

أخبار سارة الله يحبك يا صديقي المسلم

GLAD NEWS!

God Loves You My Muslim Friend

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Samy Tanagho

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by

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God promised Abraham:

“And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers.” (Genesis 17:20)

I dedicate this book to my precious Muslim acquaintances, friends, neighbors, and all the sincere Muslims in the world who are earnestly seeking to have a complete relationship with the Living God (*Allah AL-Hayy*, in Arabic).

My dear reader, I believe God orchestrated many events to get this book in your hands to have you read it. He wants to say to you,

“I know you. You matter to Me. Because I love you, I want to give you the best life possible here on earth. I want you to live with Me forever and enjoy My kingdom, My presence, and My love. This is my purpose for creating you.

This is My joy; to love you and see you happy.”

Glad News!

God loves you, my Muslim friend.

God loves you so much and He wants to embrace you as a father embraces his child. Yes, God wants you to become His child. He wants to have a close relationship with you based not on fear but on mutual love! God created you to enjoy joyful unbroken fellowship with Him forever.

God does not desire our relationship with Him to consist only of religious rituals and traditions. There is something deeper God desires for each one of us to have. God wants you to know Him through a living relationship and experience His love, forgiveness, and divine presence. God never intended this relationship to be the exclusive privilege of one special group of people.

God is inviting you to enjoy His salvation and discover the depth of His love toward you.

Understanding and applying God's truth is a common right for all humanity—a right to become spiritually enlightened and alive! God desires to fill your life with joy, love, peace, and hope.

God designed us in such a way that we will never be completely satisfied and happy without experiencing His perfect will in our lives. The way to enjoy the right relationship with God is presented to you in this book.

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

Jeremiah 29:13

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INTRODUCTION

Everyone searches for love, but for many it proves elusive. The Beatles sang “All You Need Is Love” and then they disbanded! Many couples think they have found love, but then it slips away from them. They wonder if it was true love after all. I want to tell you about *real love*, an unconditional love that will revolutionize your life. In fact, it is the greatest love story in human history—God’s love for *you*!

The most prevalent characteristic revealed about God in the Bible is that He is a loving God. Love is not just one of God’s glorious attributes; love is the essence of God’s being. God is the source of love.

I have personally experienced God’s deep love. During the past 29 years of my life, I have met thousands of true followers of Christ who have had and still have the same experience. It is stated in the Bible, “. . . we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love!” (1 John 4:16).

The God of the Bible does not merely love you, and me, and all people . . . “God is love.” In other words, love is the very essence of His moral nature. This is the message I want to share with you. My desire is that multitudes of Muslims will know and experience God’s deep and personal love for them. This longing has prompted me to write to you. I grew up with Muslim schoolmates, and neighbors, eating and playing with them. My wife was born and raised as a Muslim. I love Muslims. By the way, all true followers of Jesus Christ should deeply and genuinely love all Muslims.

In fact, Muhammad himself relied on Christians when Muslims were being persecuted. Islamic historians and books record that Muhammad trusted his Christian friends in Abyssinia and sent his followers there to be protected by followers of Jesus Christ.

The Qur'an states, "Strongest among men in enmity to the Believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans; and nearest among them in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say, "We are Christians . . ." (Surah 5:82).

It is interesting that the Qur'an mentions the name Jesus more than it does Muhammad. Throughout this book, I'd like to present to you a few important facts about Jesus Christ (*Isa AL-Masih* in the Qur'an) found in both the Qur'an and the Bible.

These undeniable facts will help you to develop an informed opinion about who Jesus really is. My prayer is that you will have an open mind and sincerity in your search for the truth. I also pray that you will ask God to guide you before, during, and after reading this book. The most important thing I encourage you to do is to prayerfully read the verses of Holy Scripture referenced in this book.

THE HEART OF GOD

My dear Muslim friend, God is speaking to me and to you:

"I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11)

Please consider the heart of God toward you. The following passage gives a glimpse of God's love for you and all those who are not secure in the arms of God.

Jesus taught this parable:

What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the

ninety-nine [secure sheep] on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one [lost] sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost. (Matthew 18:12–14)

Jesus wants us to know that God relentlessly pursues us at any time when we are lost.

As a further illustration of God’s heart of love toward you, I would like to share a true story of a wealthy couple. They sat down with a marriage counselor in his office to solve their marital problems. Angrily, the husband said, “I don’t understand my wife’s problem. I gave her a diamond ring for our wedding anniversary, I bought a house in her name, and I gave her money to spend on herself every month.” After he listed everything he gave her, the wife replied, “Yes it is true, Ameer, you have given me everything.” With tears running from her eyes, she continued, “Everything except yourself!”

It is my hope and prayer that through reading this book you will see how God has actually given you the ultimate gift of love—Himself! “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us . . .” (1 John 3:16).

My precious reader, it is not by accident you are reading this book right now. It is a divine appointment designed by the relational God to draw you to know Him because God is passionate in His love towards you.

You owe it to yourself and to God to investigate and see if what the Bible says is true.

Your servant

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sam Tanagho". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Your servant".

Samy Tanagho

SECTION ONE

THE QUR'AN'S TESTIMONY
REGARDING THE
AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE BIBLE

In this book, Islamic beliefs and verses from the Qur'an are addressed to help Muslims and Christians see the common ground and the differences between Islam and Christianity.

While I do not depend on the Qur'an to prove the credibility of the Bible, I find it significant and interesting that throughout its pages, the Qur'an testifies to the authenticity of the Bible. The Jews and the Christians are described in the Qur'an as "the people of the Book." The Jewish Scripture is the Torah; and the Christian Scripture is the Injeel. The Qur'an speaks with reverence and respect of the Torah (Old Testament), Zabur (the Psalms), and the Injeel (Gospel or New Testament). These Holy Scriptures have the status of the authentic Word of God, because they were God's revelation before the Qur'an.

The Torah can mean the "law" or the instruction God gave through Moses. Also, it can be any word God gave through the prophets. The word Torah (or Taurat) and Injeel are found many times in the Bible but are not translated to English as titles. For example, Injeel is translated "good news."

If someone says you should not read the Bible because it was annulled by the arrival of the Qur'an, my dear Muslim friend, there is no evidence to support that claim. Not one single verse in the Qur'an attests that the Bible has been invalidated by the arrival of the Qur'an. Furthermore, the Qur'an itself commands Muslims to profess belief in the Bible. We read in Surah 2:136: "Say ye: 'We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham . . . and that given to Moses and Jesus,

and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them . . .”

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE

Many Muslims mistakenly think and teach that the Qur’an came to replace the Holy Scriptures of the Jews and the Christians (the Bible). There are misconceptions that it became corrupted, altered, outdated, or lost. I will briefly address such allegations and provide you with strong evidence to show the contrary.

The Qur’an confirms the previous Holy Scripture

Many years before the time of Muhammad (by AD 350), there was a uniform canon of the Bible. The Qur’an does not accuse Christians of changing the written words of their Holy Books. On the contrary, the Qur’an declares that it (the Qur’an) was given to confirm the previous revelations and not to replace them. Surah 5:48 says: “To thee [Muhammad] We sent the Scripture [Qur’an] in truth confirming the Scripture that came before it; and guarding it in safety . . .” This confirmation is repeated in many Qur’anic verses (Surah 2:89; 2:91, 97; 2:101; 6:92; and 46:12).

The Qur’an testifies that the Torah, the Zabur, and the Injeel are the Word of God. The testimony of the Qur’an is not ambiguous. Surah 3:3–4 states: “. . . And He [God] sent down the Law (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this as a guide to mankind.”

The Qur’an’s references to the Torah

Regarding the Torah, we read in Surah 5:44: “It was We who revealed the Law (to Moses) therein was guidance and light. By its standard have been judged the Jews, by the prophets who bowed (as in Islam) to Allah’s will.” In this passage, “guidance” refers to conduct, and “light” refers to spiritual in-

sight provided by God. Other verses in the Qur'an that discuss the Torah are as follows:

“. . . We gave Moses the Book, completing (Our favor) to those who would do right, and explaining all things in detail—and a guide and a mercy . . .” (Surah 6:154)

“We [God] gave Moses the Book and followed him up with a succession of Messengers [Jewish prophets] . . .” (Surah 2:87)

Please refer also to Surah 4:54; Surah 28:43; Surah 32:23; Surah 40:53–54; and Surah 45:16.

The Qur'an's references to the Zabur and Injeel

Regarding the Zabur, the Qur'an states in Surah 21:105, “Before this We [God] wrote in the Psalms . . .”

Regarding the Injeel, the Qur'an declares in Surah 5:46 that Christ confirmed the Torah as true and that Christ's Gospel contains guidance, light, and admonition. It reads, “And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the law that had come before him: We sent him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light and confirmation of the law that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah.” Please also read Surah 57:27.

The importance of reading the Gospel

Many Muslims think that it is unnecessary to read the Bible. Their opinion contradicts even the Qur'an itself. The Qur'an states clearly that all Muslims must follow and obey the teachings of the previous Holy Scripture (The Bible). The following Surahs are clear on this subject:

Surah 2:136 states: “Say ye: ‘We believe in Allah and the revelation given to us and to Abraham . . . and that given to Moses and Jesus and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord we make no difference be-

tween one and another of them: and we bow to Allah (in Islam).”

Surah 2:285 states: “The Messenger believeth in what hath been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith. Each one (of them) believeth in Allah, His angels, His books, and His Messengers . . . ‘We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His Messengers.’ And they say: ‘We hear and we obey . . .’”

Surah 4:136 reads: “O ye who believe! Believe in Allah and His Messenger and the scripture which He hath sent to His Messenger and the scripture which He sent to those before (him). Any who denieth Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Day of Judgment hath gone far, far astray.”

My dear Muslim reader, to enjoy a right and complete relationship with God, you must read the Gospel (the New Testament). It will increase your understanding of Jesus Christ (Al-Masih, Isa). It will also help you to understand the Salvation God wants you to experience through faith in Him.

The Qur’an mentions the Glad News of Jesus in Surah 3:45 “Behold! The angel said: ‘O Mary! Allah giveth thee Glad Tidings of a Word from him: His name will be Christ Jesus . . .’”

According to the Qur’an, all Holy Books are Equal

In Surah 2:285 and Surah 4:136 cited above, notice that “His Books” is plural. This means all the Holy Books. In Surah 2:136, please discern the important phrase, “We make no difference between one and another of them.” This is a clear command that Muslims should regard all Holy Books as equal revelation.

As we read in Surah 4:136, if any Muslim ignores or rejects any part of God’s revelation in the Torah or in the Gospel, he has “gone far, far astray.” Also, God would condemn him as an

infidel, as noted in Surah 40:70–72: “Those who reject the Book and the (revelations) with which We sent Our messengers: But soon shall they know—when the yokes (shall be) round their necks, and the chains; They shall be dragged along—In the boiling fetid fluid; Then in the Fire shall They be burned.”

Clearly, the Qur’an commands all people to read and obey God’s revelations in the Bible; this is an essential part of being a Muslim. It is very clear that Muhammad himself considered the Holy Scriptures of the Jews and the Christians to be books that lead people to become fully submitted to God.

The Qur’an also indicates that the Jews and Christians, who lived in Muhammad’s time, rejected the Qur’an. You can read about this in Surah 2:91: “When it is said to them: ‘Believe in what Allah hath sent down,’ they say, ‘We believe in what was sent down to us.’ Yet they reject all besides, even if it be truth confirming what is with them . . .”

It is a fact that Muhammad wanted Arab Christians and Jews to accept him as a prophet in the line of Biblical prophets. The Qur’an also recorded that Jews and Christians rejected Muhammad (Surah 2:120).

The Qur’an considers the Bible Preeminent

Surah 10:94 is a command given to Muhammad (and all Muslims) to treat the Bible as the primary source of enlightenment: “If thou [Muhammad] wert in doubt as to what We have revealed unto thee then ask those who have been reading the Book from before thee . . .” This verse clearly instructs all the Muslim believers to refer to the Bible when questions arise regarding the Qur’an’s meaning. It is clear from this verse that in the event of any doubt about certain revelations in the Qur’an, Muhammad is commanded by God to consult with the Jews and Christians who have been reading their Holy Scriptures. So Surah 10:94 is a command to Muhammad to test the truthfulness of his own message by the contents of the Holy Scriptures

of the Jews and the Christians. This verse clearly shows that the Qur'an does not supersede the Gospel.

If Muhammad had doubt and was commanded to ask, then you, as a Muslim, have the permission—and the obligation—to examine all things. Think about all the information you receive so you can, by God's guidance, determine the whole truth.

My dear friend, the Qur'an does not claim that God sent it to prevent corruption or to replace the Holy Word of God, which is the entire Bible (Torah and the Injeel). On the contrary, the Qur'an confirms Biblical authenticity.

Jesus declared that He did not come to abrogate previous revelations. Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Matthew 5:17). He also said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words never pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

The Qur'an recognizes that the Jews possess the Word of God

There are many passages in the Qur'an that assure us that the Torah was available in an unadulterated form during the time of Muhammad. For example, a dispute had arisen among the Jews in Medina, and it had come to the attention of Muhammad. The Qur'an addresses Muhammad, "But why do they come to thee for decision, when they have (their own) law before them? Therein is the (plain) command of Allah . . ." (Surah 5:43). Notice the expression "before them" in this verse.

It is also clear from Surah 5:43 that it was not necessary for the Jews to go to Muhammad for judgment because they had the Torah, which is the Word of God that contained all the needed guidance and light.

Consider also Surah 2:101 which states, "And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah, confirming what was

with them.” Notice the expression “with them.” These verses clearly teach that the Jews of Medina had the true Torah (Old Testament) in their possession at the time of Muhammad, and it was reliable to settle their own disputes.

Throughout their history, the Jews have known only the Holy Scripture in the Books of the Old Testament. The Qur’an never states that the Torah is a book different from that which the Jews themselves accepted as the Torah.

The Qur’an recognizes that the Christians possess the Word of God

The Qur’an also confirms Biblical authenticity with regard to the New Testament. Surah 5:47 states, “Let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah hath revealed therein. If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) those who rebel.” How could the Christians be expected to judge by the Injeel unless they had it in their possession? The Christian world has known only one Injeel, which existed centuries before Muhammad’s time and continues to exist today. The Qur’an never states that the Gospel is a book different from the one Christians used at the time of Muhammad. And the Qur’an never accuses the Jews and Christians of changing the actual text of the Biblical manuscripts.

Have you noticed my precious Muslim reader what this verse said? “Let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah hath revealed therein . . .” So the Christians, who are the people of the Gospel, should rely on the Gospel. They do not need the Qur’an.

It is clear then—the Qur’an does not supersede the Gospel!

The Qur’an in Surah 5:47 uses the word *Injeel*, which is the same title that the followers of Jesus use. Please refer to Mark 1:1: “The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ . . .”

In fact, Christian Arabs still use the Arabic word *Injeel*, for the Gospel.

Additional references to the Torah and the Gospel

It is important to note that the Qur'an does not claim to give all the teachings of Jesus, nor the whole story of His life. You need to read the New Testament to discover all that Jesus taught.

The Qur'an confirms its support of the Torah and the Gospel and urges the Jews and the Christians to recognize the authority of their Holy Book. It says in Surah 5:68, "Say: 'O People of the Book! Ye have no ground to stand upon unless ye stand fast by the Law, the Gospel, and all the revelation that has come to you from your Lord . . .'"

This verse is another clear example showing that the Jews and Christians had the Word of God in their possession prior to the writing of the Qur'an. Since Jews and Christians are commanded to observe the precepts contained in their Scripture, it would have been impossible for them to know the commandments they must obey if their Book had perished. Or if the Bible had been previously corrupted, they would have gone astray if they obeyed it.

There is no indication in the Qur'an whatsoever that the Holy Scriptures the Jews and Christians had in their possession were anything other than the original Holy Books God had revealed to them.

Surah 5:68, which we just read, is another clear example that Islam, as recorded in the Qur'an, did not and should not abrogate the Christian faith which preceded it. On the contrary, the Qur'an commands all Jewish and Christian believers to follow their Holy Scriptures.

Because the Qur'an testifies that the Holy Scriptures of the Jews and Christians is the word of God, the Muslim should

submit to the authority of the Qur'an on this point. The Muslim should look no further. If the words of Muslim teachers or even Traditions (Hadith)¹ contradict what the Qur'an states, the true Muslim should follow the Qur'an because the Qur'an is much higher in authority according to Islamic law and beliefs.

Early Muslim scholars uphold Bible integrity

For hundreds of years after the death of Muhammad, many of the well-known Muslim scholars upheld the integrity of the Bible. At Tabari was a former Christian whose life was marked by his defense of Islam in front of the Jews and the Christians while he was at Baghdad (capital of the Muslim world in his time). He wrote under the direction of the reigning Abbasid Caliph Mutawakkil (AD 847–861). At no time did he charge the Jews or the Christians with corrupting their Scriptures. He acknowledged that the authentic Torah and Gospel remained in the hands of the Jews and the Christians. In his famous book, *The Book of Religion and Empire*, he wrote, “As to the Gospel which is in the hands of the Christians, the greater part of it is the history of the Christ, His birth and His life.”

Another scholar, Al-Ghazzali (AD 1058–1111), is considered one of the greatest Muslim theologians in the history of Islam. In his writings he never challenged the Bible's integrity. He even wrote treatises on the Trinity in which he quoted many passages from the Bible, without questioning the trustworthiness of the text.²

At Tabari, one of the earliest authoritative commentators on the Qur'an, comments on Surah 5:68. He noted that Ibn Abbas, one of Muhammad's companions, said that some Jews wanted to know if Muhammad believed the Torah. And so they asked Muhammad,

“Oh Muhammad, do you not claim that you walk in the steps of Abraham's Community and religion, and do

you not believe in The Torah which we have and confess that it is God's truth?"

The messenger [Muhammad] said, "Of course I do but you have read into the Scripture things that are not there and you have rejected God's Covenant with you. You have concealed what you had been commanded to make known to the people. Therefore, I disown your innovations."

They replied, "We abide by what is in our hands {The Torah}; we follow the truth and the guidance and we do not believe in you nor do we follow you."³

Here we see that Muhammad admits that the Torah is God's truth, but accuses the Jews of concealing its teaching.

Many traditions (Ahadith) record that when Muhammad was asked to judge on some disputes, he asked for the Torah to be read aloud to him. These traditions are further evidence that Muhammad considered the Torah to be holy and uncorrupted.

For example, I read in the most acknowledged biography on Muhammad's life, by Ibn Hisham, a story about a man and a woman who were caught in adultery. In that story, the people asked Muhammad to be the judge. Muhammad asked a rabbi to read the passage about adultery.

As the rabbi read from the Torah, Abdullah B. Salam struck the rabbi's hand saying, "This, oh prophet of God, is the verse of stoning which he refuses to read to you." Muhammad then said, "Woe to you Jews! What has induced you to abandon the judgment of God which you hold in your hands?"⁴