

# PAUL, JESUS, & CHRISTIANITY

Samuel Green

Engaging  
with  
**Islam**

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations in this booklet are from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

*Paul, Jesus, and Christianity*

Copyright © Samuel Green 2016. This booklet may be reproduced on the condition that it is done so with no additions or subtractions, and not for the purpose of being sold.



Download a printable version of this and other booklets at [engagingwithislam.org/evangelistic-resources/](http://engagingwithislam.org/evangelistic-resources/)

[engagingwithislam.org](http://engagingwithislam.org)

March, 2019

## PAUL AND ISLAM

Every knowledgeable Christian concedes that the real founder of Christianity is St. Paul and not Jesus Christ (peace be upon him). In any event, if there is any division between a Muslim and a Christian on the grounds of dogma, belief, ethics or morality, then the cause of such conflict could be traced to an utterance of Paul found in his books ... in the Bible. (Ahmed Deedat, *Crucifixion or Cruci-Fiction?*, ch. 1, pp. 1-2)

This view expressed by Ahmed Deedat is common in the Muslim community. Muslims are taught that modern Christianity is not based on Jesus but on the teachings of the apostle Paul; and that the reason why Christian and Muslims disagree is because of Paul. Is this true? Is Christianity based on Paul and not Jesus? Do Christians and Muslims disagree because of Paul? In this booklet I will examine these questions.

## PAUL AND THE BIBLE

The first point to understand is that the writings of Paul are approximately 6% of the Bible - only 6%.

The Bible is not one book but a collection of many books from different prophets, from different locations, in different languages, over about a 1500 year period. It contains the Law of Moses (Torah), the Psalms of David, the books of Solomon, the books of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Job, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and others. It has the Gospel of Jesus recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the writings of the apostles of Jesus.

<b>THE BIBLE</b>			
Law of Moses (Torah)	The Books of the Prophets	The Psalms (Zabur)	The Gospel (Ingeel)
<----- c. 1500 years ----->			

Why do Christians have all these books in the Bible? The answer is simple: Christians accept all the prophets and make no distinction between them,

therefore, they have all these books in the Bible so they can read them. What Christians believe about God comes from reading all these books and not from one man. That is, Christians do not just learn from Paul but all of the prophets, and what they believe about God comes from reading the prophets and not just Paul.

At this point Islam is very different to Christianity because the Qur'an only contains what Muhammad recited and no one else. Islam *is* based on one man, Muhammad, but Christianity is based on all of the prophets.

## **PAUL AND THE PROPHETS#1**

The apostle Paul commands Christians to read all the prophets. Paul wrote:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16)

Therefore, Paul does not turn people away from the earlier prophets to follow him, instead he commands Christians to read all the prophets, and this is what Christians have always done. Again, Christianity and Islam are very different at this point because Muslims are not encouraged to read all the prophets.

## **PAUL AND THE PROPHETS#2**

What the apostle Paul taught agrees with earlier prophets.

	<b>Torah</b>	<b>Prophets</b>	<b>Psalms</b>	<b>Jesus</b>	<b>Paul</b>
One God	Gen 1:1	Is 45:5	Ps 96:5	Mark 12:29	1 Tim 2:5
God created humanity in his image.	Gen 1:26-27	Dan 7:13-14, 10:4-6, Ez 1:25-28, 43:1-3	Ps 8, 82	John 10:29-39, 14:8-9	1 Cor 11:7, Col 1:15-20

The Fatherhood & Son of God	Ex 4:22-23, Deut 4:1, 32:6	2 Sam 7, 1 Chron 17:13, Is 45:11, 63:16, 64:8, Jer 31:9, Hos 11:1, Mal 2:10	Ps 2, 80:15, 82:6	Mat 6:9, 26:63-64	Rom 1:1-7
God dwells and fellowships with his people.	Gen 3:8, 4:14, Ex 25:9, 29:45-46	Ez 10, 48:35, Zec 2:10-13, 8:3	Ps 46, 76:2	John 1:14, 2:20-21	Eph 2:22
God accepts a sacrifice for sin.	Lev 16, 17:11	2 Chron 29:20-24, Job 1:5, 42:7ff, Is 53, Ez 16:63	Ps 51:19	Mat 26:27-28	Rom 3:25

As you can see the prophets build on each other and they are meant to be read together. The apostle Paul taught part of this message of the prophets.

If Christians and Muslims believe different things it is because Christians read all of the prophets while Muslims just follow one man, Muhammad.

### **DID PAUL CHANGE THE MESSAGE OF JESUS?**

It is also common for Muslim leaders to say that Jesus only came for the nation of Israel to reaffirm the Law of Moses (Torah) and that it was Paul who changed this teaching of Jesus. For example Bilal Philips wrote:

Jesus stressed to his followers that his mission did not cancel the laws received by Prophet Moses. As the prophets who came after Moses maintained the law, so did Jesus. ... However, Paul, who claimed to be a disciple of Jesus, systematically cancelled the laws. (Bilal Philips, *The True Message of Jesus*, Rabwah: IPC, 2007, pp. 73-74)

This view is wrong for the following reasons:

Firstly, as we saw in the previous table, the apostle Paul taught the same message as the prophets and Jesus, so there is no evidence that Paul taught a different message to Jesus.

Secondly, when Muslim leaders say that Jesus only came to reaffirm the Law of Moses (Torah) they are denying the Qur'an. The Qur'an is perfectly clear that Jesus brought a new revelation in addition to the Torah called the *Gospel*.

And We sent ... Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming that which came before him in the Torah; and We gave him the Gospel, in which was guidance and light and confirming that which preceded it of the Torah ... (Qur'an 5:46, Saheeh In.)

And this Gospel, while confirming the Torah, is *different* from the Torah.

And [I (Jesus) have come] confirming what was before me of the Torah and to make lawful for you some of what was forbidden to you. (Qur'an 3:50, Saheeh In.)

That is, the Gospel brings a change and makes some forbidden things now lawful. This change is because Jesus *fulfills* the Torah and Prophets. Jesus said:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law (Torah) or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. (Matthew 5:17)

Jesus fulfills the Torah and the Prophets. This is why the Gospel brings a change and it is Jesus who brought this change not Paul.

## **JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES**

Jesus had many disciples and from these he chose apostles. The word 'apostle' means one who is sent. These apostles were Jesus authorized witnesses and spokesmen. At first there were twelve apostles but over time Jesus appointed more (Rom. 16:7, 1 Cor. 15:6-9).

At first Paul was hostile to Jesus but God opened Paul's heart and Jesus called him to be his apostle.

For I (Paul) am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (1 Corinthians 9:1)

Paul did not take this honour upon himself. It was Jesus who came to Paul (Acts 9, 1 Cor. 9:1) and appointed him to be an apostle.

The apostles of Jesus took the Gospel to all the nations of the world, and so at the time of Muhammad there were Greek, Roman, Syrian, Arab, Egyptian, Persian, and Abyssinians Christians living around Muhammad. The Qur'an calls them the 'people of the Gospel' (Q. 5:47).

The work of an apostle is very hard. Like many apostles and prophets before him the apostle Paul is misrepresented and quoted out of context. You should not believe those who do this.

## **A BEAUTIFUL READING FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL**

Here is a beautiful reading from the Apostle Paul.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. (1 Corinthian 13:1-8)

It is the Gospel that teaches us this kind of love.

## **A PRAYER FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL**

Here is a beautiful prayer from the Apostle Paul.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day (return) of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11)

Pray this prayer for yourself.

## **CONCLUSION**

Muslim leaders often misrepresent Christianity. Christianity is not based on Paul but upon all of the prophets, and Christians invite you to read all of the prophets too.