

Bible and its different versions

By Khurshid Imam

A. Introduction

The followers of Jesus Christ are Muslims. Those who claim to follow the bible are called Christians. The current teaching of Christianity is mainly teachings of St. Paul and the church. Many teachings of today's Christianity contradict the bible. The moment you hear about Christianity you think about bible. Our Christian brethren use bible extensively for propagating Christianity. One can find them in urban area as well as in remote rural areas propagating Christianity through bible.

So, one need to have fairly good idea about the bible for the purpose of dawah. In this article I will give brief idea about bible; its authenticity and different versions. It is difficult to do full justice over this topic in such a brief, because the corruption in the bible is so much that it requires much lengthy write up – I will try to do my best inshallah.

B. Different types of Bible: mockery of God's word

1. Different versions of Bible

The Bible comes in many versions. Some common ones are the King James Version, the Revised Standard Version, the New International Version, the American Standard, the Catholic (Douay) and the Good News Bible etc. If the Bible is indeed the word of God, then we need to ask, "which version is from God?" The different versions of the Bible are not merely different translations. They add and take out what other "versions" contain.

2. Difference between Kings James version and Revised standard version

KJV was written in 1611 and was most famous. The most common among the Bibles in the world is the King James Version and its many major revisions. It was first published in 1611. It is the only Bible that has been translated in over fifteen hundred different languages of the world. The King James Version (KJV) has 66 books bound together within its covers. Compare this to the Roman Catholic Version (Douay) of the Bible which has 73 books bound within its covers. Seven whole books have been removed from the King James (a Protestant version of the Bible) that the Douay Version includes. Protestants have expunged these books from their Bible, calling them "Apocrypha" or "weak" in authority.

There are about 24000 manuscripts of the New Testament in the Greek that are termed "original". However, the fact is that these "originals" are themselves copies of documents

that have now been lost. Also, no two of these 24000 "originals" are identical. They are not even self-consistent. To substantiate this claim, one need not be a scholar of the history of the Bible. Any modern version of the New Testament has footnotes that clearly state after most statements, "*Other ancient manuscripts add*" or "*Other ancient manuscripts delete*" or "*Other ancient manuscripts insert*" Which manuscript out of these is from God and who did the additions and deletions?

Defects in the bible

The Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible first appeared in 1952. The editors claimed in the preface that it went to the "most ancient manuscripts" of the Bible. By "most ancient" they mean those that date 200 to 300 years after Jesus. "Ancient" manuscripts on the other hand, on which the King James Version was based, date 400 to 600 years after Jesus. All scholars agree that none of the originals of any of the manuscripts exist. All we have are "most ancient" and "ancient" copies.

The preface to the RSV says that it was produced by thirty two scholars of "the highest eminence", backed by "fifty cooperating denominations (of Christianity)." Historically, since the RSV goes back to the "most ancient" manuscripts it is more accurate than the KJV. About halfway down the preface of the RSV, on page one, these fifty-two scholars unanimously declare:

The King James Version has grave defects and that these defects are so many and so serious as to call for a revision (1952:1)

The Grave Defect: Trinity

A look at the New Testament section of the RSV, we see that the only "proof" from the Bible that the Christian fundamentalists had of the concept of the Trinity has been removed. The "most-ancient" manuscripts never had this passage (1st Epistle of John 5:7). However, as Christianity got Romanized and moved away from pure monotheism, the elite who possessed authority on what becomes doctrine shoved this statement in:

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (New Testament, 1John 5:7)

Not only the RSV but also all modern versions of the Bible do not contain this statement anymore. It has been unceremoniously thrown out. By doing this the scholars are not only bringing Christianity closer to Islam, they are confirming the part of the Koran that says:

"And do not say Trinity, desist from this, it will be better for you, for God is one God (Waahid in Arabic)." (Koran 4:171)

The Grave Defect: Jesus as begotten son

Another thing that we notice in the RSV, that goes to the "most-ancient" manuscripts is that the word "begotten" in the famous verse in John (3:16) has been taken out. John 3:16, in the King James Version (KJV) reads:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son"(New Testament, John 3:16)

By removing the word "begotten" from this verse, the scholars of Christianity are once again coming closer to Islam. The Koran states that God doesn't adopt or beget sons or daughters. The concept of "son" and an uncreated, eternal "God" are mutually exclusive, logically speaking. God represents one who received life from no one, while son signifies one who got existence from another source. In the literal sense of the word, no one can claim to be God and son at the same time.

In the language of the Jews however, the word "son" has a metaphoric meaning as well. Thus, the term "son of God" is used in the Bible, both Old and New Testaments to signify good, righteous people. Jesus himself is quoted as saying, "Blessed are the peace-makers for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9). The word that was causing difference in John 3:16 was the word "begotten". The scholars "of the highest eminence" are informing us that this was an interpolation, a later addition to the text of the statement.

"In their relentless search for "the historical Jesus," various Biblical Scholars argue that the Gospel stories of the empty tomb and Jesus' post-resurrection appearances are fictions devised long after his death to justify claims of his divinity." (Rethinking the Resurrection, Newsweek. April 8 1996, page 42)

"While believers through the ages have echoed Peter's faith-filled declaration, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," some modern scholars say that historical evidence reveals a much different portrait of Jesus than the one in Christian creeds." (In search of Jesus, U.S.News & World Report, April 8 1996, page 47)

The Grave Defect: resurrection of Jesus

In the 1952 version of the RSV, the first eleven verses of the 8th chapter of the Gospel of John have been removed. The chapter now begins at verse 12. The scholars explained that these eleven verses were interpolations, later additions to the manuscript of John. As a result, they are now in the footnote and not the text of the 1952 RSV. Also taken out are the only two references in the gospels to the ascension of Jesus (Mark 16:19 and Luke 24:51). They are taken out as interpolations as well.

In 1971 they revised the RSV, and this time due to pressure from certain denominations, they added back the eleven verses of the 8th chapter of John that were taken out. This "game" of adding and taking out has been going on for centuries. The construction of "God's word" has also been a prosperous industry.

It is precisely for this reason that the Koran warns us:

Woe unto those who write the book with their own hands and then say, "This is from God," that they may trade it for some miserable gain. Woe to them for what their hands do write and woe to them for what they earn with it." (Koran 2:79)

3. Writing own obituary?

According to the doctrine of most Christian denominations, the first five books of the Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy were "written" by Moses and are called the "Books of Moses". However, scholars don't attribute any of these books to Moses at all.

Internal evidence in these books makes it clear that Moses could not have written these words. In the 34th chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy, we read:

"So Moses the servant of the lord died and He (i.e. God) buried Him and there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses." (Deuteronomy 34:5-10)

Moses could not have written these words, written in the past tense, after he died! Also the word "since" in the verse clearly shows that whoever is writing this lived long after Moses had died. All through these five books, the structure of the sentence as well as the "third-person" reference to Moses and to God shows that neither God nor Moses wrote these words. Sentences, repeated hundreds of times, "God said unto Moses and Moses said unto the Lord," in these five books, clearly shows that a third person, someone other than God / Moses is writing these words.

Also, consider these words in the Book of Numbers, thought to have been written by Moses:

Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." (Numbers 12:3)

The meekest man on the face of the earth would never say that he was meek. Moreover, the meek man does not appear to be very meek in the judgments that he gives in the same book of the Bible:

"And Moses was wroth...And Moses said unto them, "Have ye saved all the women alive? ... Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman, ... But all the women children ... keep alive for yourselves." Num.31: 14-18

2. Ezekiel chapter 23 – pornography: This chapter of bible fits in the category of pornography as it's full of obscene words.