

A Christian's Guide to the Koran, Lesson 13, The Miraculous Transmission of the Biblical Text, 2

What of the Jewish Scriptures, which Christians have readily adopted as their own salvation history? Are they the same today as the originals?

Manuscripts made by scores of men in various places and spread all over the Middle East are in remarkable agreement with each other! They also compare favorably to the Greek text created from the Hebrew in the 3rd century B.C. Then the miracle of all textual miracles, the Dead Sea Scrolls found in 1947, but written from 200 B.C. to well into the first century, were in near perfect agreement with today's Bible! Every book of the Hebrew Bible except Esther, was found.

Then there were the scribes whose work goes back to 300 B.C. These were men who gave their life to preserving the text's accuracy, knowing that the words came from God. They counted every word, every letter of the text, and recorded the mid-point of their book, so as to be sure that they had missed nothing. If upon recounting the words, a mistake was found, that scroll was destroyed!

There was an entire system of rules for the copyists' painstaking work. The work had to be done by a Jew. It had to be written on the skins of only clean animals. The skins could contain only so many columns, and the columns could have only so many lines. Nothing could ever be written by memory, not even the smallest "jot" or "tittle" or "yod." Between the consonants, all of them, there had to be at least a hair-thick space. Similar rules spelled out section and book divisions.

This process was picked up by later copyists, and New Testament scribes, a process which showed the great respect they had for the Scriptures. Never did Jesus accuse the scribes of having copied the Scriptures wrongly! Rather, their interpretation of their *exact* text and their failure to see Him in their *exact* text, and their dependence on their *exact* text to the exclusion of the life of God that breathed through it, that was the issue.

But, Muslims want to claim, your Bible was corrupted by translation! When it went from one language to another, then to another, then to another, it lost all its original meaning! Well, since we have the original texts, it would be easy to produce them and give the lie to this argument. But in fact, every major version of the Bible and every nation, translates the Bible into its own language from the original Hebrew and Greek.

People of God, saved by the shed blood of Jesus Christ His Son, we have the very God-breathed words of Almighty God in the Old and New Testaments. We proceed with this study armed with that fact alone. God's Word is a light to our path. And as we walk together through the Koran, we will need such light. Believing that God has already spoken, we will simply shed that light on passages that speak otherwise.

Knowing that God has spoken through the prophets and through His Son and His Son's apostles, we now freely quote His Words as further introduction to all that we are about to do:

First, the most severe warning imaginable, Galatians 1:8, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed."

Second, for those who may wonder what gospel Paul preached: I Corinthians 15:1-8, "...For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures..."

Third, a warning from Moses (God) about tampering with the Torah, Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32: "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it..."

Fourth, a warning from John (God) in more severe terms (Revelation 22:18-19), "...If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

It is no small matter to come against, change, pervert, distract from, add to, take away from, ridicule, minimize, marginalize, fictionalize, and generally corrupt the word of the living God. Islam levels that charge at Christians and Jews, but offers no proof except "The Prophet said..." We hurl the charge back, and offer the Koran itself as proof.

It is my intention to point out to believers who are in any way fascinated by or drawn to Islam that the object of your affection is a dangerous one. I will show you sura by sura, ayah by ayah, that such a move would be fatal.

One final note. This study is intended for Christians. I invite fellow-believers to examine their own faith and the faith of Islam, so as to be able to help them know with what they are dealing when talking to a Muslim.

I am aware that others may see or hear or read these comments. Even Muslims. I want you to know that you are very precious in the sight of God. What your prophet could not tell you is that the Jesus whose life history was altered by the Koran died for you because of His great love and the love of the Father, His Father. To this day, by His Spirit, He invites you to come to Him and be forgiven instantly of all your sin, so that you can know, even now, that you will live forever with Him.

If I can answer questions you might have, contact me.