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Foreword

All praises are due to God alone, and may His peace and salutations be upon all His prophets.

This is a Muslim analysis of the Da Vinci Code in the light of Islamic teachings. My judgments of Dan Brown's statements do not emanate from wild running thoughts; rather I have used the Qur'an as my foundation, and Muslim historical recordings as a supplement, separating for the reader truth from falsehood.

From the very outset, many people will be wondering that as a Muslim writer, what standpoint I would be taking; in favour of the Da Vinci Code or against it? In view of this thought, I would therefore like to spell it out clearly from the very beginning, *'in some cases I am in favour of the book and in some cases against it'*. In this regard, I have therefore chosen a neutral title *'Analysis of the Da Vinci Code'*. In other words I would be analyzing the book giving due to its positive side and reasons for disagreement with its errors. It will be very unfair to completely discredit the author as a whole for certain view points of his, as some writers have done, thus making him a fool or someone stupid. Mind you, Dan Brown is no fool!

Whilst knowing that his book does contain a certain percentage of truth, though it may be small, he needs to be given credit for that. He also needs to be given credit for

being able to get people to think out of their restricted and blindfolded boundaries, thus guiding them to come onto reasoning. In view of his certain true remarks, it would also be unfair to support him in totality, whilst ignoring the incorrect side of his approach.

It must be said that Dan Brown needs to be discredited very strongly on issues where he has taken the extreme approach, using illogical reasoning, all of which I shall be analyzing in this book.

Many readers of the Da Vinci Code will agree that ninety five percent of the book is a clear-cut mystery or a fictional story which does not trouble anyone, and only five percent of the book or less than that, is actually factual history. This is further made up of both, fiction as well as non fiction, both of which I will be focusing on in detail.

I therefore term the book as a, 'wolf in sheep skin', because it draws the reader towards it by its innocent fictional appearance, but then the reader realizes that it deals with real history.

My aim in this publication is to analyze the book for the reader, separating the herrings for him, enabling him to see a true picture from a more powerful light.

Introduction

Besides the sensitive issues surrounding the controversies of the Church that Dan Brown touches on, he has also touched on other positive issues surrounding the personality of Jesus himself. This is what I intend pursuing in this publication.

As far as ‘some’ of the evil traits of the Church goes, which Dan Brown exposes, it is not relevant to our discussion in this publication, since I do not meddle in religious politics, especially that which is based on opinions and assumptions. Instead, my discussion is a constructive criticism and of a more positive nature, which focuses on:-

- a. The ‘supposed’ marriage of Jesus and Mary Magdalene
- b. The Divinity of Jesus
- c. Da Vinci’s view of the Bible.

1. The Jesus and Mary Magdalene issue

Brown's view

In short, Dan Brown says¹ that 'historical record' prove that Jesus had married Mary Magdalene.

According to Dan Brown, Leonardo Da Vinci, an artist and a scientist who lived in the 15th century was one of those who held the secret of this historical record, as Dan Brown states in his book:-

“Then you must be aware that Leonardo was one of the keepers of the secret of the Holy Grail. And he hid clues in his art”.²

Muslim Response

Firstly, Da Vinci's revealed secrets are historically related. As an introductory note, I would firstly like to begin saying that in the house of Islam 'historical records' bear no proof for the establishment of any Islamic doctrine. For that matter, even archaeological & scientific proofs also bear no evidence for establishing Islamic doctrines. If archaeological and scientific proofs do happen to coincide with the Qur'anic teachings, then well and good. If they do not coincide, then the Qur'anic teachings can never be forsaken for the sake of Science, especially with the unwinding of scientific theories which are taking place

¹ Page 329

² Chapter 55, page 311

daily.³ Similarly, from a Christian perspective also, no historian writings can streamline the writing of the Bible because *according to the Christian*, the Bible is the word of God. Therefore, one cannot compare divine records with historical records, unless however, if the so-called ‘divine records’ have a reputation of being tampered with, causing its pure divine nature to be lost, then only will it become equal to historical proofs which are based on opinions.

If divine records reveal the inner hidden secrets of the truth, it would be understood and accepted, but if historical records like that of Da Vinci, a man coming along 15 centuries after Jesus, with hidden messages in his paintings will be considered completely baseless. More surprisingly, Da Vinci did not even point towards his art using his finger to guide anyone concerning the hidden reality. Instead people of the 21st century, like Dan Brown are now assuming all this from the paintings. The proof he uses is the position in which Jesus and Mary are seated represents the female symbol for chalice, which is the female womb, thus concluding from this that they were husband and wife.

He continues proving through the words of Langdon that it was against Jewish custom for a man to remain a bachelor. On the contrary, Islam also has **no record** of Jesus being

³ In Islam Qur’anic teachings cannot be compromised due to scientific recordings, though they scarcely contradict the Qur’anic teachings. In places where they contradict, it points out to the inaccuracy of scientific theories, which later becomes rectified by the so called ‘new theories’.

married. Similarly, there are no records that Jesus didn't marry. We Muslims are therefore silent on matters where the Qur'an is silent. Hereunder is however only a critical analysis of the Da Vinci Code since it establishes such a view.

Such an evident matter, had it taken place, there would not be need for written history to tell people about it. Instead oral history would have already recorded it, as the trinity, which is not even spelt out clearly in the Bible, but the Christian still says that oral history bears record of it, which is true, that it does trace its roots up until around the time of the Paul, (and not up to the time of Jesus.)⁴

Secondly, certain facts in life are such that they are believed by individuals, though they may be in the minority. In this case, never did we hear of any Church denomination raising a claim of this nature. On the contrary, unlike the case of Jesus about not being God or the son of God, there are some Church denominations until today, though they may be in a minority, including the over two billion Muslim population of the world who affirm Jesus as not being God or the son of God. Instead they say he is a prophet of God. Had the concept of Jesus and Mary Magdalene been an accepted fact by some or even a single Church denomination, it would have been sufficient proof for the possibility of this marriage.

⁴ This is in itself a different subject which I would not want to pursue in this booklet.

Thirdly, if so much of information got exposed, even to the extent that the ‘daughter of Mary Magdalene and Jesus’ was named Sarah, and that they were honoured amongst the Jews in France because of this holy bloodline, which was linked to their Prophets David and Solomon, then why is there not a single historical record in France nor in the world that this matter did take place?⁵

Brown further proves the marriage of Jesus and Marry Magdalene with reference to the Dead Sea scrolls and the Nag Hamaadi documents. He quotes from the names of the above documents only, without giving specific references or quotations from them.

I confidently say that these documents do not reveal anything about the marriage of Jesus to Mary Magdalene. Instead, these documents do reveal that Jesus was not God, but a prophet and that he was not crucified, but was instantly raised up by God to the heavens. How could these documents have revealed the issue of Jesus’ marriage to Mary Magdalene since these documents only record the events up to 1 or 3 B.C.E⁶, whereas the alleged birth of Sarah from Jesus and Mary is in the CE⁷ period. Besides, where is France and where is Egypt? Who could have been sitting in Egypt during the CE period doing these impossibilities?

⁵ Chapter 60, page 342

⁶ Or ‘B.C.’

⁷ Or ‘A.D.’

Dan Brown makes further reference to these documents without quoting from them, whereas in the very same paragraph, he quotes from the gospel of Phillip that Jesus used to kiss Mary on her mouth, thus concluding that they were married⁸. From the word ‘companion’ in the phrase of the Gospel of Phillip which states ‘*And the companion of the saviour is Mary Magdalene*’, he tries to prove their marriage. Brown proves from the word ‘companion’ that in the Aramaic language according to the Aramaic scholars, it refers to ‘spouse’. Therefore they were married.

You can decide this for yourself. Such far-fetched proof. Brown firstly fails to provide straight forward proof, and yet after giving proof, he provides proof that is far-fetched as well as incomprehensible.

Brown’s Proof: 2

He says that the Church hid this historical record because Jesus’ marriage with Mary Magdalene proves Jesus’ earthly nature, and being not divine as the Church wanted him to be.

Muslim response

Why would the Church want to hide such a fact in fear that it would reveal the earthly nature of Jesus, because the Church itself readily accepts every aspect of Jesus as being earthly, in spite of him also being God? For example, the

⁸ Chapter 58, page 331

Church accepts that Jesus ate, drank, slept, and so on, exactly as any other earthly persons do. Therefore, why should the Church hide one earthly fact about Jesus' marriage, whilst accepting his other hundred earthly qualities? This is nothing, but an assumption against the Church.

As Muslims, we believe that revelation through divine inspiration at that particular time was possessed only by Jesus, and after his immediate ascension, there was none who received direct inspiration from God, from even amongst his disciples.⁹ Therefore, all records following Jesus' ascension, whether it is related to Mary's migration to France and the birth of Sarah etc. are all writings which would all fall under opinions, and not concrete facts. Especially when proof is demanded, Brown refers us to the writings of such and such historical authors who are the authors of such and such historical books¹⁰.

I know that if Brown were to get cornered with these proofs, he would just say, 'then just treat it as a fictional book'.¹¹

⁹ Referring to direct communication with God because direct inspiration according to Islam is only possessed by the prophets of God like Jesus, Moses, Muhammad David, Jacob, Abraham and other prophets. Non prophets may receive indirect inspirations as from dreams etc., but their inspirations cannot serve as a proof for the establishment of a religious doctrine. Like the Christians claim that the New Testament writers to receive inspiration.

¹⁰ Chapter 60, page 340

¹¹ As he quotes in his interview.

2. The Divinity of Jesus

Brown says No Muslims say No

Dan Brown spells it out very clearly, that prior to the year 325 CE ('A.D.');

Jesus was regarded as a prophet. At several places in his book, this subject, Brown reinforces the fact that Jesus was a mortal. In another place, he states that Jesus was a man and not the son of God¹². From the Islamic point of view, Brown is one hundred percent correct. Nonetheless, in the mind of a Christian, this statement gives rise to an important question that; if assuming that the statement was true, then how was it possible that after the year 325 CE a great majority of Christians deviated from the original teachings of Jesus? In response to this question one has to first understand the background of Christian history.

Clarifying a minor misconception of Dan Brown

In order to understand the truth about Jesus being a great prophet, it will firstly be important to prove to the reader that during the year 325 CE, there had already existed many Christian groups who were in conflict with each other concerning the identity of the personality of Jesus.

¹² Chapter 60, page 342

In order for you as the reader to understand this, you will need to firstly understand the background of Christian history, then only will it be possible to view this whole scenario as a complete puzzle put together.

Brown's historical account goes almost accurate, except for one point; Brown depicts the war in the year 325 CE as being a war between the Christians and the pagans.¹³ His discussion revolves very briefly around the subject of this great historical event known as the Council of Nicea that took place in the year 325 CE. Brown's assumption is that the war in 325 CE had been between the pagans and Christians. If so, then where does the issue of destroying the Gospels fit in? Why would the opposition party i.e. the pagans want to create an issue concerning the Gospels, as it was not in conflict with the pagan religion? This is however Brown's minor assumption. Furthermore, how could it have been between the pagans and the Christians, as Brown himself affirms¹⁴ that it is Constantine himself during that period who had been a role player in approving the New Testament gospels of today i.e. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The truth is that the war in 325 CE had been amongst the Christians themselves, which was concerning the true identity of Jesus. It is also clearly understood from the 'gospel selection issue' that during the 325 period, there

¹³ Chapter 55, page 313

¹⁴ Page 313; 'The Bible today as we know was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great.

had definitely been some tension amongst the Christians themselves concerning some issue, from which the eighty gospels that existed were being disputed.¹⁵ In view of all these explanations, where then does the question of war between the pagans and the Christians arise? Secondly, for what reason would the Christians want to dispute with the pagans? There is obviously no reason.

This was all said to explain to that throughout the history of Christianity there definitely existed a group of Christians who did not believe in the Bible that the Christians of today believe in. Also, there existed another group of Christians at that time who accepted Jesus as a prophet which Christians today don't accept.

Historical background of Christianity in detail¹⁶

What follows is a more detail historical account of Christianity in 325, than that of Brown's, which he has very briefly touched on.

¹⁵ The figure according to Dan Brown. According to another record, more than a 270 versions were burnt, other records show more.

¹⁶ It is not our general practice to prove anything through history, as I said history bears no proof for the establishment of religious doctrines. Hence, my approach is generally purely Biblical, which I have not really included in the publication, especially that Brown himself has not touched on it. Since Brown has written on History, and our purpose here is concerning the Da Vinci Code, we also therefore concentrated our discussion around the history.

The reality of the controversy that existed during the year 325, occurred between two¹⁷ major groups of Christians from amongst the many other groups, one of whom we would term as the Unitarians, and the other as the Trinitarians. The Unitarians were those who accepted God as the ONE and only God as proclaimed by Jesus in the first commandment¹⁸ of the Bible;¹⁹ and Jesus as a great man, a prophet of God. In other words, they accepted God and Jesus as two different entities.

The Trinitarians were those who accepted Jesus as the son of God. The argument between the two groups was concerning the determination of the true identity of Jesus. Either the gospel affirming the divinity of Jesus supporting the Trinitarian's view was to be accepted, or either the gospel of the Unitarians, supporting the pure unity or oneness of God was to be accepted. Accordingly, the group winning the support of the Emperor Constantine would have their view passed.²⁰

Dan Brown needs to be credited for the point which he makes saying that history had always been written by the winners. In other words, history only records the side of the winning party. This is exactly what transpired in Christian history. The Trinitarian perspective of God superseded the Unitarian perspective of God, causing the gospels supporting their view widespread, and the gospels

¹⁷ Two main groups are mentioned, though there existed many other groups.

¹⁸ First commandment 'Hear O Israel your God my God is one God.'

¹⁹ Includes the New and Old Testament.

²⁰ This distinction of groups is however not found in the Da Vinci Code.

supporting the Unitarian concept of God to be burnt, banned and destroyed. Therefore, the historical records of Jesus and God according to the four gospels of today have been undoubtedly written by the winners, who were the Trinitarians. In spite of the widespread preachings of Trinitarians, the truth had always survived, though it survived in its minority.

Emperor Constantine was a follower of the pagan religion. With the spread of Christianity in Rome, he now had a mixture of pagans and Christians under his rule. The Christians were furthermore divided into two groups, thus creating tension under his rule.

In order to resolve these disputes between them, Constantine tried different ways of uniting them, solely for the purpose of creating peace in his Kingdom. In doing so, he failed. He first tried to unify them under one religion of Christianity persuading them to forget their differences about Jesus' identity. To him, whether it was the Trinitarian concept of God or whether it was the Unitarian concept of God, it did not really matter. According to him, finally both believed in God. To him these were petty differences. After his great efforts for reconciliation, he realized that these differences were not petty for Christians. He also called meetings between the two parties to resolve their differences, which did not work out. He also tried pressurizing the individual parties to give up their views. All these events lead to the great historical meeting of the year 325 CE, called the Council of Nicea.

This meeting was to settle the differences by passing a judgment on either one of the sides. All that Constantine was interested in doing was creating peace in his kingdom and nothing else. In doing so, he had to see on which version of Christianity judgement should be passed on. Judgment was to be done by Constantine himself, who was a pagan, not even the judgment of any Bishop or learned cleric was accepted. Constantine's judgment was not based on determining whose view was most authentic, rather which would blend in the best under his rule.

The Trinitarians also had a reputation of having close ties with Constantine. That is why prior to the Council of Nicea, Constantine also tried placing pressure on the Unitarians to compromise their faith. They refused saying that all they were doing was affirming the teachings of Jesus himself, which he proclaimed in the first commandment. They also argued that it was possible to visualize a time when Jesus did not exist, whereas God always existed, and that Jesus was dependent on God like any other creature, all of which demonstrates that he was anything other than God.

The belief that suited the pagan concept of God the most was the Trinitarian concept. Therefore the decision was passed in favour of the Trinitarians. This was followed by a widespread massacre of those who did not sign the Trinitarian creed. According to Brown, eighty other New Testament Bibles supporting Unitarianism were burnt. According to other reports, approximately three hundred

were burnt. Anyone possessing an unauthorized Bible was facing himself to capital punishment. As from that time onwards, pagan concepts of religion have become integrated into Trinitarian Christianity, thus making it drift further away from the original teachings of Jesus. According to Brown, as well as from research, it was found that as from that time onwards Christianity had undergone the following changes:-

1. The celebration of the birth of Jesus on the 25th December was taken from the Romans who celebrated the birth of their sun-god Mithra who was born on 25th December. There are no historical records that it was the birthday of Jesus
2. The celebration of Easter was taken from the pagans of the East who believed their god dies in the beginning of winter and comes to life at the start of spring. The resurrection of Jesus was made to coincide with the exact time that the pagans celebrated the resurrection of their god. This became Easter.
3. The Roman Sunday now became the Sabbath (Saturday) for the Christians.
4. The emblem of Christianity became the cross.

After that period, the Unitarians isolated themselves from the rest, mainly occupying the areas of North Africa while

the Trinitarians spread into Europe. At about 246 years later, Prophet Muhammad came to revive the message of the first commandment preached by Moses and by Jesus concerning the belief in the ONE God. The Unitarians saw the commonality between Muhammad's message with Jesus' message,²¹ also recognizing him as the prophet prophesized by Jesus. Thus they embraced his message, the message of Islam. That is why North African people today are mostly Muslims. I therefore conclude saying that the Unitarian Christians, who were once a sect of 'Christianity',²² are today disguised under the name of Islam. In simpler terms, I would claim that 'the true followers of Jesus in the past are the Muslims of today'.

The Muslim therefore claims to have inherited their view in regard to the concept of God directly from the Unitarians, who were in turn the direct inheritors of the original message preached by Jesus.

On this subject of the non-divinity of Jesus Christ and him being a prophet, Dan Brown would pass the test in claiming that Jesus was a prophet and was not divine because there are almost 2 billion Muslims in the world affirming this. This historical truth survived despite the fact that the manuscripts supporting it were previously burnt, banned and destroyed. Instead, this doctrine was

²¹ The Unitarians affirmed Jesus as a Prophet, so do the Muslims.

²² The phrase 'Christianity' used here for the followers of Jesus is done more for convenience purposes. Rather, the true followers of Jesus were not at all called by the name 'Christian'. The term Christian began only to be used only in Antioch years later. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" Acts 11:26

passed down through the generations and preserved by word of mouth and written down as historical record.

On this subject of the non-divinity of Jesus, there are other accurate statements of Brown's which are worthy of compliments. One is as follows:-

‘Many scholars claim that the early Church literally stole Jesus from His original followers, hijacking his human message, shrouding it in an impenetrable cloak of divinity, and using it to expand their own power.’²³

‘Former’ Church Corruption

As far as the Church corruption goes, which Brown has also pointed out, I wish to add that the former Churches had been corrupt due to them hiding the true historical facts. As far as the Churches today are concerned, according to Brown, and I also agree that the Church today is sincere in distinguishing truth from false.

Dan admits this, that the modern Church today upholds this doctrine more out of sincerity:-

‘And yet; Langdon countered, it’s important to remember that the modern Church’s desire to suppress these documents comes from a *sincere* belief in their established view of Christ’.²⁴ I also say this, not for winning Christian support for my works, or for a tap on my shoulder, by say

²³ Chapter 55, page 316

²⁴ Chapter 55 Page 317

it because, the very mere fact the Christians are comparing their present Bibles with the ancient manuscripts, thus engaging themselves in deletion, addition & alterations of the present Bibles is in itself a proof of keenness in the establishment of the truth from falsehood. In doing so, they produce different translations as they call them, despite them running away from the word ‘version’, which in actual fact are versions.²⁵

Therefore, I say that the Church today is sincere, unlike in the past, they had a reputation for spreading corruption. This subject too, is a very lengthy one, which we don’t intend to pursue here.

3. Brown’s view on the Bible

Brown’s statement on the Bible

Brown says: -

“The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven.... Man created it as historical record of tumultuous times, and it

²⁵ I say this for one simple reason. If a new version states that a certain verse from the older one did not exist in the ancient manuscripts, it now becomes a different version. Like two reporters on an accident scene, both reporting the exact same event, except one saying that the driver’s indicators were on and the other reporter saying that the indicators were not on. Both the reporters, though they may be writing the exact same statement, with the difference of one word will be termed as versions. Similarly, if the one Bible like the King James version quotes the verse from 1 John 5:7, and the Revised Standard Version omits it saying that it did not exist in the ancient manuscripts. This clearly shows that they are two different versions or two different sides of the story.

has evolved through countless translations, additions and revisions. History has never had a definite version of the Book.’²⁶

“More than eighty gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John amongst them’.²⁷

It is very important to note that, though Brown places a question Mark on today’s Bible, he also does revere and honour Jesus’ personality in saying:-

‘As a prophesized messiah Jesus toppled Kings inspired millions...’.²⁸

In another passage he says:

‘Nobody is saying Christ is a fraud, or denying that he walked the earth and inspired millions to better lives. All we are saying is that Constantine took advantage of Christ’s substantial influence and importance. And in doing so, he shaped the face of Christianity as we know it today’.²⁹

²⁶ Chapter 55 Page 312

²⁷ Chapter 55 Page 313

²⁸ Chapter 55 Page 313

²⁹ Chapter 55 Page 316

Muslim Response

This view of Dan Brown in terms of honouring the personality of Jesus, and denying the authenticity of today's Bible, exactly coincides with a Muslim's outlook of the Bible. The above quotation of Brown also refutes the statements of some writers who have accused Brown of being anti-Jesus.

For me as a Muslim to say that the entire Bible is a fabrication would be an over statement. I would never say that because we also accept that there are certain statements which we believe were uttered by Jesus, for an example Mark 12:29:

Jesus said:-

“The first is, Hear O Israel: *‘The Lord our God, the Lord is one’*’.

This verse is also proven from the Qur'an to have been uttered by Jesus himself:-

“When Jesus the son of Mary said; ‘O Children of Israel, Worship God, who is my God and your God’.³⁰

What we Muslims do accept is that today's Bible was not preserved, and instead has undergone many changes. The

³⁰ Chapter 6:Verse 72

Bible issue is also a lengthy subject, which I don't intend to pursue here in much detail.

The Qur'an's outlook on the Bible

The Qur'an on the one hand reveres and honours the Gospel, ('Injeel'), speaking highly of it and making it an article of faith for Muslims to believe in. Disbelieving in the Gospel of Jesus does not qualify one to remain a Muslim. It was the scripture which was revealed from God to Jesus.

The Qur'an on the other hand refers to the people of the Book as those who have changed their book with their own hands.³¹ Thus showing that the scriptures were being tampered with.

Therefore, Muslims observe the following beliefs about today's Bible: -

- Muslims disagree with the issues in the Bible that are contradictory to the Qur'an like the divinity of Jesus, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, the different major sins attributed to the Prophets of God etc. These are openly rejected and are believed to be clear-cut fabrications according to the Qur'an.

³¹ Chapte2: Verse 79 "Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands, and then say: 'This is from Allah,' to traffic with it for miserable price! Woe to them for what their hands do write, and for the gain they make thereby."

- No Muslim is permitted to pass any mockery or derogatory remarks on the Bible because this would then be considered as personal grudge following guess work. Besides, it is also a sin, and is not permitted in Islam, like those who mocked at Prophet Muhammad in displaying him in a cartoon.

Today's Bible is however a mixture of the words of God, Jesus, disciples, and non disciples like Paul.

The 'Injeel' which Muslims believe-in is purely the word of God, where God speaks Himself, unlike today's Bible. This is because God speaks in the Qur'an saying that God revealed the Injeel, implying that it is a speech of God which He Himself revealed to Jesus, which was in turn transmitted by Jesus to the people.

Brown also makes reference to this, saying that even the Vatican today admits that there is something which they call as the 'Q' documents, which they believe to have once existed and are reported to have gone missing. They also say that these were the documents of the true followers of Jesus.

Therefore, the fact that Muslims are saying that our beliefs are in conformity with the original teachings of Jesus, should not be surprising to anyone because Christian records also bears testimony to this fact.³² The mere talk of

³² Chapter 60 Page 343

the 'Q' documents shows the existence of another side to the story.

A question may be posed; if the Bible is considered as a forgery, then does the word of God exist in the world today? If it does, then where is it preserved?

Many Christians believe that the Bible has to be the 'only' word of God existing, because the Bible says that 'Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word (i.e. God's word) will not pass away. Some Christians agree that the Bible is not error-free since it has the human hand involvement in it, but that does not make them doubt it being the word of God? What a 'contradictory statement'. On the one hand they agree that the Bible is not error-free and on the other hand it still remains to be the pure word of God. If it is so then how confident are we that certain statements are transmitted in a manner that God wanted it to be transmitted? Due to its errors and contradictions, there are great possibilities of misinterpretations and interpolations which could possibly change the original message, thus resulting in unworthy words put into God's mouth, words which have never been revealed.

Yes, we Muslims also believe that the word of God has been preserved, but not in the context of how the Christians interpret it. Muslims believe in the Injeel, the book revealed to Jesus, which is the word of God. Even after the Gospels were tampered with, by people, God still preserved his word, which is in the Qur'an. Understand this

by way of an example; Tom secured his gold coins in a brown safe. When the thieves tried to steal the gold coins, they failed, however they damaged the safe. Tom however removed the gold coins and placed it into a grey safe. Tom has always appreciated the brown safe. He acknowledges the long service he got out of it, but accepts the fact that he cannot any longer derive any benefit from it since it has been tampered with.

Similarly, the word-of-God was once preserved in the safe called the Injeel of Jesus. Later this safe was tampered with, damaging its original form. Thereafter God transferred his message into the safe of the Qur'an. Every Muslim believes in the Injeel, a book containing the revelation of God. This book, though it is disguised under the name 'Holy Bible' cannot be utilized as a book of guidance today because it was tampered with, thus bringing changes to its original message. The book to be followed as guidance today is none other than the Qur'an because the word of God is contained in it. In this manner the word or message of God has always been preserved.

The 'Real' Biblical concept of Jesus

Did you know?

1. That there is not a single verse in the Bible where Jesus said; 'I am God' or 'Worship me'.

2. If the trinity was what Jesus preached, then why didn't Jesus clarify this in the first commandment of Mark 12:29, instead he first preached the oneness of God.
3. God not seen or heard- In the Bible; John 5:37, it states that God cannot be seen or heard. Therefore, if Jesus was God, then how is it that he was seen whereas God cannot be seen?³³
4. Two in one- According to the Christians Jesus is the son of God, whilst in the belief of trinity he is also God. How can he be God and the son at the same time?
5. Whilst the term 'son of God' is used in the Bible, Jesus also refers to himself as 'son of man' in approximately 83 places in the Bible.
6. Christians say Jesus is God, and God, as we know is Father. If God is Father, then Jesus is also Father because 'God' and 'Father' are synonymous terms. If it is so that Jesus is the father, then why did Jesus say in Matthew 23:9; 'And call no man your Father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in Heaven' ?³⁴

³³ John 5:37- "You have never heard his voice at any time nor seen His Face".

³⁴ The word 'man' in the following quotation; 'And call no man your Father...' also includes Jesus because in many places in the Bible Jesus is referred to as man.

7. If Jesus is God himself, why did he pray for help? Does God pray? Then, why didn't he help himself or pray to himself?³⁵
8. If Jesus was part of the trinity, why then did He not claim so in the Old Testament, because all over the Old Testament, God continuously emphasizes about Himself being One, for example in Deuteronomy 6:4 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord'.
9. Did Jesus ever say that he is the second part of the trinity; likewise did the Holy Ghost ever claim to be the third part?
10. There is no word like 'trinity' in the Bible?
11. If trinity is such a belief that is emphasised upon, why did this belief not exist before Jesus, in the past, like in the Old Testament? If it did exist, then God would have surely indicated to it in His first commandment to Moses!
12. If God had a son, then who is God's wife.
13. How can Jesus have a genealogy (which he has, according to Matthew 1:1) because he is claimed to

³⁵ Why did he pray; '*Eli Eli.....*' (Matthew 27:46)

be the son of God, and how can God have a genealogy?³⁶

14. Baptism- Jesus came to “Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him” (Matthew 3:13). Baptism implies purification of sins. How can Jesus be God if he asks John to purify him of his sins? How can God be sinful? A sinful God?!!
15. Jesus is imperfect compared to God- “One came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he (Jesus) said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.” (Matthew 19:16-17) This verse proves that there is only one good that is God, relating to the perfection of Good.
16. Jesus was called Master- The disciples called him Rabbi, i.e. Master or teacher (Luke 1:38). They never called him God.
17. There is however only one place where Jesus says; ‘I and my father are one’. Firstly if it is read in its correct context from the previous verse, it implied that Jesus and God are one in ‘purpose’ and

³⁶ In Mathew, after the long list of forefathers, Chapter 16 reads “And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ”. It seems as if this is the genealogy of Jesus through Joseph. If it is so, then what’s so miraculous about his birth and what makes him the son of God? If he is the son of both, God and Joseph, then how can he have two Fathers? If Jesus is God, then how can he have human lineage, as it supposed to be a spiritual lineage?

‘ambition’, and not in ‘person’. Furthermore, if Jesus and God are taken as one person, then how would one interpret the verse where Jesus says; ‘My father is greater than I’, considering that the Christian says that the three in the trinity are in total agreement with each other, whereas here there is a disagreement in the quality of greatness between Jesus and God.

The Islamic concept of Jesus³⁷

- Jesus was one of the mightiest prophets of God.
- He gave his followers the glad tidings of another messenger to come after him, who is Muhammad.
- He was born miraculously without a father or any male intervention.
- He was neither the begotten son, nor part of the divinity of God.
- He preached the worship of one God, and not the trinity.
- He also proclaimed himself as the messenger of God, and not the son of God.
- He did not die for any one’s sins.
- He was neither crucified, nor resurrected; instead he was raised-up instantly by God.
- He will return towards the end of time before the day of Judgement.

³⁷ These are just brief point-form extracts from verses of the Qur’an and traditional recordings of Muhammad.

- He will judge by means of the Qur'an.
- He will return as a leader of the Muslims.
- He himself came to fulfil or confirm the teachings of Moses, and not to preach a new religion.
- When he returns, he will break the cross and kill all pigs. He will also kill the one-eyed Dajjaal (Anti-Christ)

4. A Response to Brown's Live Interview

4.1 Brown's outlook on religion

Dan Brown is putting onto paper questions, which people generally ask concerning religion. His ideas in his book are those which he has brain stormed wanting to get people to start thinking on important issues of religion:-

‘My hope in writing this novel was that the story would serve as a catalyst and a spring board for people to discuss the important topics of faith’.³⁸

He also wants people to start thinking out of their restricted religious boundaries in accepting everything which the Church tells them to believe. The reason he also gives is that ‘religion has always demanded faith without reason’. He also commented saying that religion is always

³⁸ NH Radio interview

at war with science'. Clear cut science is contradicted by religion.

Whilst making people to think, he is not also providing solutions directing people which way to go. He says, 'I leave it now to the scholars and the historians to debate these issues'.

This is where we as a Muslim's come in. The wish to share and present to people an alternative viewpoint.

Muslim Response

In my view, the Da Vinci Code is good in one way, but also bad in another. It is bad in a way because it unplugs the minds of people out from the socket of religion. It is also bad in a way that it does not provide an alternative to the Christian's. Instead it leaves them suspended as in undermining religion in totality, leaving no hope at all that the person will look for another religion, more appealing to logic, reason and science compatible.

Brown's book is good in one sense that it breaks prejudice and narrow-mindedness which is generally a widespread spiritual disease in the Christianity. We fail to reason with them concerning their doctrines. They always end-up remarking; 'We walk not by sight, but we walk by faith'. Sometimes they say; 'There is no proof needed for the word of God (i.e. the Bible)', or sometimes they describe

their experiences with the Holy Spirit, which they claim to feel all the time.

We are glad in a way that Brown has done a job which we've been trying to do for years. We therefore take advantage of the situation by offering the Islamic alternative.

Islam on the other hand does not preach prejudice. The Qur'an invites all of mankind to question or challenge its contents, which it presents openly. It's amazing. I find it necessary to refer you to the verses of the Qur'an which openly demand from people to challenge and scrutinize its contents from every angle. (See footnote for verses.³⁹) In doing so, they would definitely prove unsuccessful, in trying to falsify or disprove its miraculous nature. Therefore, Brown's statement concerning that 'religion demands faith without understanding' does not apply to Islam because Islam does have the answers. A faith that has no answers always demands 'belief without reason from its followers'.

³⁹ a. Demands you to ponder on it- 'Do they not ponder over the Qur'an, or do you have locks on your hearts'. (Chapter 47: Verse 24)

b. Ponder over its freedom from contradiction- 'Do they not ponder over the Qur'an, had it been from anyone besides God, they would surely have found therein many contradictions'. (Chapter 4: Verse 82)

c. Challenge to produce the likeness of it- 'And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant (Muhammad), then produce a chapter like thereof; and call your witnesses or helpers, (if there are any) besides God, if your (doubts) are true'. (Chapter 2: Verse 23)

4.2 Brown's hope on religion

Dan Brown says in his interview: “I believe that science and religion are both friends, one day they would become one. He makes another statement saying that ‘I don’t claim to know where we came from⁴⁰, but I know that there are multiple versions of that story’. He also says that he believes that ‘religion and science are two different languages trying to tell the same story’. The question he raises; ‘How can we become people of science without losing our religion’? He finally concludes saying: *‘I hope science and religion become friends*’, which in reality they are. He also claims not to be programming people’s minds in any specific direction. He says in one statement; ‘The ball is rolling. Let the biblical scholars sit down and debate...’ He also stated that religion has always evolved with the lapse of time; therefore religion has not been preserved in the purest form ever. He feels convinced about this, especially after researching Christian history.

Muslim Response

I also agree with Brown, when he says that ‘most’ religions in the world do go through an evolving process, but my message to Brown is to search for ‘a’ religion which is void of evolution.

From all the above statements of Brown, I can sum up that Brown knows from the deep recesses of his heart that the

⁴⁰ Referring to the spiritual realities of life

truth lies in some version of religion. From his words, there is a sense of eagerness in finding the truth. Furthermore, his questions on religion are all directed towards Christianity. I say that there ought to be a faith wherein the truth has always prevailed throughout the generations. If not, then God is ‘God of Hiding’⁴¹.

4.3 Brown question’s religious rituals

I agree with Brown that in Christianity there are rituals which are incomprehensible to the common mind, for instance depriving the body of its matrimonial rights, cutting the tongues, and sitting in the caves. As pointed out by Brown, these are to be questioned, as they are religious rituals having no significance or benefit to the human being, they cause harm instead.

Muslim Response

I agree that some of these innovations have crept into Christianity and were not in actual fact preached by Jesus himself. Besides these innovations, there are many others which have also crept into Christianity, thus causing a stigma to be attached to all religion in general. True religion is free from rituals of such nature.

From the point of view of a person who belongs to a faith having both, a mixture of truth and falsehood, it becomes

⁴¹ Rhyming with the words of Brown on his interview statement, that God is ‘God of the gaps’.

difficult to differentiate between innovations and true ritualistic practices. In Brown's list of ritualistic innovations he has also included fasting to be one of them, as he feels that it punishes the body by depriving it of food. I therefore wish to show the significance of fasting according to the religion of Islam.

Fasting in Islam⁴²

Firstly, fasting has always been the way of life of the Prophets of God.⁴³ We Muslims accept it, follow it, and believe in it. But, for the benefit of those from an anti-religious point of view, who would naturally have a difficulty in accepting things without understanding, I therefore present a brief explanation of fasting, as a non oppressive ritual.

According to Islam, God has created man solely for the purpose of worshipping Him'. Worship in Islam means the performance of good deeds purely for the pleasure of God. Therefore any bad action that is performed or any action performed for show, defeats the purpose of worship. Therefore man needs to continuously strive to his level best in trying to perform good actions, and to stay away from bad actions. From amongst the actions which God

⁴² By fasting, according to Islam it means; to abstain from eating, drinking and cohabitation with one's spouse⁴² from sunrise to sunset. Fasting in Islam, which is ordained once a year for 30 days in the Holy month of Ramadhaan, allows a person's evil desires to be controlled.

⁴³ Qur'an

has commanded to man, God has also ordained for man a system of fasting, like charity, pilgrimage, prayer etc.

Fasting helps a person fulfil his purpose of worship by allowing him to control his evils passions. Fasting also helps a person build his will-power, enabling the person to restrain himself from the evil dictates of the soul, like in the case of addiction of alcohol, drugs, anger, and in all other evils where will-power is required. Fasting is wherein one gives up food and drink voluntarily, in spite of being able to eat willingly. Fasting also creates discipline in enabling the person to oppose his self desires, which is the main reason for selfishness. The hunger experienced in fasting causes a person to reflect over the condition of the poor and needy. Thus creating in him a quality of mercy, abstinence from oppression on the poor and weak. The hunger in fasting creates within a person gratitude for food and water, the two bounties which are generally unappreciated by people. It is therefore appreciated properly at the time of thirst. Fasting also creates God consciousness. When the stomach is empty, a person naturally turns his heart focus to God. All these are contributing factors towards developing dedicated devoutness in worshipping God.

4.4 Brown question's natural disasters

Brown says that if God is so powerful, then how can He not have power of control over the natural disasters in the world.

Muslim Response

From an Islamic perspective, life in this world is based on tests and trials. The Qur'an points out that the corruption and turmoil that prevails on the land is due to what man has earned by his own doings. God sometimes unleashes these disasters according to His divine wisdom. Misfortunes of these types inflicted on innocent people too should not be taken as a means of failure or punishment. What can be a blessing for one person can be punishment for another. For example, God's dealing with man is sometimes like the knife of a surgeon i.e. to heal people spiritually; and sometimes it is a punishment, like the knife of criminal who is aiming to harm or kill. For those who have lost their lives innocently, it is a means of elevation of their status in the Hereafter wherein all eternal success lies.

Ultimately, it's Gods right. He does what he wills. He is the driver of the world vehicle. If we interfere in his decisions, we will only cause harm to our own selves.

Science and religion in Islam

As far as the contradiction of Science and religion is concerned which Dan Brown refers to, I wish to educate him and others by a few examples from Islam and its relation to science. I also wish to clarify that as Muslims, we do not compromise Qur'an teachings for the sake of scientific theories. For that matter, even Muslim historian records⁴⁴ bear no proof in any way against divine Islamic records. Divine Islamic records are as follows:-

1.) The Qur'an, which we believe to be the word of God in its literal sense⁴⁵.

2.) 'Standard Islamic traditions' (known as Ahaadith), which are recorded from the lips of Muhammad by his companions. [For that matter also, even archaeological and scientific proof cannot be given precedence over Islamic teachings.⁴⁶]

Dan Brown's focus of argument is that at present, science and religion are continuously at war. As far as the

⁴⁴ Referring to even Muslim historians, let alone others. Even the sayings of great saints cannot streamline the divine recordings.

⁴⁵ Word by word from God

⁴⁶ If archaeological and scientific discoveries happens to coincide with the Qur'anic teachings, then well and good. If they don't coincide, the teachings of the Qur'an can never be forsaken for the sake of science, though they hardly contradict the Qur'anic teachings. In places where there is a contradiction, it would point to the inaccuracy of scientific theories, which later become ratified by the so called 'new theories'.

contradictory aspect goes between science and religion, I would like to correct Brown by saying that contradiction is not between science and religion in general. Instead it is between ‘Christianity’ and science. Due to Brown’s thorough study of Christian history, he has discovered many innovations and incomprehensible doctrines in the Christian faith. One of which is the assumed birthday of Jesus that is the 25th of December. This date was taken from the Roman sun-god called Mithras. He also found many other ancient gods birthdays to fall on the 25th December. Due to all this, he therefore questions ‘religion’ in general concluding that religion has always evolved throughout history. In doing so, he is putting all his eggs in one basket. Less does he realize that this stigma should only be attached to Christianity, it should not be generalized for all religions, despite Brown’s thorough knowledge of Christianity. Also, his lack of Islamic knowledge leaves much to be desired of him. Generalizing ‘religion’ can drive many people towards atheism, especially when he says that ‘I don’t claim to say that I have all the answers, rather I am only getting people to start thinking’, and hence questioning faith.

Here are some examples from the Qur’an where science is found perfectly compatible with the Qur’an. I want you to also bear in mind that the Qur’an was revealed 1400 years ago at a time when there was no trace of science at all. Scientific research has only recently unfolded. Though we will not be able to discuss many comparatives, but for the benefit of the reader some examples will be given ahead.

Science and Islam

1. Creation of the universe

The 'Big Bang Theory'

Modern science has recently discovered that the whole universe was initially packed together at a single point. Then there occurred an expansion known as the Big Bang. From the resulting nebulae, the stars, planets, Moon, Sun etc. were formed. This is what is referred to by science as the 'Big Bang Theory'.

(The New Encyclopaedia Britannica vol. 19, pg. 636)

“Do the disbelievers not observe that the heavens and the earth were a single mass, then We (God) split them apart”?
Qur'an 21:30

2. Astronomy

The solar apex

Modern science has recently discovered that the solar system i.e. the sun and its planets are moving in space at a

speed of 19 km per second towards a point in the constellation of Hercules (Alpha Lyrae). Its exact location has been calculated with precision. Astronomers name it the '*solar apex.*'

“The sun runs on its course to its fixed place (solar apex). This is an estimation of The Almighty, All Knowing”.
Qur’an 36:38

3. Medicine

Honey

The bee absorbs nectar and juices from various flowers and fruits. Then it produces honey which it stores in cells of wax. The fact that honey contains healing properties for mankind has been highlighted in the Qur’an 1400 years ago, at a time when science had ignored the bee as an insignificant creation. It should make one think how a prophet of Arabia who lived in the desert could give such an elaborate account of the bee without having access to modern day Science and technology.

4. Botany

Plants created in pairs (male and female)

Previously humans did not know that plants also have male and female gender distinctions. Botany now states that every plant has male and female species. Even the plants

that are unisexual have distinct elements of both, male and female.

“And He has sent down water from the sky, with it We have produced diverse pairs of plants each separate from the others”.
Qur’an 20:53

5. Expansion of the universe

Modern scientific discoveries have now proven that the universe is expanding. The evidence for this was provided in 1925 by an American astronomer, Edwin Hubble, after observing that all the galaxies are receding from one another, which implies that the universe is expanding. This was brought to man’s attention by the Qur’an even before man developed the telescope.

“And the sky, We created it with might and great are We in expanding it”.
Qur’an 51: 47

6. Geology

Mountains

Modern scientists, like Emeritus Professor Frank Press, have recently confirmed that mountains have deep roots under the surface of the ground like pegs. As compared to the height of the mountain these roots go several times deeper into the earth.⁴⁷ The theory of “the mountains

⁴⁷ The Geological Concept of mountains in the Qur’an, El-Naggar, pg. 5

having deep roots” was introduced only in 1865 by the Astronomer Royal, Sir George Airy.⁴⁸

Modern theory of “plate tectonics” holds that these deep-rooted mountains play an important role in stabilizing the crust of the earth. This knowledge of mountains as stabilizes for the earth was only recently understood in the framework of “plate tectonics.”

This knowledge of mountains having peg-shaped roots, serving as stabilizes was already mentioned 1400 years ago by Prophet Muhammad in the Qur’an.

“Have we not made the earth as a bed and the mountains as pegs”.
Qur’an 78:6-7

7. Oceanography

Modern science has confirmed that a barrier divides two seas so that each sea has its own temperature, salinity and density.⁴⁹ Oceanographers are now in a better position to explain the verse of the Qur’an. There is a slanted unseen water barrier between two seas through which water from one sea passes through the other. For example, when the Mediterranean Sea water enters the Atlantic past Gibraltar, it still moves several hundred kilometres into the Atlantic at a depth of 1000 metres with its own warm, saline, and

⁴⁸ Earth, Press and Siever, pg. 435 (authored by Professor Emeritus Frank Press, who was the adviser to former US President Jimmy Carter, and the President of National Academy of Sciences, Washington DC.

⁴⁹ Principles of Oceanography, Davis pg. 92,93

less dense characteristics. Although there are large waves, strong currents, and tides in the ocean, yet they do not mix or transgress this barrier. Hence the Qur'anic verse reads:

Barrier between the two seas

The Qur'an speaks of the two seas both meeting and mixing with each other, yet they are separated from each other by means of a barrier or a partition. Early commentators of the Holy Qur'an could not understand and explain the two opposite meanings of the words '*maraja*' and '*barzakh*', the first which means that they meet and mix, and the other which means that there is a barrier between them.

“He has set free the two seas meeting together. There is a barrier between them. They do not transgress”.

Qur'an 55:19-20

8. Oceanography

Darkness beneath the sea

Oceanographers have recently discovered the darkness in the ocean at a depth of 200 metres. At this level there is almost no light at all. Human beings are unable to dive more than forty meters without the aid of submarines or special equipment.

“(The parable of the disbelievers is) like zones of darkness in an abysmal sea overwhelmed by a wave above which there is another wave above which is a cloud”. Zones of darkness, one above the other. If man stretches out his hand, he will scarcely be able to see it.’ Qur’an 24:40

9. General Science

Uniqueness of human fingerprints

The use of fingerprints as identification became a scientific tool since 1880, after the research of Sir Francis Golt only to discover that no two person’s fingerprints are identical. This is how detectives worldwide identify their criminals. But 1400 hundred years ago, when the infidels argued about the possibilities of Resurrection after death when the bones of man have disintegrated, the Qur’an confirmed the possibility in its unique style through the following verse:

“Does man think that We cannot assemble his bones? No, We are able to put together in perfect order the very tips of his fingers.” Qur’an 75:4

10. Embryology

The human foetus development

Dr. Keith Moore who is one of the world’s most prominent scientist in the field of anatomy and embryology compared a human foetus in its early stage to a piece of ‘chewed

gum' and thereafter confirmed that the two resemble each other in appearance. This is the exact meaning of the term 'Mudhgah' in Arabic. It was found that the foetus in the early stage was similar in appearance to a 'chewed' substance. The somites at the back of the embryo resembled the teeth marks of the chewed gum.

“We created man from an extract of clay. Then we placed him as a clot of blood in a preserved receptacle. Then We created the clot into congealed blood. Then We created the blood into a chewed-like lump”. ***Qur'an 23:12-14***

11. Geography

Clouds and Rainfall

Scientists have studied cloud types and have realized that rain clouds are formed and shaped according to a definite system. Meteorologists have studied this by using advanced equipment like planes, satellites, computers and balloons. They conclude that clouds produce rain in the following sequence:

Have you not seen how God makes the clouds move gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a stack, and then you see the rain come out of it” ***Qur'an 24:43***

12. Astronomy

The light of the Moon is reflected light

It was believed by earlier civilizations that the moon emanates its own light. Science now tells us that the light of the Moon is a reflected light. However this fact was mentioned in the Qur'an 1400 years ago in the following verse:

“Blessed is He who made Constellations in the skies, and placed therein a lamp and a moon giving light.”
Qur'an 25:61

The Qur'an in describing the brightness of the Sun and Moon, uses two different words to describe them. The words that have been translated as 'lamp' for the sun and 'light' for the Moon. The word 'lamp' used for the Sun shows that the glow of the Sun is from within itself like a lamp. The word 'light' is used for the moon shows that the glow of the moon is not of its own, but a reflection of another light i.e. the sun. The Bible in describing the difference between the Sun and Moon, only distinguishes them by their size.

...Continuation of Brown's Live Interview

4.5 Brown's statement on evolution

In Brown's interview, he questions how could one read the story of Adam and Eve along side with a book on evolution and cosmology.

Muslim response

The theory of Evolution denies the creation of the universe. The atheistic scientists try to prove this by saying that there was a mechanism in nature that gave life to inanimate matter, which in turn gave life to millions of species. They deny that the universe had been created and believe that it existed forever. This has however been disproved by scientist of the 20th century.

Darwin's theory suggests that all species descended from a common ancestor, and have grown apart from one another in a series of small progressive changes.

According to Darwin's theory, life on earth began from inanimate matter. Then the question is; how did the first living thing come into being? Darwin failed to address that issue contending that the first cell could easily have formed in some warm little pond. The evolutionist biologists who attempted to make good this attempt in Darwinism ended up in disappointment. All observations and experiments show that it was impossible for all living

cells to emerge from inanimate matter. Scientists then discovered something else in the second half of the twentieth century, life and especially the living cell with the complex organelle. It has within it the most complicated designs. For example the likeness of eyes, with which no camera can possibly compare. Bird wings have inspired aeronautical technology, the complexity of a living cell, the extraordinary information contained in d.n.a. All these are clear examples of design, and clearly reject the theory of evolution, which regards life as a product of blind chance. Scientists in most western countries, particularly in the United States, today reject Darwinism in favour of the theory of intelligent design. The reason for this is that scientific facts show that life emerged with design and not by chance. In short, science once again confirms that God had created all living things. This ultimately reveals the existence of God who is responsible for all creation.

Scientists disagreement on Evolution

Patrick Glynn says:

‘The past two decades of research have overturned nearly all the important assumptions and predictions of an earlier generation of modern secular and atheist thinkers relating to the issue of God. Over the course of a century in the great debate between science and faith the tables have

completely turned. Today the concrete data point strongly in the direction of the God hypothesis.’⁵⁰

Philosophers of the 18th century like Emanuel Kant also supported the atheistic idea about the universe not having a beginning. Science however, later proved that it had a beginning. This was proven from the Big Bang theory in 1929 when the American astronomer Edwin Hubble discovered that the galaxies were constantly moving away from one other. This meant that the universe was expanding. They concluded that if the flow of time in the expanding universe were reversed, then it would emerge that the whole universe must have come from a single point. Astronomers found themselves facing a metaphysical situation which the single point possessed infinite gravity, yet zero percent volume. Everything emerged with the explosion from that infinitely small point. In other words the universe was created from nothing. Although the Big Bang theory disturbed materialists, it continued to be supported by concrete scientific discoveries.

During the observations in the 1960’s, two scientists, Arno Pencias and Robert Wilson identified the radioactive traces left behind by the initial explosion; the same thing was confirmed in the 1990’s. Today the atheists have been completely cornered by the recent scientific truths. One of

⁵⁰ By Patrick Glynn in his book ‘God The Evidence’, The reconciliation of faith and reason in the Post secular world, Prima Publishing, California, 1997 pp 19-20, 53.

the atheists reaction to the Big Bang Theory appeared in the 1980's by John Madocks the editor of 'nature', which is one of the best known materialistic scientific magazines. In the article entitled 'down with the Big Bang' Madocks wrote that the Big Bang is philosophically unacceptable because creationist and those with similar persuasions draw ample justifications from the doctrine of the Big Bang. He also predicted that the Big Bang was unlikely to survive the decade ahead. The Big Bang evidence has since grown stronger, and many more discoveries confirm the creation of the universe. The conclusion arrived at by modern astronomers is this; Matter and time were brought into being by an infinitely powerful Creator, the Creator of the universe that we inhabit is God, Lord of all the worlds.

The collapse of the idea of the Accidental Universe

The most perfect balance in which the heavenly bodies have been created, all point to a perfect design of some Supreme Being. An example of this is the distance of the Sun from the earth which has been perfectly designed to make human life possible. As the scientist, George Greenstein stumbled upon these facts, he concluded:-

“As we survey all the evidence, the thought instantly arises that some supernatural agency must be involved. Is it possible that suddenly, without intending to, we have

stumbled upon scientific proof of the existence of a Supreme Being?⁵¹

The same view is supported by Michael J Denton in his '*Nature's destiny*,' The Free Press, New York, 1988, pg. 14

The Holy Qur'an clarifies this issue in saying:-

‘We did not create heaven and earth and everything between them for no purpose. That is the opinion of those who disbelieve’.
(Qur'an 38:27)

5. Events following the crucifixion

Issues regarding the crucifixion and the Resurrection have always been a subject of critical discussion in recent times. In view of this, I have therefore decided to reveal the reality with regards to each of these subjects for the benefit reader, beginning with the crucifixion of Jesus.

The question is; Was Jesus crucified in reality? The answer is 'no'. If I am then asked, what is my proof? I would reply that the Qur'an says so. The Christian would possibly say

⁵¹ George Greenstein, *The symbolic Universe*, William Morrow, New York, 1988, Pg. 27

that the Qur'an is not proof for him. I therefore produce proof from the Bible itself.

First of all, from the Biblical point of view, there are no eye witnesses to the crucifixion from any of the disciples of Jesus. The Bible says that;

‘And they all forsook him and fled’.⁵²

‘All’ meaning everyone from amongst the disciples ran away. Obviously, the only possible witnesses available were the enemies of Jesus, those who assumed to have killed him, which happens to be mentioned in the Qur'an.⁵³ The only way the news spread, about the crucifixion, was from the enemies' source, who said out of boast that they killed Jesus. Therefore, wherever in the Bible it is mentioned that he ‘died’ or was ‘killed’ on the cross, though it may be mentioned dozens of times in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, we would have to accept the fact that *‘the disciples according to the Bible’*⁵⁴ received this information via hearsay, which means they all heard it as a rumour from others, and not witnessed it themselves.

The reality was that God made it appear to the Jews and the Roman soldiers that they killed Jesus, but in actual fact

⁵² Mark 14:50

⁵³ Qur'an- Chapter 4: Verse 157 ‘They (the Jews) said in boast, ‘we have killed Jesus....’

⁵⁴ The phrase, *‘Disciples according to the Bible’* refers to the fact that according to Islam the true disciples did not fall prey to these discussions. Whether the New Testament writings are the writings of the disciples, is a subject of its own.

they did not kill him. God's purpose for doing so was to deceive Jesus' enemies in order to save Jesus.

Q. If Jesus was not crucified, then is it possible that the entire Christendom unanimously agree upon the fact that Jesus was crucified? Is it possible that the whole 100% Christians misunderstood; especially that it had been a historical fact that Jesus was crucified? Now, how does the Muslim come along after an elapse of time with a new concept that Jesus was not crucified?

A. The fallacy of the crucifixion was only revealed 571 years after Jesus Christ by the Prophet Muhammad who received this revelation directly from God in the Qur'an. Until before this period, no one knew this fact. The Qur'an⁵⁵ also points out that God 'made it appear to them so', in other words, God led the Jews to believe that Jesus was crucified, whilst he was not. God's attempt in doing so was to directly deceive or confuse the Jews. Though this news would break out and reach the disciples, they would also be indirectly made to be confused or outwardly seem to be deceived by God. Instead, God didn't intend to deceive the followers of Jesus, rather to directly deceive or confuse the Jews.

⁵⁵ Qur'an Chapter 4: Verse 158

Q. Was God justified in deceiving the people concerning the crucifixion?

A. God was justified in deceiving the Jews of that time in order to save his beloved Prophet from the embarrassment of the nakedness on the cross.

If God intended to reveal the truth of the crucifixion immediately after the alleged crucifixion in order to avoid the misinterpretation of the people, who could He have revealed the truth to, because according to the system of God in Islam, there was no one at that particular time capable of receiving this direct inspiration from God, because direct inspiration from God belonged only to God's Prophets. Now that his Prophet Jesus was not around, there was no one else to receive this revelation.

As to the true followers of Jesus, upon hearing the news of Jesus' crucifixion, it did not disturb their faith regarding whether they believed it or not, since salvation wasn't dependent on believing that Christ died for them on the cross, as it is believed in Christianity today as a foundation of their faith. Instead the foundation of the true 'Christian'⁵⁶ faith as well as the requirement for salvation was what was preached by Jesus in his first commandment

⁵⁶ Once again, the phrase 'Christianity' used here for the followers of Jesus is done more for convenience purposes. Rather, the true followers of Jesus were not at all called by the name 'Christian'. The term Christian began only to be used only in Antioch years later. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" Acts 11:26

of Mark 12:29.⁵⁷ Secondly, salvation depended on the performance of righteous deeds, which Jesus preached according to Mathew 5:20, 'For I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees; ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven'.

Q. If Jesus was not crucified but rather raised up by God, then what was the condition of the disciples after that? Did they believe in the crucifixion or not?

A. The condition of the true disciples was such that they continued to remain steadfast on the teachings of Jesus which Jesus had preached to them. This matter of whether Jesus was crucified on the cross or not, was not an issue of dispute between them because they themselves did not see him on the cross. They therefore preferred silence on this subject.

Q. How could the 'so called' Christians at that time then believe that Jesus was crucified, which leads them to believe in it even up to today?

A. Apart from the true followers of Jesus, there existed a group from amongst the Christians who fell prey to the call of the Jews that they had crucified Jesus. These Christians made this claim probably after they heard the Jews and the Romans who boasted that they killed Jesus. This

⁵⁷ "The first is, Hear O Israel: *'The Lord our God, the Lord is one'*."

automatically led some followers of Jesus to retaliate to the boastful claim of the Jew saying to them; 'Our master died for us on the cross'. This very statement was adopted by some of the 'so called' followers of Jesus in order to console themselves that Jesus died for them on the cross. Subsequently, this became an issue of faith ever since. Like the case of Mr Bush consoling the family members of those who were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, saying to them that; 'We are proud that your sons have died for us, (i.e. for our country).' No one up to the present assume that soldiers die for the sins of their people. Likewise was the case with Christianity, that eventually led to the issue of people saying that Jesus died for their sins on the cross. With the addition of the word 'sin' it, automatically brought into Christianity the issue of salvation. Eventually salvation according to them was centred around the crucifixion, resurrection, redemption and the atonement. This is the main sale's point. This is why Paul said that 'If Christ was crucified and resurrected, then our preaching is in vain'. This now became a turning point in the Christian faith, drifting further away from truth of the real doctrines.

Can you imagine that the Jews wanted to kill Jesus. Jesus on the other hand was praying to God to save him. The disciples according to the Bible tried protecting Jesus by selling their garments to buy swords. After all their effort in trying to protect Jesus, how could they have afterwards claimed that Jesus died for them on the cross?

Ever since, Christianity deals with everything after the crucifixion, and has nothing to do with what Jesus preached in his 33 years of life. I don't say this blatantly or to mock, but instead to reveal the reality of the situation. The fact remains that Jesus initially preached 'the first commandment' while the Christians today on the other hand, on the first opportunity preach 'salvation in the blood of Christ'.

6. The only way to salvation

According to Islam, the only way to salvation is believing in the ONE unseen God, and also to believe that Jesus was a prophet of God, and Muhammad is the last Prophet of God. This is as far as belief is concerned.

As far as our actions are concerned, the requirement for salvation to offer a self sacrifice⁵⁸ to God, that is to repent sincerely to Him and ask Him for forgiveness, as well as having sincere regret from the core of our hearts over the sins we have committed. This repentance is because we are all sinners by nature and that we all do tend to commit wrongs in life. Furthermore, we are required to 'sacrifice' by striving to perform⁵⁹ good deeds for the pleasure of God⁶⁰.

⁵⁸ Not a third party sacrifice, in believing that someone else died for us on the cross.

⁵⁹ Self sacrifice means that God wants a sacrifice from us as individuals, because it is we as individuals, who have broken the law and have sinned, and not just believing that someone else died for our sins.

Conclusion

I pray to God that He makes this publication a means of forgiveness for my shortcomings, and a source of guidance for the world to be able to recognize the truth. I therefore invite every person to read the Holy Qur'an which is:-

1. The word of God (in its literal sense⁶¹, because it was revealed from God word for word, letter for letter in the way that God wanted it to be).
2. Free from contradictions.
3. The Qur'an answers the questions concerning the realities of life, the Hereafter, the concept of God, prophethood (as pointed out by Dan Brown in his interview, man has not truly discovered these realities, and therefore he wants people to start thinking)
4. The Qur'an grants satisfaction to the heart and soul in the answers and solutions that it provides.
5. The only book which is preserved by being memorized in its entirety by thousands of people throughout the world from the time it was revealed. It is even memorized by children until.
6. It is still preserved in its original text, Arabic.
7. Its translations are free from deletions, additions, alterations of verses.
8. Compatible with sciences.
9. Preserved in its original language, Arabic without even the slightest change in it.
10. Invites all to the common religion of monotheism which existed at every generation.

⁶⁰ The self sacrifice of performing good deeds includes giving of charity, fasting, praying five time a day, taking care of orphans etc. Any good action, though they may be a performance of rituals are all under the category of self sacrifice, especially that a sacrifice requires effort.

⁶¹ Unlike when Christians say 'word of God' in its figurative sense

