

Islam Attacks the Bible and Christianity

(by Bob Pulliam)

Now one might say, "Islam does not attack anything. Perhaps some Muslims would, but not Islam." But doesn't the system of Islam demand an attack on the Bible and Christianity? Certainly it does! But there is nothing surprising here. Christianity has, for its part, received more all-out skeptics' attacks than any other religion. How often have you heard the atheist quote the Quran, and then tear it apart? How often has the agnostic done a critique on the god of Islam? Some things demand attack, because they are true and righteous. These, like magnets, draw the skeptics' arrows. Islam, for its part, made no efforts at attacking the Bible for quite some time after its inception. Indeed, Muhammad thought the Bible would back him up! The Christianity of Muhammad's day was not in full accord with the truth. Many traditions and fables ran rampant among the Coptics. When the truth about the Bible's contents and conflicts between the Quran and the Bible became acutely known, the Muslim scholar had to investigate. Investigation led to attacks on the credibility of the Bible. After all, something had to go, and they weren't going to turn the Quran loose.

Let's look at some of the charges leveled against the Bible and Christianity...

The Corruption of the Bible...

We will not dwell on this here. For a complete discussion of this point, see *Is the New Testament Accurate*.

Making Jesus a God When He Is Not...

When one reads the Quran, it is clear that Muhammad did not understand the significance of Jesus being called "the Word". The Quran uses this term to refer to Jesus. Did Muhammad (Allah?) not know that John wrote: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (Jn 1:1) Muhammad did not believe Jesus was God, but he uses a term of him that the Bible uses to call Him God. Note a few passages from the Quran regarding this:

Sura 3:45 "When the angel said, 'O Mary verily God give you good tidings of the Word from Himself; His name is Jesus Son of Mary exalted both in this world and the world to come and one of those near the throne.'" ('word' is feminine and 'Himself' is masculine - obviously making a distinction between 'Word' and 'God'... this word is identified as 'Jesus Son of Mary')

Sura 4:171 "O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: nor say of Allah aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah, and His Word, which he bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His messengers. Say not 'Three': desist: it will be better for you: for Allah is One God: Glory be to Him: (Far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of Affairs."

Sura 3:39 "While he was standing in prayer in the chamber, the angels called unto him: 'Allah doth give thee glad tidings of Yahya, confirming the truth of a Word from Allah, and (be besides) noble, chaste, and a Prophet,- of the (goodly) company of the righteous."

This last passage from the King Fahd Holy Quran is indicative of the argument made concerning Jesus called "the Word". If they call Him 'a Word', then it implies the identity of all prophets as "Words" from Allah. But where is any other prophet called "the Word"?

Muhammad had access to people who knew the scripture to some degree. The controversy over the divinity of Christ was raging during this period. In fact much of the Quran makes arguments similar to the pleas of the Nestorians of that day.

Jesus was the Son of God, and therefore was God... He is identified as such in John 1:1; claims such for Himself in John 5:16ff; 8:51-59; and is taught to have all the fulness of God in (Col 2:9). For further information, see Salvation in Islam.

Division in Christianity...

When you call it division in Christianity, you make it sound like all of the various factions are still Christians. Jesus only established one church (Mt 16:18; Eph 1:22f; Eph 4:4). The identity of that one church is determined by following the word left by Jesus and the apostles. Jesus and His apostles warned of what now is...

Mt 7:15 "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."

II Tim 4:3 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."

But let us examine the claim that Islam is a united religion... Do any of these sound familiar?... Abadites, Mutazilites, Jabbarya, Sufis, Najiyah, Shiites (which gave rise to Nusayris, Yezidis and Druses), Sunnites, Isma'ilis (which gave rise to Nizaris and Musta'lis), Nation of Islam (which is not even Islam). The Muslim scholar wants everyone to believe Islam is all united under one Holy Quran when he makes his attack on the division of Christianity. Islam is not a united religion. When answering this, I have heard the Muslim say, "Yes, there are sects, but it is only political matters." What do you think prompted all of these sects in Christianity?

Do these sects in Islam really look favorably upon each other?...

"According to a celebrated hadith, the Prophet announced that his community would be divided into seventy-three sects and that the members of all these would go to hell except one, which was promised salvation. Sunnis use this hadith to show that they constitute a unique community... those who follow the prophetic tradition and remain within the community. The Shi'a, on the other hand, teach that they alone managed to harvest the authentic heritage of the Quran and of the prophetic tradition...." (Mohammed Arkoun, Rethinking Islam, (Westview Press, San Francisco), 1994, p46.

How interesting! Muslims believing other Muslims will go to hell. That isn't very united!

Failure to Heed John 16:7...

The prophecy of the Comforter in John 16:7 is often relied upon, for here they believe the name of Muhammad is found:

Sura 61:6 "And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: 'O Children of Israel! I am the messenger of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the Taurat (which came) before me, and giving Glad Tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.' But when he came to them with Clear Signs, they said, 'This is evident sorcery!'"

It is important that they find Jesus speaking of Muhammad in the New Testament, for Muhammad claimed that they would. To attempt this, they use John 16:7.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you."

It is claimed that "Ahmad" is the Arabic translation of "Comforter" in this verse. The Greek word for "comforter" here is "parakletos", meaning one called along side to help. The Arabic word for "Ahmad" means praised one, and is "periklutos" in the Greek. They are two different words, unless you want to imagine that words sounding somewhat similar are the same. And if Jesus originally said "periklutos", when was the passage corrupted in the Greek?... W.M. Watts has observed,

"Muslim children are never called Ahmad before the year 125 A.H. But there are many instances prior to this date of boys called 'Muhammad.'" (which would make the name Ahmad a case of skotching the wagon).

Now also note the full reading of John 16:7 - "if I depart, I will send Him to you." Did Jesus send Muhammad? What Muslim believes it? But John 16:13 identifies who the "parakletos" will be (i.e. the Holy Spirit). It was not Muhammad!

Unwillingness to Heed Deuteronomy 18:18f...

Great criticism is heaped upon us for not heeding our own Bibles when they tell us to watch for Muhammad. We are told that he was prophesied in the Old Testament:

Dt 18:18f "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him."

There are two important points to make here. First is the less obvious. Why doesn't the Muslim listen to their own "scripture"? The Quran tells them to verify it's message by the Bible. But when they find that the Bible does not verify it, they reject what they have been told to esteem. (See *Is the New Testament Accurate*) Second, to whom does this prophecy apply? Just to say it applies to Muhammad does not make it so. In Acts 3:22, Peter applied these words to Jesus. The text could not have been written to try to take glory from Muhammad, for this text was written long before Muhammad was born. Does it apply to Muhammad?... Moses led with signs, and brought a law confirmed by miracles; Muhammad did neither!

Foolishly Missing "Allah" in the Bible...

The Muslims claim that Adam; Noah; Abraham; David; and Jesus all called on "Allah". This creates a mad rush to find "Allah" in the Bible. It should be there somewhere!

The name Allah (al - ilah) is an Arabic word, and cannot be found in any form in the Greek or Hebrew of the Bible. These Bible characters could not call on "Allah". But they did call upon El, or Yahweh. Did Hebrews later change the terminology? I suppose they also chiseled out reliefs in stone to remove the name "Allah".

Here are two of the feeble attempts to find the word "Allah" in the Bible: 1) "Allelujah (alle), was a Hebrew term of praise to Allah." The Hebrew word was actually "Hallelujah", and is not a compound word (allelujah is the Greek use of the Hebrew term). It is a single Hebrew word meaning "praise to Yahweh". The name for God in this term is actually at the end of the word (jah), rather than the beginning. 2) "Eli, was a term referring to Allah." "El" was actually the Hebrew term for God. The words uttered by Jesus are the Aramaic of Ps 22:1. It clearly means, "My God, My God..." and has nothing to do with Allah.

Conclusion...

Attacks on the Bible have been the mainstay of Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh Day Adventists for years. But before any of them came along, the Muslims were already crying foul. But the scriptures have stood firm through all, and the attacks invalid and unwarranted.

Muhammad is not found in the Bible, and neither is Allah. Attempts to place them there have done nothing more than show the desperation Islamic scholars feel to vindicate their religion.