest absolute faith in the Qur'an, but blind fanaticism. In fact, such people hide their hatred behind a mask regarding the whole Divine Inspiration. The same can be said of those who despise the Qur'an under the pretext that they believe in the Gospels.

Any Muslim who thinks that the Gospel is falsified is against the Qur'an. And any Christian who attacks the Qur'an, is against the Spirit of the Gospels. Whœver has really understood the Gospel's Spirit cannot but embrace the Qur'an.

The Qur'an incessantly applies itself on the Bible as its assured and faithful reference. In fact, God advises Muhammad to refer to the readers of the Bible if he doubted the divine words that were inspired to him:

> "If you are in doubt concerning what We revealed to you, ask **those who have read the Book before you**." (Qur'an 10; Jonah,94)

We would have liked to see every Muslim put into practice, the spirit of the Qur'an, and every Christian put into practice the spirit of the Gospels, so to break the chains of extremism that lead to perdition. May every Muslim therefore imitate the Prophet of Islam, who occupied his heart with words of piousness and respect for the Bible:

> "We (*God*) have revealed the Torah in which there is guidance and light. Prophets who surrendered to God were to judge... Following upon their tracks We sent Jesus son of Mary, confirming what he already possessed of the Torah. To Him We revealed the Gospel in which there is guidance and light, confirming what was in his hands of the Torah a guidance and homily to the pious. **So let those who follow the Gospel judge in accordance with what God revealed in it**." (Qur'an 5; The Table,44-47)

Is there a single Qur'anic verse that a believer in the Gospels can reject, under the pretext that it attacks the Gospels? No. Not one verse can be found in the Qur'an which contradicts the Gospels and its teachings, on condition, however, that the interpretation takes into consideration the "Best of Arguments", ie the one which attests to the Gospels, not which contradict it.

Any Qur'anic interpretation contrary to the Gospels is false testimony given against the Qur'an. We are dismayed by those who present false Qur'anic interpretations, then justify their erroneous assertions by claiming that it is the Gospels which is falsified. This justification is even more condemnable than the error itself. The Qur'an Itself denounces and judges such persons.

We are likewise dismayed with those who refuse the Qur'an on the pretext that it is contrary to the Gospels. This assertion is false, as the Qur'an attests the Gospel and confirms it. Why reject it then, under false pretext? On the contrary, is it not more sincere and simpler to believe in the Qur'an because it testifies in favor of the Gospels? In fact, the Qur'an says to the people of the Bible:

> "O People to whom the Book (*Bible*) has been revealed, believe in what We have revealed (*the Qur'an*), **confirming** the truth of that which you already have (*Bible*)." (Qur'an 4; Women,47)

It is why the people of the Bible must strive to seek the Qur'anic interpretation that **confirms** the Bible, "which they already have". By acting with love and wisdom, they will unite the ranks and put an end to denominational hatred.

The Qur'an also addresses its commandments to the Muslims in saying:

> "O believers, believe in God and in His messenger (*Muhammad*), and in the Book (*Qur'an*) He revealed to His messenger, and **the Book He revealed before (*Bible*)**. Whoso disbelieves in God, His angels, **His Books** (*the Old, the New Testament, and the Qur'an*), His messengers, and in the Last Day has strayed far in error." (Qur'an 4; Women,136)

It is not our business to judge those who do not believe in the Holy Books of the Old and New Testaments **in their current text**, nor to condemn them more resolutely than God himself declares in the Qur'an: They "strayed far". We therefore exhort to believe the **current text** of the Bible, because it is the text that the Prophet Muhammad knew. The Divine Inspiration in the Qur'an designates this text because the evidence, even scientific, of its authenticity is manifold and destroys any dispute to the contrary.

There is however, no scientific proof of the falsification of the Bible. If a person who is convinced of this falsification succeeds to present scientific proof of what he is advancing, I will be grateful to him and become his disciple.

The scientific evidence of the Bible's authenticity

God did not inspire the Bible so to leave it to men's whims and malice. Here are the principal scientific proofs -results of modern archaeology- which, with the Qur'an, attest the Bible's authenticity:

1. The "Dead Sea" scrolls discovered in 1947 in Qumran (near the Dead Sea), demonstrate the authenticity of the Old Testament. Scholars have compared this text to those that we possess and were found to be authentic. These texts of the IInd century B.C. are inscribed on goats' leather. These rolls are found at the Rockefeller Museum of Jerusalem. International museums have copies of them.

2. The "Ryland" papyrus, that dates to the year 125 A.D., contains a part of chapter 18 of St John's Gospel. It conforms with the current text.

3. The "Chester Beatty" papyrus carries a large chunk of the New Testament. It dates to the IIIrd century A.D. This text also conforms with the current one and is found in the Museum of Michigan (U.S.A.)

4. The so-called Vaticanus Bible dates back to the IVth century A.D., and consists of the whole Bible in Latin. It is found in the Vatican Museum.

5. The so-called Sinaiticus Bible, discovered in the convent of St Catherine in Sinai, is found in the British Museum. It is the Bible in Greek; it also dates back to the IVth century A.D. It was discovered by a Russian prince at the end of the XIXth century.

6. A logical proof of the Bible's authenticity: the wide range of Christian denominations have the same Biblical text. This text exists in different languages and all conform to the original text.

7. Many of the Muslim scholars deny the falsification of the Bible. The principal ones are the two grand well-known sheikhs (deceased): Afghani and Muhammad Abdo.

According to a fable propagated by certain "believers", the Gospel was taken up to Heaven with the Messiah and could no longer be found on earth. To these people, we pose the following question: What weight of truth do these words entail, since the Qur'an says of "those who recite the Bible, given they recite it correctly?" How could they read it correctly, if it is no longer on earth?

These rantings are even more ridiculous, that the Qur'an recommends the people of the Gospel to judge according to what God has inspired therein. Can God, in the Qur'an, recommend us to judge from a book which no longer exists?

We have demonstrated that the Qur'an is an Arabic reading of the Bible which, at the time of Arab paganism, only existed in three languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. This is irrefutable proof, supported by modern-day archaeological discoveries, of the presence of the Bible on the earth at that time. It was therefore not taken up to Heaven with the Messiah! The archaeological discoveries already mentioned demonstrate that.

The official Islamic tradition equally reports in the "Noble Discussions", of the Prophet Muhammad, an extremely important fact[3]. After the apparition of the Angel Gabriel to Muhammad, the Prophet was troubled by the revelation of his mission. He immediately left his habitual place of meditation and reported this happening to Khadija, his wife. To calm him, she took him directly to Waraka-Ibn-Nofal, Khadija's cousin and Muhammad's uncle. Bokhari reports that Waraka was an Arab scribe -a Christian convert- **who drafted "the Gospel in Hebrew**". The Bible existed, therefore, "on earth", at Muhammad's time, within the Arabian Peninsula.

The scientific and scriptural evidence presented here demonstrate the Bible's authenticity. It shows the immense abyss between, on the one hand, the words of the Qur'an and its Prophet concerning the Bible, and on the other, the calumnies of certain traditionalist believers. For our part, we confide in the testimony of the Qur'an and its Prophet in favor of the Bible. And this testimony is satisfactory for us.

Some believe that the Bible was falsified after the Qur'anic Inspiration. This is the worst of all arguments, and reveals a depraved faith. As we have presented irrefutable scientific evidence of the current evangelical text's authenticity, which is identical to the one inspired in the past before Muhammad. It is in favor of this same text that the Qur'an witnesses.

The "gospel" of Barnabas

Many persons in the East believe in the pseudo gospel of Barnabas. This "gospel" is a parody of the Messiah's life, accepted, unfortunately by many Muslims. But every Muslim who is worthy of this name, cannot but reject this "gospel" for the simple reason that it presents Jesus not as the Messiah, but as the predecessor of the Messiah. According to this false "gospel", Muhammad would be the Messiah.

Here are some extracts of this "gospel":

> "The priest says to Jesus: Stand up Jesus, as we must know from you who you are: it is written in the Book of Moses that God will send us the Messiah who will inform us about God's will. Therefore, I want you to tell us the truth. Are you God's Messiah whom we are waiting for? Jesus answered: it is true that God did promise us this, but I am not the Messiah, because he was created before me and he will come after me." (chapter 96,1-5)
>
> Chapter 97,13-17 also reports:
>
> "The priest then said: what will be the name of the Messiah? Jesus answered: the name of the Messiah is admirable because God Himself gave him a name when He created his soul and placed him in a heavenly glory. God said: Wait, O Muhammad! His blessed name is Muhammad."

These verses are a flagrant contradiction with Divine Inspiration in the Gospels and the Qur'an, which testify, all two, that Jesus is truly the Messiah.

Furthermore, Muhammad never claimed to be the Messiah, neither did he say that Jesus was not so. He never declared that he was created before Jesus. The Qur'an's teachings are contrary to the vulgar lies of the "gospel" of Barnabas, and strongly confirm that Jesus is indeed, the Messiah of God.

[3]These discussions ("Hadith" in Arabic) are reported by the scholar Bokhari.

The purpose of the authors of this "gospel" -which badly conceals Zionism's hand- was to spark a separation between Christians and Muslims, applying the principle of "divide and conquer". They played on the affection of Muslims for Muhammad, presenting him as greater than Jesus. Superficial believers have blindly fallen into this trap, without grasping the depth of the problem. They do not realize that, denying Jesus' Messianism and attributing it to Muhammad, transforms them into counter-witnesses of the Qur'anic message, to which they nonetheless claim to belong.

Dœs the Qur'an speak of falsification?

The propagators of the rumors of the Bible's falsification, recur to certain Qur'anic verses. They forget that the Qur'an presents itself as a witness to the Bible. We will mention certain Qur'anic verses to which adepts of the falsification refer, and demonstrate that the Qur'an's intention is to denounce those who falsify **the interpretation** of Biblical verses. The Qur'an dœs not refer to Biblical verses, but to the bad faith of the interpreters. The Qur'an says:

> "Do you (Muslims) really expect them (Jews) to believe in the message sent to you, when a group among them would hear the Word of God (*in the Bible*), and **then pervert it, knowingly, after having grasped its meaning?**" (Qur'an 2; The Cow,75)
>
> "Those to whom We brought the Book (*Bible*) know it as well as they know their own children. Some of them **suppress the truth knowingly**." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,146)

Those ill-intended interpreters **knowingly** altered, with full knowledge of the facts, the meaning of the Biblical verses, "**although they understood its meaning**". This is a falsification in **the interpretation** of the word of God. Elsewhere, the Qur'an also reveals:

> "Among them **is a group who twist their tongues while reading the Book**, so that you might suppose it to be part of the Book, but it is no part of the Book. They claim it is from God, but it is not from God. They utter falsehood in God's name, and they know it." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,78)

Remark that this group "twist their tongue"; they do not falsify the Biblical texts. By "twisting their tongue", they present **false interpretations** -which are convenient to them- to make believe that what they say comes from God, "whereas it is not from God".

Such is our interpretation of the above-mentioned verses, verses which some ill-intentioned people want "to twist", to slander the Gospels. The Qur'an accuses the Jews in particular of having recourse to this type of practice:

> "Among Jews are some who **distort the Words** of revelation **from their contexts**. They say..." (Qur'an 4; Women,46)

Those who "distort the Words from their contexts", digress them from the meaning intended by God, in presenting a false interpretation. The Qur'an also says on this matter:

> "For violating their (*the Jews*) Covenant We cursed them, and hardened their hearts. **They twist words** (of the Bible) from their context, and have forgotten a portion of what they were asked to remember..." (Qur'an 5; The Table,13 and 15)

It is clear that to "twist words", points to here, the false interpretations of the Divine Intention.

Yet the Qur'an is not alone in denouncing the Jewish scribes. In the Old Testament, the prophet Jeremiah had already rebelled against them for the same reason:

> "How dare you say: 'We are wise, and we possess the Law of Yahweh?' But look how **it has been falsified by the lying pen of the scribes!**" (Jeremiah 8:8)

It is important to meditate these words of inspiration by Jeremiah to grasp the divine Intention that is being revealed: unmask the Jewish scribes who disfigure the Biblical message with their false interpretations.

We have demonstrated that the Biblical text is authentic. The current text in our hands, thus perfectly corresponds to the known text before the Messiah. This text is confirmed by the "Dead Sea" Scrolls. It is this text, which the Messiah and the Prophet Muhammad knew. No falsification is found therein; no human hand can falsify it because God, in His Infinite Wisdom, desires that the whole text of the Divine Inspiration reaches us. The reason is that God wants to inform us of His plan of salvation in favor of all mankind, and about the fatal influence of the Zionist spirit of the Jewish leaders and scribes.

Indeed, the scribes when transcribing the Bible, added, in favor of the Zionist plan, many false texts attributed to God, as the Qur'an rightly points out. These texts can still be found today in the Bible. God, in His Wisdom, allowed them to endure therein to reveal the Zionist hand that introduced them to justify, in the name of God, the human, unwanted traditions of God. These verses resemble parasites, easily detectable by any wise person.

Jesus did not fail to denounce these "hypocrite" scribes and Pharisees:

> "'Why do you break away from the commandment of God for the sake your tradition?' ... 'In this way you have made God's word **null and void** by means of your tradition. Hypocrites! It was you Isaiah meant when he so rightly prophesied: This people honors Me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from me. The worship they offer me is worthless; the doctrines they teach are only **human regulations**'." (Matthew 15:3-9)

It must therefore be stressed, that the Bible itself invites us to discern between Divine Inspiration and the Zionist interpretations therein. A believer must not move away from the Bible because of this Zionist infiltration. On the contrary, this state of affairs must incite strong and valiant hearts to scrutinize the Bible in order to extract the treasures, despite the obstacles. This is how Jeremiah, Jesus, and Muhammad acted.

Moreover, the Prophet Muhammad's respect of the Bible is a sufficient and supplemental guarantee for all Muslims who wish to consult it. Because God says to Him in the Qur'an:

> "Say (*to the Arabs who scorn the Bible*): 'Bring a Book from God, more conductive to guidance than both (*Torah and the Gospel*), and I shall follow it, if you speak the truth'." (Qur'an 28; The Narrative,49)

What better testimony in favor of the Bible can we ask from this noble Arab prophet? It is clear that in the Prophet of Islam's mentality, the Bible is indeed inspired by God. We want to be precise: The Bible **in its current text**, since it is this same text which Muhammad knew.

From the above-mentioned verse, God not only makes Muhammad an Apostle of the Qur'an, but of the Bible too, as the Qur'an is an Arab Inspiration of the Bible. It is the reason for which God, in the Qur'an, asks Muhammad not to demand from the people of the Bible to recur to him as judge, because they have the word of God in the Bible:

> "How is it that **they elect you to judge** between them when they already possess the Torah, in which is found the judgement of God..." (Qur'an 5; The Table,43)
>
> "So let those who follow the Gospel judge in accordance with what God revealed in it. Whoso judges in accordance with what God revealed, these are the dissolute." (Qur'an 5; The Table,47)

The Prophet Muhammad invites all Arab believers to follow the path of "those who came before them" in the faith, the Jewish and Christian **faithful**, matured by the Spiritual Waters of the Bible. The Qur'an says:

> "God wishes to make clear to you and to guide you concerning the laws of those who came before you..." (Qur'an 4; Women,26)
>
> "O believers (*Arabs*), believe in God and in His Apostle (*Muhammad*), and in the Book (*Qur'an*) He revealed to His Apostle, and the Book (*Bible*) He revealed before. Whoso disbelieves in God, His angels, **His Books**, His messengers, and in the Last Day has strayed far in error." (Qur'an 4; Women,136).

Such is the Qur'an's commandment: to believe not only in Muhammad and in the Qur'an, but also in the Scriptures inspired by God before the Qur'an: the Torah and the Gospel in their current text. Any true believer, Jew, Christian, or Muslim, cannot but believe in the totality of the Biblical-Qur'anic Inspiration.

May God Almighty gather His elect, all sincere hearts, all those of good faith, around His one and indivisible Inspiration, in order that they form one unit to face the evil powers who seek to divide them.

4.6 The life of the Prophet Muhammad

Some Orientalists blame Prophet Muhammad for his multiple wives and many wars. We will outline the reasons that justify his behavior which, in our times, appear unacceptable and incompatible with a prophet.

The marriages of Muhammad

One reproach concerns Muhammad's marriage to Zaynab, daughter of Jahsh. Zaynab was the wife of Zayd, Muhammad's adopted son. After his divorce, Muhammad had to marry her. Muslims make no effort whatsœver to present the best explanation of this marriage. The explanation we will give further down, adapts perfectly to the character and integrity of the Prophet Muhammad. In effect, some official Islamic interpretations of this marriage, had distanced many Orientalists -and many Christians- from the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad as a consequence. The Muslim scholars interpret it so: "After Zaynab's marriage to Zayd, the Prophet's gaze fell upon Zaynab and love for her took over his heart".

This explanation is neither certain, nor conclusive: it is the fruit of a particular mentality of the Arab interpreters of the time. Now, research in the field of interpretation remains open; it is better known in Islam as "Ijtihad", which means "effort", because one must do an effort to find, as prescribed by the Qur'an, the best interpretation. It is what we have done, and we think we have found it. We shall explain further, after having briefly outlined the life of the Prophet.

Muhammad was born in Mecca, in the year 570 of our era. He died on June 8, 632. His father, Abdallah, died a few months before his birth, and his mother Amena, died when he was only about five. An orphan, his grandfather Abd-el-Muttaleb took charge of him. He died three years later, leaving him under the care of his son Abi-Taleb, Muhammad's paternal uncle, who loved him very much because of the uprightness of his morals. Abi-Taleb is the father of Ali, Muhammad's beloved cousin and faithful friend for life. Ali later married Fatima, Muhammad's beloved daughter. Abd-el-Muttaleb, Muhammad's grandfather, was a noble of the Bani-Hashim House of the Meccan tribe of Quraish. He had ten sons including Abdallah (Muhammad's father), Abi-Taleb (the uncle who adopted and sheltered him), Hamza (who believed in Muhammad), and Abu-Lahab (who fought him).

Amena, Muhammad's mother, was the sister of Waraka-Ibn-Nofal, whom we have already mentioned. He was the cousin of Khadija, Muhammad's first wife. Muhammad spent his youth in

Mecca and was known for his integrity, chastity, and moral uprightness. He liked isolation and meditation, and did not share the tastes of worldly life with other young men of his age. The inhabitants of Mecca called him "The Honest One" (in Arabic: "El-Amine") because of his faithfulness and honesty. His love for prayer and meditation often led him to the mountain caves that overlooked Mecca. There, he fled the city's tumult, to deepen his research of the spiritual.

This did not prevent him from taking part in Mecca's commercial life. He attended to the commercial caravans in transit between Yemen and Syria. Muhammad was employed at his cousin Khadija -widow of a rich Meccan merchant- where he managed caravans towards Syria, for commerce. She was attracted by his honesty in transactions, and sent him Abi-Taleb (Muhammad's uncle who sheltered him) to talk to him about marriage. Muhammad accepted. He was 25 years old then, and Khadija 40.

It was a happy marriage until the end. They had three boys, who died very young, and four daughters: Rokaya, Zeinab, Umm-Kalthoum and Fatima, the beloved of Muhammad.

During his many trips to Syria, Muhammad met several Christian monks, including the famous monk Bohaira, to whom Muhammad was bound by a deep friendship. Bohaira had admired Muhammad's high morality, and often spoke to him of the prophets and the Messiah. Thus, God was already preparing him, without his knowledge, for a great mission.

When the soul of Muhammad reached maturity through contemplation, at the age of 40, Heaven manifested itself to him. The Angel Gabriel appeared to him while in solitude in a cave near Mecca named "Harra". The Prophet, and the vision over, hurries to Khadija his wife, and tells her what occured. These verses are found in the Qur'an 96; The Blood Clot,1-3. We reproduce the story as related by Bokhari:

> "Gabriel presented himself to me and tells me: Read! (*the Bible*) I responded: I cannot read (*Muhammad was illiterate*). The Angel took me and covered me until I calmed down, then he said: Read. I answered: I cannot read. He took me and covered me a second time until I calmed down, then he said: 'Read!' I answered: 'I cannot read'. He took me and covered me a third time and sent me saying: 'Read, in the Name of God who created! He created men from a blood clot. Read! For God is generous'. And the prophet returned with these words engraved in him, heart trembling, to Khadija daughter of Khowaylid, and reported to her all what had happened. He tells her: 'I feared for my person'."

Such was Muhammad's first vision. He trembled just as Moses, Jeremiah, Daniel and other prophets did before him. Khadija decided to go with Muhammad to see her cousin, Waraka-Ibn-Nofal. He was a Christian and transcribed Biblical text. Waraka reassured them in saying that this corresponded to the message of Moses, the Biblical message. Bokhari reports the story as follows:

> "Muhammad therefore went with Khadija to Waraka-Ibn-Nofal who had become old and blind. Khadija told him: 'Cousin, listen to what your nephew (*Muhammad*) wants to tell you'. Waraka answered: 'What is it, my nephew?' The prophet then informed him about his vision. Waraka told him: 'This is the Law of Moses that God has descended upon him. Oh! How I wish to remain alive and take part to this mission. I wish I could stay alive when your people will deny you'. And the prophet Muhammad exclaimed: 'Will they deny me?' He answered: 'Yes! No man is given what you have received, without having enemies. And should this be granted to me, I would support you up to your victory'. Waraka died soon after."

Thus, Waraka confirmed the authenticity of the vision and certified to him that his message was Biblical. The Message then, is one, and the mission is the same. It is important that this fact is raised.

Waraka's prophecy was accomplished because the inhabitants of Mecca, whose main tribe is the tribe of Quraish, fiercely fought the Prophet.

In the beginning, and for a long time, only a small group believed in Muhammad. Khadija, his wife, was the first of the believers. The new religion that began to dawn in Mecca, worried the idol merchants and those in power of the city who collected taxes and who profited from the pagan pilgrimages that they held. Monotheism represented a serious danger to their trade, power and hegemony. They thus transformed into mortal enemies of Muhammad and his disciples, and strongly persecuted them.

The Prophet courageously endured the painful burden of his mission and waited patiently, even though it cost him his money and his rest. He refused to oppose his armed enemies with weapons, even abstaining from carrying a sword for self-protection. He advised his disciples to flee Mecca and seek refuge in Ethiopia, a Christian country. Amongst his disciples, twelve of them went to the Negus, the emperor of Ethiopia. He greeted them and granted them the right of refuge, assuring them a peaceful stay.

For ten years, Muhammad endured persecution in Mecca, preaching monotheism in vain, having around him only a small number of faithful. The opposition of the tribe of Quraish increased in violence to the point of threatening Muhammad's life and his followers. There was more than one attempt on his life. Muhammad finally relinquished and fled Mecca for Yathreb, later named "Al Madina", which in Arabic means "The City", ie the City of the Prophet.

Muhammad left Mecca secretly during the night, having been warned of a plot to kill him. That same night, Ali, his cousin, took his place in his house, in his bed even, to simulate his presence, thus saving his life. In Yathreb, many adepts protected him, and solely the Jews of this city constituted a threat to him.

Before the flight of Yathreb, two painful events struck the Prophet: the death of his uncle and protector Abi-Taleb (this precipitated the plots against him), and that of his beloved wife Khadija, the faithful life and mission companion. She was his spiritual support, having affirmed him in his faith, and had given him confidence in himself. The year of the death of these two dear persons to Muhammad, was called "the Year of Sadness".

The people of the Quraish tribe, led by the notable Abi-Sifian, tried to seduce Muhammad. They delegated a committee to his uncle Abi-Taleb, shortly before his death, whilst lying sick in bed, so to obtain his intervention with Muhammad. They proposed Muhammad money, glory, even royalty, under condition that he renounces monotheism. They said to him: "If your intention in preaching is money, we will give it to you. We will gather from our own wealth so that you would be the richest amongst us. If you desire honor, we shall establish you as leader, and nothing will be decided without your consent. If you want the kingdom, we shall make you our king; but, as for the Unique God, no!"

In hearing these words, the Prophet clung even tighter to his mission and said: "By God! Should you give me the sun in my right, and the moon in my left to make me renounce this affair, I will not renounce it." On the death of his uncle Abi-Taleb, who sought to temper between the people of Quraish and Muhammad, the tension was at its peak.

Shortly before his flight to "Yathreb", Muhammad experiences the miracle of the Mystical Journey related in Sura XVII, called "The Night Journey". This mystical and historical fact is very important in Muhammad's life and his followers; it constitutes a turning point in his mission. During this night, Muhammad was at his cousin Hind, sister of Ali, son of Abi-Taleb. He saw the Angel Gabriel present himself to him to transport him in vision on a horse named "Al Bouraq" (Lightening) towards Mount Sinai, where God spoke to Moses. He then took him to Bethlehem, the Messiah's birthplace, followed by Jerusalem, to the site of the Temple. From there, he raised him to Heaven, then returned him to Jerusalem, where he re-took his horse to return to his cousin Hind. "The Night Journey" begins so:

> "Glory be to Him Who carried His Servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to the furthest Mosque, whose precincts We have blessed, to show him of Our wonders!" (Qur'an 17; The Night Journey,1)

The inhabitants of Quraish refused to believe in this vision. Many of his followers refused to believe him and ceased to follow him. After this experience, Mecca's hostility still augmented towards him and the Prophet's isolation became almost total. On September 24, 622, Muhammad decided to flee Mecca for Yathreb, "Al Madina". This flight marks the debut of the Islamic calendar of Hijra (Hijra: departure, flight, emigration).

After his departure, Muhammad married several women, not for the love of women, as several Orientalists think, but to unite the Arab tribes by a parental link. Muhammad's first wife, Sawda, was the widow of one of his twelve disciples who went to Ethiopia at the Prophet's demand, in order to flee persecution. Sawda was no longer young, and mother to several children. Muhammad married her in recognition, to protect her and provide for the children, because she and her husband were among his first disciples.

He also married Aicha, the daughter of one of his first disciples, Abu-Bakr, to strengthen the links between this faithful friend and himself. Aicha was only seven years, but remained two years in her father's house before integrating to the Prophet's house. It was during those two years that he married Sawda. Muhammad also married Hafsa, daughter of Omar Ibn-El-Khattab, the second of the four Caliphs who succeeded him after his death.

With the same desire of unifying the Arab ranks, he gave his daughters to men chosen in marriage. Osman-Ibn-Affan, one of his faithful disciples who became the third of the Caliphs, married his daughters Rokaya and Oum-Kalthoum. Ali, his cousin, married Fatima, his beloved daughter. He gave his daughter Zeinab in marriage to Khaled Ibn-el-Walid, an enemy officer who he had defeated at the battle of Uhud, but who later became a follower. Muhammad himself in return, married Khaled's aunt, to reinforce, through matrimony, the community of the first believers. Muhammad also married two older women, Zaynab and Salma, because they were widows of two martyrs who had fallen during the fighting.

As for Muhammad's marriage to Zaynab, Jahsh's daughter, previously the wife of his adopted son Zayd, the Muslim interpreters have erred, in our opinion, in presenting this fact as a bond of human love.

We will cite below, the Qur'anic verses on this subject, and add the official commentary of "Al Jalalein", which is accepted in general, but that we disapprove of. We shall then present our interpretation, which demonstrates the nobility of the Prophet's intention in marrying Zaynab. The Qur'an says in this regard:

> "It is not for any believer -man or woman- if God and His Prophet decide some matter, to have liberty of choice in action. Whoso disobeys God and His Prophet strayed far in manifest error." (Qur'an 33; The Confederate Troops,36)

The interpretation of "Al Jalalein":

This verse was inspired with regards to Abdallah Ibn-Jahsh and his sister Zaynab. The Prophet had the intention to give Zaynab as a bride to Zayd, his adopted son. But when they arrived at the Prophet's house, Zaynab and Abdallah were disappointed when they learned of Muhammad's intention, believing that Muhammad himself wanted to marry Zaynab and not give her to his adopted son. They submitted nevertheless, to the judgment of the Prophet, after this inspired verse: "Whœver disobeys God and His Apostle strays far".

The Prophet gave Zaynab in marriage to Zayd, but later, his gaze stopped upon her and his heart was enflamed with love for her. Zayd took her in hatred. He says to the Prophet: "I want to divorce her". But the Prophet tells him: "Guard your wife beside you".

Our interpretation:

Prophet Muhammad did not experience a passionate love for Zaynab. This is the reason for which he refused Zayd his divorce. Even more so, Muhammad himself had invited Zaynab and her brother to come to the celebration of the marriage of Zaynab and Zayd. This had taken place despite the initial objections of Zaynab and her brother. They accepted nothing but the Prophet's inspiration. Subsequently, Zayd's intention to divorce put the Prophet in an embarrassing situation, and exposed Zaynab to dishonor and disgrace. The people would have said: "The Prophet's son has repudiated her", which meant her banishment from society as a result, and an animosity between the Prophet Muhammad and the people of Jahsh's House. Only one option remained to Muhammad: reluctantly, marry Zaynab himself as it was said, "Muhammad has married her." It was to raise her dignity instead of degrading her.

Muhammad feared society's miscomprehension nonetheless. Many would have said that he took the wife of his son having been seduced by her. This is the reason why he insisted on Zayd not to go ahead with this divorce. If Muhammad was in love with her, he would have looked forward to, even desired the divorce.

Zayd was a slave before knowing Muhammad. The latter had set him free before the start of his mission, and Zayd subsequently, believed in Islam. A double grace was thus granted to him: that of emancipation, and that of faith. This is the reason for which God, after verse 36, continues in telling Muhammad:

> "Remember when you said to him (*Zayd*) to whom God had been generous (*by Islam*) and your had been generous (*in setting him free*): 'Retain your wife, and be pious before God' - all the while hiding within yourself what God was to reveal..." (Qur'an 33; The Confederate Troops,37)

The interpretation of "Al-Jalalein":

"You sought to hide in your heart" your love for Zaynab and intention to marry, should Zayd leave her.

Our interpretation:

The Prophet did not conceal his love for Zaynab in his heart, but his concern, conscience of the gravity of the situation. He realized that, in case of Zayd's divorce, he would be obliged to marry her himself, to not dishonor her. On the other hand, people would not had understood his deep intentions and would have misinterpreted his actions; they would think, moreover, that he married her out of love, and which some people think still today. This is the reason for which God prompted Muhammad to act according to his own conscience, regardless of what people may think: "And you fear men (*for they would say that he married his son's wife*). It is God rather, that you have to fear."

The interpretation of "Al-Jalalein" with regards to this verse:

"Take her in marriage without worrying about what people would say".

Our interpretation:

The Prophet must act wisely before God, ignoring people's allegations. Muhammad must model his behavior in function of what is better, not to search for ways to please men, even if they slander him in saying that he married Zaynab because of passion. The Prophet must take into account God's Judgement, Who knows his hidden intention: wed Zaynab to save her from dishonor and to avoid the dangerous discord between the Arabs.

Our interpretation is in complete harmony with the Prophet's entire life, especially in what concerns the noble and deep motivations for his marriages.

The main battles of the Prophet Muhammad

In "Al Medina", the "Prophet's City", the "Enlightened City", as it was named later, Muhammad had several disciples from the two tribes of "Al Aws" and "Al Khazraj". His only enemies there were the Jews who allied themselves with Mecca's idol worshipers. It is why the Qur'an says:

> "You will surely find that the most hostile of men to the believers are the Jews and those who ascribe partners to God (*pagans of Mecca*). And you will surely find that the nearest in amity towards the believers (*to the Qur'an*) are those who say: 'We are Christians', and that is because among them are priests and monks, and they do not grow proud." (Qur'an 5; The Table,82)

After his flight to Al Medina, the Jews of this city incited the idolaters of Mecca to keep on fighting Muhammad. The Prophet had, till that moment, refused to carry arms, but this pursuit forced him to resort to it in self-defense. He had to defend his followers, the first community of believers, and his own life against the enemies who attacked Al Medina. They had already invaded the homes of his followers in Mecca and obliged them to go into exile. The Qur'an alludes to this in the following verse:

> "Those who were **driven out of their homes** without just cause, only because they said: 'Our Lord is God'." (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,40)

It is the reason why Muhammad decided that he must defend himself in Al Medina. Legitimate defense is not only a right, but one's duty too. God therefore allowed the Prophet to fight:

> "**Leave is granted (*by God to take up arms*)** to those who are being attacked, for they were wronged, and God is assuredly capable of sending them victory." (Qur'an 22; The Pilgrimage,39)
>
> "Therefore, fight them so that there will be no discord and the whole of religion belongs to God." (Qur'an 8; Booty,39)

Before addressing the topic of wars, it is important to stress that Muhammad, according to the cited Qur'anic verses, never took the initiative of war, but always found himself in the position of self-defense. In certain circumstances, Muhammad was accused of taking the initiative, but it was a pursuit of the enemy, a battle that completed another.

The invasion of Badr

During this first battle, the Muslims, only 300 in number, confronted 1000 idolaters of the Quraish tribe of Mecca. Despite their small numbers, the Muslims triumphed over the idolaters and this was a great joy and sign to them. This battle took place in the second year of Hijra.

The invasion of Uhud

The idolaters of the tribe of Quraish in Mecca, incited by the Jews of Al Medina, attacked Muhammad at Uhud, a suburb of Al Madina. The Quraishites, in a secret alliance with the Jews, were led by the army chief, Khaled Ibn-El-Walid who, later, converted to Islam and married Zaynab, Muhammad's daughter. This battle ended with the defeat of the Muslims and the death of Hamza, Muhammad's beloved uncle. During this invasion, the Prophet became aware of the secret alliance between the Jews of Al Medina and the idolaters of Quraish, and decided to put an end to the Jewish power.

The invasion of the "Trenches"

This invasion was named so, because a trench was dug around Al Medina to prevent access to the Quraishites. The Jews, once again, motivated the idolaters of Mecca to fight the Muslims. The Meccans then encircled Al Medina with a considerable army of 10,000 men. Muhammad had an ex-Persian soldier named Salman by his side. A Christian, and well-advised in military combat, he advised Muhammad to dig a trench around Al Medina and the Meccan horses were not able to invade the city. This saved Muhammad and his followers. This battle took place in the fifth year of Hijra (627 AD). The Meccans believed in an easy victory, but were stuck in the desert with diminishing provisions and the freezing cold. They were thus forced to withdraw.

The invasion of Beni-Qorayza

The invasion of the Jewish village of Beni-Qoraiza followed the invasion of the Trenches. In the meantime, Muhammad discovered the Jewish plot concocted against him, and the Jews' defining role in the invasion of the Trenches. Muhammad decided to pursue them. The Jews had fled into the village of Beni-Qoraiza, where he attacked and annihilated them. The survivors sought their last refuge in the Arabian Peninsula, a Jewish fortress in the city of Khaybar. It was later in this place, that Muhammad's last battle against the Jews followed suit.

After the invasions of the Trenches and Beni-Qoraiza, the bases of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula were consolidated, and Muhammad had a period of peace. The Arabs began to fear him, and sought to establish peaceful links with him.

The pact of Hudaybiyya

Six years after the Prophet and his followers exited Mecca, the latter wanted to return in pilgrimage. The Prophet headed a peaceful march towards Mecca. They stopped in a place on the outskirts of Mecca called Hudaybiyya. The people of Quraish denied Muslims permission to enter pilgrims into Mecca. Talks were held and culminated in the "Hudaybiyya Pact" under which a ten-year truce was proclaimed. This pact allowed Muslims to make a pilgrimage to Mecca the following year and for a period of only three days.

The pilgrims and Muhammad thus returned three weeks later to Al Medina. The pact of Hudaybyya allowed Muhammad to spread his message all over the Arabian Peninsula, and contributed in manifesting the peaceful aspect of Islam. A good number of Arabs embraced the monotheistic religion and joined the Prophet. At that time, the great officer Khaled Ibn-El-Walid converted to Islam, married Zaynab, the Prophet's daughter, after having fought the Muslims in Uhud. In return, Muhammad took Maymouna as wife, Khaled's aunt, and thus consolidating the union between them.

Muhammad's Emissaries to the Kings

As the situation calmed down in the Arabian Peninsula, Muhammad sent emissaries in charge of a letter to the chief kings, asking them to adhere to the Islamic faith and its message. The solicited Kings were Heraclius, the Byzantine King, Xerxes, the Persian king, the Negus "Ahmassa" of Ethiopia, and finally, the Head of the Coptic community in Egypt. In chapter VI, we reproduce the contents of the letter sent to King Heraclius.

The invasion of Khaybar

As peace spread in the Arabian Peninsula, only one threat remained to Muhammad: the Jews entrenched in Khaybar. One month after the pact of Hudaybyya, Muhammad went out himself and headed an Islamic army, and surrounded the city and the fortress. The Muslims valiantly launched their campaign without fear of death, and triumphed after a fierce and ferocious fight. It was the 7th year of Hijra, 629 AD.

Ten years after Hijra, the light of Islam had totally spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula, where Muslims and Christians lived in peace. Muhammad made a peaceful, triumphant entrance into Mecca, and met no resistance. He entered the "Qaaba" and destroyed all the idols therein. He then pronounced these words:

> "Say: 'The Truth has come and Falsehood is stifled. Falsehood shall ever be stifled'." (Qur'an 17; The Night Journey,81)

Muhammad generously pardoned his enemies -Abi Sifyan and all those who had led the resistance against him- and did not seek vengeance.

This noble Prophet died in the 11th year of Hijra, the year 632 of our era, in Al Medina, where his tomb currently lies.

5. The principal points of Agreement between the Qur'an and the Gospels

The main point of agreement between the Bible and Qur'an is the revelation of the Unique God, the Creator of the Universe. Moreover, the main testimony of the Qur'an in favor of the Gospels is the confirmation that Jesus is truly the Messiah. Had the Qur'an not attested this fundamental evangelical truth, it would neither have been sincere, nor truthful. It is this testimony in particular which confounded the Jews, raising their hatred against Muhammad, especially since the Qur'an is a confirmation of the Evangelical message in its totality. And yet, the Gospels are banned by the Jews, Atheists and Pagans.

Had the Qur'an affirmed that Jesus was not the Messiah, the Jews would not have fought Muhammad, and this would have justified their waiting for a Zionist Messiah, known in the Gospels as the Antichrist. We will discuss this subject by talking about the Messiah.

The main points of agreement between the Qur'an and Gospels are the following:

1. The Messiah
2. The Virgin Mary
3. The Heavenly Table
4. The (Holy) Spirit

5.1 The Messiah

The first and great Truth revealed by the Qur'an to the Arabs is the existence of the one God.

The second fundamental truth is that Jesus is truly the Messiah sent by God and announced by the prophets of the Old Testament. As already mentioned, it is the revelation of this truth by the Qur'an that irritated the Jews and led them not to support the Qur'an. Because, in acknowledging the Qur'an, they would have had to give up the awaiting of a Zionist Messiah.

Here are the Qur'anic verses which confirm that **Jesus is the Messiah, the Prophet** of God, **the Word** of God, and **the Spirit** of God:

> "Remember when the Angels said: 'O Mary, God gives you glad tidings of a Word from Him. His name is **the Messiah**, Jesus son of Mary…'" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,45)
>
> "They (*the Jews*) declared: 'It is we who killed **the Christ**, Jesus son of Mary, **the Prophet** of God…'" (Qur'an 4; Women,157)
>
> "**The Messiah Jesus**, Son of Mary is indeed the **Prophet of God**, and **His Word**, which He cast into Mary, and a **Spirit** from Him." (Qur'an 4; Women,171)
>
> "Who can do anything against God's will should He wish to extirpate **the Christ son of Mary**, his mother…" (Qur'an 5; The Table,17)

If the Jews had accepted Jesus' Messianism, they would have stopped waiting for a Zionist messiah and consequently, would have had to renounce Zionism and the State of Israel - which incarnates the ideals of Zionism. The Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah in the past, and still do so because He condemned the establishment of a political entity in the name of Judaism. St John reports in his Gospel that Jesus, seeing the crowds rushing towards him to proclaim Him as king of Israel, escaped to the mountain all alone (John 6:14-15). Jesus also taught, that God's Kingdom is within man (Luke 17:20-21), not in the outside political world, as the Jews and so many others still believe today.

Twelve centuries before Jesus, Gideon, a military leader, he too, declined the kingship offered to him by the Jews:

> "The men of Israel said to Gideon, 'Rule over us, you and your sons and your grandson, because you have rescued us from the power of Midian.' But Gideon answered them, 'It is not I who shall rule over you, nor my son; **God must be your lord**'." (Judges 8:22-23)

Following this, the Prophet Samuel had announced God's rejection of an Israeli kingdom (1 Samuel 8). But the Jews, for a long time, had aspired for a Zionist empire through the intervention of an Israeli Kingdom in Palestine. They ignored God's commandments and His Will, proclaimed by the Prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 8:1-19).

In refusing the establishment of an Israeli kingdom, the Messiah reveals the spiritual, nonpolitical purpose of the Jewish religion and all religion. This dœs not exclude the exercise of political activity by believers. To the contrary, it is preferable for believers to take the reins of power in order to institute social and moral reforms for society. But to politicize the spiritual in creating, in the name of religion, a new State, as some Jews, Christians and Muslims want, is contrary to the plan of God. For God is for believers, and the State is for all, believers and non-believers, as the Qur'an says:

> "**There is no compulsion in religion**." (Qur'an 2; The Cow,256)

Such a Revelation should be written in gold.

The belief in Jesus as the Messiah is the summit of the Evangelical teaching:

> "Nobody is able to say, 'Jesus is the Lord' (*which is to say that he is the Messiah*), except in the Holy Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:3)
>
> "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Messiah is a child of God." (1 John 5:1)

Jesus Himself had said to the Jews who plotted against Him:

> "Yes, if you do not believe that I am He (*the Messiah*), you will die in your sins." (John 8:24)

We need to underline another Qur'anic verse testifying that Jesus is the awaited Messiah:

> "They make taken their rabbis (*the Jews*) and monks (*the Christians*) as Lords instead of God - and also the Christ son of Mary. They were commanded to worship but one God - there is no God but He!" (Qur'an 9; Repentance,31)

This verse which testifies that Jesus, the "son of Mary" is the Messiah, is often misinterpreted by some as a negation of the Messiah's divinity. This is not the Qur'an's intention, which presents itself as a confirmation of the Evangelical Inspiration (Qur'an 4; Women,47). And yet, the Gospels reveal the divinity incarnate in the person of Jesus. (See Chapter: "The litigation points", paragraph 3: "The Divinity of the Messiah"). We must therefore not take as Lord and God the Son of Mary INSTEAD of God, but AS God incarnate announced by the Biblical prophecies. Otherwise we would be worshiping two gods, independent from one another: God as one part, and the Messiah as another, when "they were ordered to serve only one God". Notice that the words "Lords" is plural, indicating polytheism. This subtlety is not perceived by all the interpreters of the Qur'an, who did not bother to interpret by "the best of arguments", as prescribed by Qur'an in chapter XXIX; The Spider,46).

Moreover, the Evangelical Inspiration warns us against the apparition of the false Zionist messiah called the Antichrist by St John:

> "You were told that the Antichrist must come... **The man who denies that Jesus is the Christ**... he is Antichrist" (1 John 2:18-22).

We know that the Jews deny that Jesus is the Messiah, the Zionists in particular.

What can we conclude from these Evangelical words? We draw two conclusions:

1. Muhammad, in acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah is inspired by the Holy Spirit and "is born of God".
2. All those who deny that Jesus is the Messiah, ie the Jews who both reject Him and who await another messiah, form the entity of the Antichrist. In other words, the modern State of Israel incarnates the powers of the Antichrist.

The Evangelical Inspiration reveals that Jesus Himself will annihilate the Antichrist when this latter will appear. According to St Paul, the Messiah's Advent will be preceded by the apparition of "the Rebel", "the Enemy", who the Messiah Jesus will annihilate by the magnificence of his coming (2 Thessalonians 2:3-12). The Rebel announced by St Paul is the impious and racist behavior of the Zionists. God is universal, non-racist. "The Lost One", the "Son of Perdition" and "the Enemy" whom St Paul speaks of, are Zionists who "act in a way that cannot please God and make them the enemies of the whole human race", as Paul explained (1 Thessalonians 2:15).

In the past, the Zionist Jews worked secretly under the Roman Empire to found the State of Israel. They were prevented by the Romans. At present, the apparition of this State allows them to operate openly and with greater power than before, and to exert their influence. Today, this antichrist power is armed with allies who claim to be Jesus' disciples. This is the seduction and treason of the end of times predicted by the Gospels (Matthew 24).

The Prophet Muhammad in his "Noble Discussions", spoke of the apparition of this force of impiety in saying that the Antichrist will have three letters "**K.F.R**." inscribed on its forehead. These letters in Arabic, form the word "Kufr", and mean impiety or blasphemy. He even specified that this force of evil emanates from the Jews. In the Evangelical Inspiration, we find the same blasphemies inscribed on the head of the Apocalyptic "Beast":

1. This beast was given "to mouth its boast and blasphemies." (Revelation 13:5)
2. "I saw... a scarlet Beast... and had blasphemous titles written all over it... on her forehead was written a name, a CRYPTIC NAME." (Revelation 17:1-5) See the text: "The Key of the Apocalypse"

The Prophet Muhammad, confirming St Paul, has equally stressed in his "Noble Discussions" that, at the Antichrist's apparition, Jesus and his elect will rise up to fight him and destroy him. Jesus' disciples today, according to the intention and inspiration of the divine prophecies, are not the traditional Christians who collaborate with and support Israel. This culpable "christian" support to Israel was also prophesied, because according to the Gospel, the seducer Antichrist will succeed in seducing Jesus' false disciples (Matthew 24). Nowadays, true believers are those who thirst for Justice, those who bear the yoke of Zionism's iniquity, those resistant to Israel and international Zionism.

According to the Evangelical prophecies, and those of the Prophet Muhammad's, the State of Israel will disappear forever. Its fall will symbolize Zionism's failure, and all the corresponding materialistic mentalities. From this happening, many will realize that Jesus is truly the Messiah, and that His Kingdom is indeed and forever established on earth, according to the announcements of the prophets.

5.2 The Virgin Mary

The Qur'an contains the most beautiful verses on the Virgin Mary. It places the Mother of the Messiah at the highest summit of human holiness:

> "Remember when the angels said: 'O Mary, God has chosen you, made you pure and chosen you above all the women of the world.'" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,42)

This testimony condemns the Jews who, as the Qur'an reveals, have invented terrible words of slander against Mary, (Qur'an 4; Women,155). God, in the Qur'anic Inspiration, attests what He had inspired in the Gospel about Mary:

> "Of all women you are the most blessed..." (Luke 1:42)

The Qur'an equally reveals Mary's exceptional purity, and her Immaculate Conception, as well as that of Jesus'. In the following two verses, the wife of Imran, ie Mary's mother (the Family of Imran are Mary's parents), prays in saying:

> "'My Lord, I pledge to You what is in my womb. It shall be dedicated to Your service. Accept this from me for it is You - You Who are All-Hearing, All-Knowing'. When she gave birth to a female, she said: 'My Lord, I have given birth to a female... I have called her Mary. I seek refuge in You for her and her progeny (*Jesus*) from Satan, ever deserving to be stoned.'" (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,35-36)

God hears the prayer of Mary's mother and grants her vow: Mary and Jesus were the only ones safeguarded from the devil, as Muhammad reports in his "Noble Discussions":

> "No man is born without the devil reaching him from birth and he screams because of this satanic attack (*tarnish of original sin*), **except Mary and her Son**."

This verse from the "Noble Discussions" is reported in the interpretation of "Jalalein", from verse 35 of the Sura "The Family of Imran"; it is a Hadith related by Abu Houraira, see `http://www.el-ilm.net/t1333-maryam-bint-imran`. It is also reported in a slightly modified way by Al Bokhari, see "L'authentique tradition musulmane, choix de hadiths", Fasquelle, pg 48 (French book).

These words, accepted by the whole Muslim world, are an acknowledgement of Mary's Immaculate Conception.

With these words, the Prophet Muhammad teaches us that every man, including the Prophets and himself, is born with this defect, except for Mary the Immaculate and, of course, her Son, the Messiah.

5.3 The Heavenly Table

The Qur'an reveals us that God has descended from Heaven a "Table", served to nourish Jesus' Apostles. This heavenly food is a common point between the Bible and the Qur'an, a point ignored by the greater majority of believers. It is the communion of the Messiah's Body and Blood, the spiritual Table of God. In fact, the Qur'an reports pedagogically, in a condensed and vibrant form, the Last Easter Supper that Jesus shared with his Apostles and during which He instituted the spiritual Meal with his Body and Blood. This fact is reported by the Qur'an in a subtle manner, respecting the ignorance of the Arab world on the evangelical message:

> "The disciples said: 'O Jesus son of Mary, can your God send down upon us a Table **from Heaven** (*spread with food*)?' He said: 'Fear God if you are true believers'. They said: 'We wish to eat from it so that our hearts are at peace, and we know that you have spoken the

> truth to us, and we be **witnesses** thereof (*witnesses of the Table*)'; said Jesus son of Mary: 'Lord, send down upon us **a Table from Heaven**, and it shall be a feast day for **first and last** among us, and a miracle from You, and grant us Your bounty - You are the best of Providers.' God said: 'I shall send it down **upon you**. Whoso among you disbelieves hereafter, I shall torment him with a torment the like of which I shall torment no other human being.'" (Qur'an 5; The Table,112-115)

What is this Table (spread) coming down from Heaven? It is important to know its true nature, since the Apostles committed themselves "to be witnesses" to it. Moreover, this testimony is to last up till the last believer on Earth, since Jesus reclaims this Table from God in order that It be "a feast for the first of us and **the last** of us". Then, God made It descend, threatening unbelievers with the harshest of punishments.

Some interpreters see in this Table a material food made up of fish or meat. They confound between the **material** miracle of the multiplication of bread and fish made by Jesus in the Gospel (John 6), and the miracle of the **Spiritual** Meal: the Heavenly Table which "came down **from Heaven**", as the Qur'an specifies.

The Gospel reports in chapter 6 of St John, of the Messiah's words on this spiritual Meal of vital importance. He said that "His Flesh and His Blood" are a spiritual food and beverage which gives "Eternal Life" to believers. Many of His disciples, in hearing these words, found them "intolerable" and no longer followed Him (John 6:48-66). Still today, many of the "believers" refuse these words and ask themselves "how can this man give us his flesh to eat!" (John 6:52)

The Jews, after centuries of preparation, were not able to understand Jesus. Many acclaimed Christians, still today, do not grasp the profound meaning of His words. How then, do we explain this spiritual Meal, this Table, to the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula who knew nothing of the Bible? The Qur'an thus had to present the biblical message by innuendo and parables in order to arouse amongst the truth-loving Arabs, a holy curiosity leading to the search for the deep meaning of this message in the Gospels. There they will find the fullness of light concerning the mystery of the Qur'anic Table which descends from Heaven. As we have said, many find this fact hard to believe; it is a matter of "believe it or not! Take it or leave it". To each one his or her responsibility.

Some interpreters claim that this Table has still not been sent by God. This dœs not correspond to the Qur'anic words: "God said: 'I am sending one **to you**'". God therefore brought it down to the Apostles in the past, even threatening unbelievers with unparalleled suffering. Additionally, Jesus asks God for This, in order that the "the first and the last" of the believers bear witness to it. The first Apostles had therefore already participated in it. It must endure up till the end of times in order that the last believers bear witness to It on Earth.

The Messiah gave the Apostles this "Table", which came down from Heaven. It is this "Bread of Life that comes down from Heaven" (John 6:32-36). Jesus gave this Bread from Heaven one year after He had spoken of It. This happened during the Last Easter Supper He had with his Apostles when taking the bread, gave it to them saying:

> "'Take it and eat', He said, 'this is my Body'. Then he took a cup, and when He had given thanks He handed it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you, for this is my Blood, the Blood of the New Covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins'." (Matthew 26:26-29)

It is from henceforth that the Apostles, and the believers after them, understood how the Messiah gave Himself to them as food and drink. The Meal, the served Table, which the living Messiah offers to "the first and to the last" believers is the Holy Spirit. It dwells in the hearts of believers through this Bread which they eat, and this Wine which they drink, which contain the Body, the Blood, and the Soul of the Messiah, eternally living.

This Heavenly Beverage is the same as mentioned in the Qur'an from the Sura, "Those who Shortchange": those who drink of this rare Wine are the pure ones, God's chosen ones, whereas those who refuse to drink it are the damned. In fact, the Qur'an reveals:

> "The righteous are in bliss. Upon couches, watching. On their faces you would discern the radiance of bliss. They **are given to drink from a nectar, sealed**, whose seal is musk - for this let contenders contend - and whose mixture is from Tasnim, a fountain, from which those **nearest to God** shall drink. Sinners (*those who refuse to drink it*) would once laugh at the faithful (*in this sealed wine*) . . . " (Qur'an 83; Those Who Shortchange,22-29)

The Qur'an, by offering believers this mysterious "**sealed Wine**", in a pœtic and harmonious way, testifies in favor of Jesus' words in John's Gospel about the "**sealed bread**", it too, a food sealed by God, which comes down from Heaven, namely Jesus Himself, "for on Him the Father, God Himself, has **set** His **Seal**" (John 6:27). This Heavenly Food is found in the Bread and the Wine, which is generously served on God's Heavenly Table, and which descends from Heaven.

Recall what Jesus says in the chapter of the (served) Table:

> "Lord, send down upon us a Table from Heaven (*spread with food*), and it shall be a feast day for first and last among us, and a miracle from You. . . " (Qur'an 5; The Table,114)

This means that the Table which descended, was not for the Apostles only; it continues to descend every day and everywhere, to be a feast "for the first and **the last**", therefore for believers of all places up to the last believer, up till the Day of Resurrection, and It will witness eternally before God in favor of those who have witnessed for It on earth.

The Table served and this Holy Wine sealed with musk which descend from Heaven, are intended to separate humanity in two: on one side God's elect, those who feed themselves from this Table, and on the other, the damned who refuse to feed themselves from It, and mock those who believe in It.

Finally, it is necessary to point out a fact of the utmost importance: namely that the Holy Qur'an incites the believers, **let contenders contend** for this mysterious Beverage which comes down from Heaven (Qur'an 83; Those Who Shortchange,26). This is totally different from the alcoholic drinks in the world below. That all those who refuse this Holy Wine, arm themselves with Wisdom. Let those who mock the believers who rush to it as "contenders", pull themselves together before it is too late for them.

5.4 The Spirit

The Islamic world has but a vague notion of the "Spirit". This word often comes up in the Qur'an without its essence being clarified. So, believers wonder what exactly this word means. We read in the Sura 17; The Night Journey,85:

> "They ask you about the Spirit. Say: 'The Spirit belongs to the realm of My Lord, and of knowledge you have been granted but little (*in the Qur'an*)'."

It is for divine wisdom that the Qur'an hides from Muslims what the Spirit is. God wants that His Qur'anic Revelation be an open door and passage towards the Bible, to the Gospels in particular, because He wants the Qur'an to be a witness confirming the veracity of the Biblical Revelation, as explained before.

In the Qur'an, the question of the Spirit is similar to that of the "Table", which God descended from Heaven onto the Apostles. The believer can understand its meaning only by resorting to the Bible. In fact, the Qur'an itself incites the believer to consult the Bible and the people of the Bible. We read in the Sura of "Jonah":

> "If you (*Muhammad*) are in doubt concerning what We revealed to you, **ask those who have read the Book** (*the Bible*) before you. Truth has come to you from your Lord so do not be among those who doubt." (Qur'an 10; Jonah,94)

Thus, the Qur'an appears as a passage towards the Bible. Here, believers find the clarifications of what has been partly revealed in the Qur'an. In fact, the latter clearly declares that it offers the Arabs, ignorant at the time, save **a part** of the knowledge, or even "little knowledge", whose supplement is found in the Bible:

> "**Knowledge** you have been granted but **little**" (Qur'an 17; The Night Journey,85)

Those who denigrate the Bible make up "those who doubt" (Qur'an 10; Jonah,94). But the believer who wants to open up to the ensemble of Divine Revelation, will find in the Biblical Revelation the answer about the significance of the word "Spirit": it is the Holy Spirit of God, God Himself who sent His Eternal Spirit to the prophets from the time of Abraham, then became incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary as God revealed in the Bible and the Qur'an.

In fact, the Gospel reports:

> "... Mary said to the Angel, 'but how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?' The Angel answered, '**The Holy Spirit** will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God.'" (Luke 1:34-35)

Similarly, we read in the Qur'an:

> "The Christ Jesus son of Mary is indeed the Prophet of God and His Word which He cast into Mary and a **Spirit from Him**." (Qur'an 4; Women,171)

Moreover, when the Prophet Muhammad's messengers went before the Negus to explain to him the Prophet's teachings, Jaafar-Ibn-Abi-Taleb answers that Jesus is "the Servant of God, His Messenger, **His Spirit**, and His Word cast in the Virgin Mary".

6. Invitation to reflection

This last chapter invites the reader to reflect on two points:

1. The letter of invitation to the faith addressed by Muhammad to the emperor Heraclius
2. The welcoming reserved by the Negus of Ethiopia to the Muslims who sought refuge after their flight from Mecca.

6.1 The letter to Heraclius

Here is the translation of this letter:

> "In the Name of the Merciful God. From Muhammad, servant of God, to Heraclius, the Great King of the Byzantines, greetings to those who follow the good orientation. Now I invite you to receive the message of Islam. Accept Islam, you will be saved and God will give you a **double reward**. If you refuse, **the impiety of the Arians** will be upon you. Oh people of the Book, come, let us discuss and agree on the fact that we worship but one God, without associating anything else to Him, and without proclaiming amongst us lords others than God. If you accept, say: Witness that we are Muslims."

Two points interest us in this letter:

The double reward

The Prophet Muhammad assures Heraclius of a "double reward" from the part of God, should he believe in his Message. The Prophet repeats here this **double reward**, promised by God to the Christians who had proclaimed their faith in Islam by saying:

> "We had indeed been Muslims before It (*the Qur'an*)". God answers them in the Qur'an: "These shall be **paid their wages twice**." (Qur'an 28; The Narrative,53-54)

The first reward is derived from their faith in the Messiah and the Gospels, the second comes from their faith in the Qur'an, which witnesses in favor of the Bible and the Gospels.

What should the attitude of today's Christians be, who believe in the Gospels and in the Qur'an? According to the Prophet Muhammad -and contrary to the opinion of many traditional Muslims- they do not have to renounce any of the teachings of the Gospels. Muhammad only asks them to say: "We are Muslims" (*that is to say submitted to God*). According to the Sura "The Story" mentioned above, they were **already Muslims** submitted to God, before the Qur'an.

As for the Negus of Ethiopia and the Coptic patriarchs, it was for the first time that they hear the Islamic Message; the patriarchs exclaimed: "But these words stem from the same source as the words of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah!"

Likewise, the Qur'an witnesses that Islam preexisted the Qur'anic revelation:

> "When Jesus detected unbelief from them (*the Jews*), He said: 'Who are my supporters on the path to God?' The Apostles said: 'We are the supporters of God and believe in God. Witness that **we are Muslims** (*submitted*)'." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,52)

And God says in another verse:

> "When I inspired the disciples to have faith in Me and in My Messenger (*Jesus*), and they said: 'We believe; so witness that **we are Muslims**'." (Qur'an 5; The Table,111)

So, in the concept of the Qur'an, the Apostles of Jesus were already Muslims before Islam, and whœver believes that Jesus is the Messiah is already Muslim, "submitted" to God by accepting the Gospel.

After the coming of the Prophet Muhammad who confirmed the Gospels, those who reject Muhammad reject the Gospels; and those who believe in Muhammad bear witness with him the Gospel's authenticity, and obtain "a double reward". Likewise, the Muslim who believes in the Qur'an and Muhammad, and submits to the Gospels too -in its current text- witnesses with the Qur'an. But if he rejects the Gospels, he ceases to be a Muslim. He thus becomes a false witness of both the Gospels and the Qur'an, and the impiety of the Arians extends to him.

The impiety of the Arians

The second point worthy of interest in this letter is the mention of the "**Arian impiety**", known in the West as "Arianism". Arianism appeared in Alexandria in the IIIrd century after Jesus Christ. A Christian priest named Arius, denied the Messiah's Divinity and had many disciples known as the "Arians" (not to be confused with the Aryan race). The Council of Nicaea (Turkey), held in 325 after Jesus Christ, condemned Arianism. This heresy, well known in Christianity's history, continued for a long time after the Council of Nicaea. It spread out in the East up until the time of the Prophet Muhammad, and even after. Its evil consequences exist still today. The Muslim interpreters, who still ignored the true meaning of Arianism, are incapable of giving an exact explanation, and distort Muhammad's intention.

In mentioning this impiety, Muhammad demonstrates a wisdom and an intelligence which affects every sensible spirit. For the Prophet certifies from his Arab and desert environment, that the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, condemning Arianism, are justified and fully approved by him. Now, this impiety was the **negation of the divinity of Jesus and the Holy Trinity**. Is this not an implicit recognition on the part of Muhammad of these two divine Truths?

6.2 The refuge of the Muslims in Ethiopia

Muhammad's first disciples took refuge in Ethiopia in two successive groups. As soon as the first group arrived to Ethiopia, the tribe of Beni-Quraish of Mecca, Muhammad's staunch enemy, sent two messengers, Amru Ibn-El-Aass -who ultimately became Muslim- and Abdallah Ibn-Abi-Rabih behind them with precious gifts to offer the Negus "Ahmassa", calling for the extradition of the Muslim refugees. They accused them of being malicious, of having left the religion of their people and of opposing the religion of the Negus. They claimed that they had invented an unknown religion, contrary to that of the Negus and the Arabs.

The Negus refused to deliver the refugees before hearing them out first. One of them, Jaafar Ibn-Abi-Taleb, then spoke in the Negus' presence and the Ethiopian religious leaders:

"Oh King, we were an ignorant people who worshiped the idols until God sent us a prophet from amongst us whose origin we all know, as well as his honesty and faithfulness. He invited us to believe in the One and only God and to worship Him".

The Negus responded: "Can you read to us a text written by this man on behalf of God!"

Jaafar responded: "Yes", and he recited all the Sura of Mary up till the verse where Jesus says:

> "Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am resurrected, alive!" (Qur'an 19; Mary,33)

When the patriarchs heard these verses, they said: "But these words stem from the same source as the words of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah."

And the Negus confirmed this in telling the two messengers: "The words of these men here, and the words of Moses emanate from one same source. Leave now! In the Name of God, I will not deliver these men to you".

Yet the two messengers did not give up their scheme. They returned to tell the Negus: "The Muslims speak evil of Jesus, Son of Mary. Send for them and interrogate them on this subject". When they arrived before the Negus, Jaafar answers him: "We say what our Prophet has taught us: Jesus is the Servant of God, His Messenger, His Spirit and His Word sent unto the Virgin Mary". These Muslims had thus understood that Jesus only, is the Spirit and the Word of God.

When the Negus heard that, he took a rod and drew a line on the ground in saying: "Between your religion and ours, there is no more than this line".

Had the Negus known Muhammad personally and heard his teachings from his own mouth, and not had the two messengers of Mecca poison the atmosphere, he certainly would not have drawn this line between the believers. The Prophet Muhammad never imagined, nor wanted such a line of separation. Wouldn't he had been, he the Prophet, inspired to say to the people of the Book:

> "Our God and yours is One God." (Qur'an 29; The Spider,46)

Where is this line then, in Muhammad's mentality? It simply dœs not exist.

Now is the time for every believer who is mature in faith to overcome the lines and artificial obstacles erected for centuries by human fanaticism. The time has come for the believer to find and embrace his believing brother.

There are no more Jews, there are no more Christians, there are no more Muslims. We are all Jews, we are all Christians, and we are all Muslims, provided however, that we surpass the letter and embrace God's Spirit after discovering his true intention in his Biblical-Qur'anic revelation. "Judge for yourself what is right" as the Messiah recommends (Luke 12:57). This is "the Straight Path" of the Qur'an (Qur'an 1; Al-Fatiha,6).

Let us have the courage to be independent believers!

6.3 Conclusion

Why did I call this Book "A Look of Faith at the Qur'an"?

The reason is simple: in men's eyes, I am Christian and, in their opinion, a Christian dœs not believe in the Qur'an. Yet my Christianity is more faithful to Islam than that of many Muslims. The Qur'an and its noble Prophet Muhammad witness in my favor and grant me a **double reward**.

The Qur'an and the Bible are nobody's monopoly. The Qur'an is a Divine Inspiration addressed to all those who love spiritual Life and aspire to sublimate their thoughts to sit with the Creator, in His company and live eternally with His life-giving Breath and Spirit.

I believe in God, in Abraham, in Jesus, the Messiah of God, and in Mohammed, the Prophet of God. I am an independent believer. I am neither Jewish, nor Christian, nor Muslim. And yet I am altogether Jewish, Christian and Muslim, because I believe that there are only two communities: the Community of blessed believers, and the community of banished fanatics, belonging to all peoples, nations and religions.

Also, I conclude my testimony with this luminous Quranic verse from Sura 3; The Family of Imran,199:

> "Among the People of the Book are some who believe in God, and **in what was revealed to you** (*Qur'an*), **and what was revealed to them** (*Bible*), bowing in piety before God, and bartering not the Signs of God for a paltry price! These shall have their reward with their Lord, and God is swift in reckoning." (Qur'an 3; The Family of Imran,199)

Pierre (13.10.1984 / Revised 23.02.2008)

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