

Who is God, Yahweh or Allah?

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The Purpose of this Book

Who is the one true, living God?

That is the central question of this book. Many people are confused and do not know who the true, living God is.

A great number of people believe that Yahweh (sometimes spelled *Jahweh*, the Hebrew name for the God of the Bible) and Allah, the God of the Qur'an and Islam, are the same being, and therefore regard both as the one true God. But can they truly be the same being—known by two different names, worshipped by two different religious communities, each with entirely different beliefs and practices?

If they are indeed the same being, then this is good, and both may rightly be worshipped as such. But if they are not the same being, then at least one of them must be a false god and should not be worshipped.

One way to determine whether Yahweh and Allah are in fact the same being is to examine the sacred texts of these religions and identify the moral attributes of each and then compare them. If their moral attributes are identical, it becomes possible — and reasonable — to acknowledge that they are indeed the same being, and therefore the same God. This is the focus of this book.

Drawing from the Bible, the Qur'an, and the Hadith (more on these important Islamic writings later), the moral attributes of Yahweh and Allah are identified and compared. This should provide a clear answer to the question of whether they are truly the same being. If it becomes evident that they are not the same God, it should also become clear who the true God is.

In this study, numerous quotations from the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the Bible have been used. These citations are more than sufficient to establish—beyond any reasonable doubt—the character and moral attributes of the two beings under discussion: the God of the Bible and Allah of Islam

The purpose of this book is to help the honest seeker of truth to gain a clear understanding of the character and attributes of Yahweh, the God of the Bible, and Allah, the God of the Qur'an, so that he or she may be able to make an informed decision on the matter.

Author

1. Who is God?

This study seeks to establish, beyond all doubt, who the true God is. Is it Yahweh, or is it Allah—or could it perhaps be both?

The two largest religions in the world are Christianity—of which the majority are Roman Catholic—and Islam. Yahweh is the God of Christians, and they acknowledge and worship Him as God. Muslims (Islam) worship Allah and regard him as the one true God. Islam does not recognise the Christian God as Yahweh. Instead, Muslims claim that the God of Islam and the God worshipped by Christians are the same God, and that His name is Allah. There are even many Christians who believe that Yahweh and Allah are the same God, and that these two faith communities essentially worship the same divine being.

It is therefore extremely important to determine whether these two beings are indeed the same person or deity. If they are not the same God, one must conclude that at least one of them is not the true God and is therefore a false god.

When one looks at creation, the benevolent love of the true Creator-God becomes visible. The God who created the universe, the world, and everything in it cannot be anything other than a God of love. When one considers the harmony of the earth in relation to the cosmos—the beauty, artistry, and delicate intricacy of what has been made: the universe, the earth, plants, animals, and humanity—one can see love reflected in it. Every creative person cares about his or her successful creations and feels pride and protectiveness toward them. How much more, then, should one expect a Creator-God to desire the well-being of His creation, and especially of humanity. Yet it can go well with God's creature, the human being, only as long as he acknowledges and honours his God and remains in a relationship of love with Him. This must, however, be done freely and not under compulsion, otherwise it becomes not only meaningless but also loveless.

The fact that human beings possess free will is itself evidence of the Creator's love. How loving would it be to create people who function mechanically or instinctively, like robots? Humans would not be able to perform good deeds or be obedient. Neither would they be able to commit evil or be disobedient. No meaningful relationship between the Creator and the people in His creation would be possible if humans lacked the ability to make decisions and choices.

If the true God were not a God of love, He could have created humans without the ability to choose freely. In that case, laws and commands would not have been necessary, for they would not have been capable of doing wrong. Alternatively, He could have created them with free will but then forced them violently to obey His commands and serve Him. This would be even more loveless. How just would it be for a God to create humans with free will and then compel them by force to serve Him?

It is therefore assumed—and this is the foundational premise of this study—that the primary moral attribute of the true God is love. Specifically, a benevolent, caring love, not a sentimental or emotional softness. Also that the love of a true Creator-God shall first and foremost be a benevolence, a caring concern, because it is directed toward the well-being of His creation.

One would expect that a true God, who is by nature loving, would give laws (that which He commands humanity to do) that amount to love and benevolence, or at the very least insist on loving actions toward fellow human beings as well as toward Himself. Such a disposition would be good and beneficial for others and would not pose a threat to anyone. A God of love would also be just. Love does not permit injustice. Therefore loveless behaviour ought to be punishable, and one may expect a God of love to punish such conduct.

These two beings—Yahweh of the Bible and Allah of the Qur'an—are introduced through their respective books. Yahweh is revealed through the Bible, and Allah through the Qur'an and, to a large extent, through the Hadith (the Hadith is explained in Chapter 2). Through these revelations, their character and attributes become clear. For the purposes of this study, the focus falls primarily on their moral attributes. If they are indeed the same God, they must at least share the same moral attributes. These moral attributes are clearly described in their respective books. The quotations used here leave no doubt about the character and nature of the moral attributes of these two beings.

This study will therefore examine the two religions, Islam and Christianity, in depth. It will consider what their holy books teach and the kind of lives their followers live as a result. The study is not concerned with people's opinions about the religions, **but with how the moral lives and actions of their followers are shaped by what they are taught in their respective sacred texts.**

If, in the process, anything is said that causes offense, the reader is asked to believe that this is not the intention. The intention is simply to adhere to the truth, and it is unfortunately the case that truth sometimes hurts. Great care has been taken to present quotations faithfully, without bias, and in context. If the reader perseveres, he or she will come to see that the motive behind this book is love, and a sincere effort to seek and reveal the truth.

The reader is therefore invited to read it to the end, and, if necessary, verify the accuracy of the quotations from the sources, and then decide what he or she considers credible. It is unfortunately true that, just as not all Christians are fully aware of what the Bible teaches, there are likely also Muslims who are not fully aware of everything taught in the Qur'an and the Hadith. For this reason, some quotations from these books may come as a surprise to some readers, both Christian and Muslim.

For the sake of those who may not be familiar with Islam, a brief overview of Islam follows.

2. More about Islam

This is not an exhaustive study of Islam as a religion. However, if one wishes to understand the moral attributes of the God of Islam, one needs at least a basic knowledge of Islam, its origins, and how one can determine with reasonable certainty what Islam teaches about morality and how those teachings are to be applied.

Islam is a religion that originated on the Arabian Peninsula (modern-day Saudi Arabia) at the beginning of the seventh century AD. The Arabic word *Islam* means “submission” or “surrender.” In the context of Islam, it refers to total submission—to by all people—to the God of Islam. A person who follows the religion of Islam and who is fully submitted to Allah is called a **Muslim**.

Allah is the God of Islam and, according to Muslims, the only true God, and is worshipped as such. The word *Allah* means “the God” or “the only true God worthy of worship.” The name Allah was already known in the pre-Islamic period as the name of a deity worshipped by various Arab groups. According to Morey (1992:217), archaeological findings suggest that Allah was the name of the moon god who was worshipped as the chief deity in the *Ka’aba* in Mecca. Mecca is Islam’s holiest city, which all Muslims must visit at least once in their lifetime to worship at the *Ka’aba*. This obligatory pilgrimage to Mecca is called the *Hajj*.

Muhammad is the founder of Islam and lived from 571(570)–632 AD (sources differ on the exact year of his birth). Islam regards him as the last prophet and final messenger of their god (Allah). Muhammad claims this in the Qur’an. He refers to himself, among other things, as “honoured apostle” in Sura 69:40.

He received his first revelation in 610 AD in the form of a vision while in a trance-like state. At first he feared for his life and was unsure of the origin of the vision. His first wife, Khadija, comforted him and treated him for shock. She sought advice from her cousin, Waraqa-b-Naufal, who was the first person to interpret Muhammad’s experience as a genuine prophetic revelation. Khadija and her cousin convinced him that the revelation he had received came from the archangel of God, who had previously appeared to Moses. According to tradition, Muhammad then attempted to commit suicide, but the angel Gabriel appeared to him and assured him that he was the Apostle of Allah. Over the next 22 years, until his death in 632 AD, he continued to receive revelations in various ways. These revelations, remembered, transmitted orally, and later written down on various materials, were eventually compiled to form the Qur’an (see below).

Some of Muhammad’s contemporaries claimed that he was insane or possessed. This likely stemmed from the fact that he frequently entered trance states. The many denials in the Qur’an that Muhammad was insane or possessed also suggest that such suspicions existed in certain circles.

Sura 52:29: *"By the grace of Allah thou art neither soothsayer nor madman."* (Pickthall, 1997:381) *"... nor are you one possessed"* (Ali 2000:484) (see also Sura 37:35–36; 44:14; 51:52; 68:2 & 51; 81:22).

The **Qur'an** is the primary book through which Islam is presented. It consists of visions or revelations received by Muhammad, the founder and prophet of Islam, while in states of ecstasy or trance. The Qur'an was compiled from these revelations, which were remembered and orally transmitted by his followers. They were later written down on various materials, including pieces of leather, leaves, stone tablets, and even bones. Only after Muhammad's death were these written fragments collected and, around 650 AD, compiled into book form to create the Qur'an. Although there is no complete consensus among Muslims regarding its compilation, completeness, or content, most Muslims believe that the Qur'an was given word-for-word by Allah through the angel Gabriel to Muhammad.

The Qur'an consists of 114 chapters and is written in Arabic. Some Muslims do not accept any translations; therefore, translations are often referred to as "the meanings of..." (see the bibliography). In English and Arabic, the chapters are called *Surah* or *Sura*, meaning "step" or "degree." Throughout this study, references to the Qur'an will follow the format Sura: chapter and verse (for example, Sura 5:20 or 24:45).

In Islam, the Qur'an is regarded as the final revelation of Allah, the God of Islam. It is taken extremely seriously, and all commands within it are considered direct instructions from Allah through Muhammad and must be obeyed.

The **Hadith** is, after the Qur'an, the most important body of writings on which Islam is based. It consists of collections written by various individuals who lived close to the time of Muhammad. These collections contain sayings attributed to him, as well as descriptions of his habits and practices. These are things a Muslim is obligated to follow. From these collections (the Hadith), the *Sunnah* or *Sunna* is derived. *Sunna* refers to what a Muslim must follow and therefore also functions as "law." The literal meaning of *sunna* is "path" or "way," in contrast to *Shariah* or *Shariat*, which means the religious law of Islam.

The most authoritative collection of the Hadith, accepted by approximately 90% of Muslims worldwide, is *Sahih Al-Bukhari*. The English translation by Dr. Muhammad Mushin Khan is titled *The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhari*, published by Khitab Bhavan, New Delhi, 1987.

Sunna is defined by *Al-Bukhari* (Khan, 1987 Vol. 1 p. Lxxxi) as:

"All the traditions and practices of the Prophet that have become as models to be followed by the Muslims."

There is another, less authoritative, version of the Hadith that will occasionally be referenced here. It is titled *Al-Hadis, an English Translation and Commentary of MISHKAT-UL-MASABIH*, published by Islamic Book Service, New Delhi 1998, compiled by Al-Haj Maulana Fazlul Karim. References to and quotations from this version can

help provide a clearer understanding of the world of Islam. His quotations correspond in essence to *Al-Bukhari's* explanation above:

Karim, 1998 Vol. 1 p.154: *"The ... Quran and the Hadis of the Holy Prophet shall be the foremost books in guiding the life of a true Muslim."*

Karim, 1998 Vol. 3 p.122: *"Hence the observation of the rules of the Quran and Hadis is compulsory for preservation of the soul from fire and for its continued progress."*

The Hadith supports what is taught in the Qur'an. It is the guideline by which every Muslim is obligated to live—the path they must follow. What Muhammad said and did must be followed by every Muslim whenever necessary.

The Islamic faith rests on five principles, known as the **Five Pillars of Islam**. According to *Al-Bukhari* (Khan, 1987 Vol. 1 p.17), these principles are as follows:

- To confess that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and that Muhammad is Allah's messenger.
- To perform the five obligatory daily prayers faithfully and correctly.
- To pay the Zakat, which is obligatory almsgiving.
- To undertake the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).
- To observe the fast during the month of Ramadan.

There are specific prescriptions for the observance and meaning of each of these principles (pillars). These will not be discussed in this book. It is sufficient to note that every Muslim is expected to adhere faithfully to the requirements associated with them.

How does the average non-Muslim experience Muslims in general?

3. Non-Muslims' Impression of Muslims

For the average non-Muslim, Islam often appears mysterious. In countries where Muslims are a minority, they generally live peacefully. They are usually experienced as courteous, friendly, and helpful people. In Western nations, however, interaction between non-Muslims and Muslims is mostly limited to business settings, where the non-Muslim is the customer and the Muslim the business owner. Muslims are also frequently perceived as a close-knit community in which friendships with non-Muslims and meaningful social interaction are relatively rare.

Despite numerous acts of terrorism around the world in which Muslims have been involved, Muslim leaders repeatedly assure the public that Islam is, in fact, a peaceful religion. At times they even condemn certain acts of terrorism and express sympathy for those who have suffered. This often reassures the average non-Muslim and leaves them with a more positive impression of Islam. Nevertheless, there remains a significant amount of violence carried out by individuals who identify as Muslims across the world.

A few examples include: the destruction of the World Trade Center buildings in New York on 11 September 2001, where thousands of innocent civilians were killed; the violent killing and torture of more than a thousand civilians in Israel on 7 October 2023; and the attacks carried out by groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis—supported by the regime in Iran—against Israel and Jewish communities worldwide, in an openly declared effort to destroy Israel completely. Many European countries, as well as the United States, have also seen increasing incidents of violence involving individuals who identify as Muslim. From the reactions of certain Muslim leaders, one sometimes gets the impression that these acts are not regarded as terrorism but rather as legitimate acts of war. How thousands of unsuspecting, unarmed civilians going about their daily lives can be considered “enemies” who deserve to be killed as an act of war is not at all clear to thoughtful non-Muslims.

Many more examples could be listed, but it is unnecessary. Anyone who follows global events knows that these examples are only the tip of the iceberg. With the situation in the Middle East (2026), it is difficult to understand how some people still believe that Islam is peaceful. The same applies to the problems of violence and other crimes involving illegal immigrants—many of whom are Muslim—in numerous Western countries. Sadly, there are also thousands of non-Muslims who, out of ignorance or deliberate intent, excuse or justify violence committed by Muslims.

The scale of violence in the world involving Muslims is unmistakably evident. Only those who are completely uninformed about global events—or who refuse to acknowledge them—continue to believe that Islam is peaceful and non-violent. This uncertainty exists even among Muslims themselves, many of whom are not fully aware of what their sacred texts teach. People whose faith is built on what they hear in mosques, from religious leaders, and within their communities are often unsure.

On the other hand, Muslims also struggle at times to make sense of the behaviour of non-Muslims, especially Westerners, whom they generally regard as Christians. In the name of Christianity, Muslims were killed during the Crusades. Muslims living in Western countries also see daily how people who identify as Christians—and who claim that Jesus bore the punishment for their sins—commit serious sins such as sexual immorality, substance abuse, violence, and more. Understandably, this does not make sense to them: how can someone deliberately continue in sin while claiming that Jesus paid the price for that sin?

Not everyone who is regarded as a Christian, or who passes as one, is necessarily a true Christian-believer. Many of these individuals do not know the God of the Bible and do not live in wholehearted surrender to Him, as true Christians should. This is not an attempt to make excuses; it is simply fact, and it is good for Muslims to be aware of it. What can be said is that the more devoted a person is to the God of the Bible, and the more fully he or she lives in surrender to Him, the more loving that person becomes. The God of the Bible is love, and this will be demonstrated from Scripture. Anyone who promotes or justifies violence, hatred, or immorality cannot be a true Christian, even if they claim to be one.

The question that must be answered is: **Is Allah a God of love?** We will therefore examine the Qur'an and Hadith to see what Allah and his prophet Muhammad teach about love, violence, war, sin, forgiveness, punishment, and related matters, and how these teachings shape the lives of Muslims. On that basis, we can determine whether Allah is a God of love. We will then compare these findings with the statements made by Yahweh, the God of the Bible. It should then become clear whether Yahweh, the God of the Bible, and Allah, the God of the Qur'an, are the same being—and if not, which one is truly God.

So, what is the nature of Allah's love for human beings?

4. The Love of Allah, the God of Islam

What would the nature of Allah's love for human beings be? Are all his commands characterized by love for all people, regardless of who they are?

According to the Qur'an, Allah's love appears to be selective and therefore not universal. Allah's love must be earned. The following quotations from the Qur'an indicate who qualifies for Allah's love—and who does not:

Sura 2:190: *"for Allah loves not transgressors."* (Ali, 2000:24)

Sura 4:107: *"And plead not on behalf of (people) who deceive themselves. Lo! Allah loveth not one who is treacherous and sinful."* (Pickthall, 1997:65)

Sura 7:55: *"Lo! He (Allah) loveth not the transgressors."* (Pickthall, 1997:106)

Sura 8:55: *"For the worst of beasts in the sight of Allah are those who reject Him"*

Other translations of Sura 8:55: *"For the worst of all living creatures in the sight of Allah are those who reject Him – they will not believe."* (Ali 2000:146). Pickthall (1997:124) translates Sura 8:55 as: *"Lo! The worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the ungrateful who will not believe."*

But who does qualify for Allah's love?

Sura 2:195: *"For Allah loves those who do good."* (Ali, 2000:25)

Sura 5:13: *"for Allah loves those who are kind."*

Sura 2:222: *"Truly, Allah loveth those who turn to Him, and loveth those who have a care for cleanness."* (Pickthall, 1997:25)

Sura 3:31: *"If you do love Allah, follow me (Mohammed): Allah will (then) love you and forgive you your sins."* (Ali, 2000:42)

It is clear from these quotations that only those who deserve it may count on Allah's love. Yet it remains uncertain whether one is an offender, because sin is not clearly defined in the Qur'an. Likewise, one does not always know what constitutes good deeds, apart from certain actions specifically described in the Qur'an. Nor does one know whether one's deeds are good enough. Allah will decide. Some of the "good deeds" that must be performed according to Allah's commands in the Qur'an, to be worthy of his love, will be discussed later.

When Allah strictly forbids friendship with non-Muslims, it is also evident that he does not love all people, but only those who meet his conditions.

Sura 3:28: *"Let not the believers Take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers:"*

Sura 5:51: *"O ye who believe! Take not Jews and Christians for friends. They are friends to one another. He among you who taketh them for friends is (one) of them. Lo! Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk."* (Pickthall, 1997:79).

Allah is serious about enmity toward non-Muslims. Anyone who dares to violate this command faces severe consequences. The following is not merely a recommendation but a command, and disobedience is punishable:

Sura 4:138–139: *"Bear unto the hypocrites the tidings that for them there is a painful doom. Those who choose disbelievers (non-Muslims) for their friends"* (Pickthall, 1997:68).

Sura 18:102: *"Do the disbelievers reckon that they can choose my bondsmen as protecting friends ...? We have prepared hell as a welcome for the disbelievers."*(Pickthall, 1997:208)

If a "painful punishment" awaits Muslims who take non-Muslims as friends, and if they are called hypocrites in the Qur'an, this explains why genuine social interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims is rare. It is not permitted. A Muslim who has non-Muslim friends cannot be considered a good Muslim, because he disregards Allah's commands.

According to the Hadith, very little is written about Allah's love, but it is clear that it must also be earned. *Al-Bukhari* (Khan, 1987:431, Vol. 4) states:

Narrated Abu Huraira *The Prophet said, "If Allah loves a person, He calls Gabriel saying, 'Allah loves so and-so; O Gabriel! Love him.' Gabriel would love him and make an announcement amongst the inhabitants of the Heaven. 'Allah loves so-and-so, therefore you should love him also,' and so all the inhabitants of the Heaven would love him, and then he is granted the pleasure of the people on the earth."*

Karim likewise writes very little about Allah's love. Under the heading *"Love and hatred for (on behalf of) Allah,"* he states in Vol. 1, p. 506:

"The Holy Prophet said: The action dearest to the Almighty Allah is love for Allah's sake and hate for Allah's sake."

And in Vol. 4:273 he agrees with Sura 8:55 quoted above:

"Surely the vilest of animals in Allah's sight are those who disbelieve."

If Allah hates those who do not follow him (all non-Muslims), and expects his followers (Muslims) to hate them on his behalf, it becomes difficult to understand how Islam can be considered peaceful, or how Allah and the God of the Bible could be the same being. It is understandable that if one's God commands one to hate someone, one is not expected to love that person or treat him as a friend. Allah's instructions regarding the relationship his followers (Muslims) should have with non-Muslims are clear.

But what is the attitude of the God of the Bible toward humanity? Is his love for all people, or—like Allah's love—only for those who qualify?

5. Love of Yahweh, God of the Bible

True Christians know that the God of the Bible is a God of love. Any Christian who does not accept or believe this is simply not familiar with what the Bible teaches on the subject. No one with even a reasonable knowledge of Scripture can deny that Yahweh, the God of the Bible, is a God of love. For this reason, God is patient and desires that people be saved.

John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* (Emphasis added).

The word "world" includes all people and certainly does not exclude sinners. Jesus says precisely this in Mark 2:17:

Mark 2:17: *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."* (See also Matthew 9:12 and Luke 5:31 in this regard.)

The God of the Bible hates sin, but He loves the sinner, and therefore He sends Jesus so that there may be salvation for them:

1 Timothy 2:3–4: *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."*

This love of God, and His patience with sinful humanity, is further confirmed in:

2 Peter 3:9: *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance"*

The God of love desires to bless all people. For this reason He already promised Abraham in

Genesis 12:3: *"I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

Yahweh loves the human beings He created, even though they fell under the power of sin through their disobedience. With endless patience He launched His plan of redemption through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel, so that salvation might be available to all through Jesus Christ. **No human being has ever deserved God's love, yet He loved us first.**

1 John 4:10: *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

1 John 4:19: *"We love him, because he first loved us."*

Romans 5:8: *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* (Emphasis added).

God does not merely love—He *is* love. 1 John 4:8: *“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”* and 1 John 4:16: *“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.”* (Emphasis added). Yahweh does nothing that is unloving. All His actions are loving meaning, at least, benevolent. This means willing and doing what is good. Even God’s judgments are benevolent, including toward those who ultimately reject His love. Because He is just, God acts for the good of His entire creation and for those who accept His saving work in Christ and are reconciled to Him. He often acts to prevent people from bringing even greater judgment upon themselves. Pain and suffering in this world are not necessarily God’s punishment; they are most often the consequences of sin—either one’s own sin or the sin of others.

God’s law is therefore love: Leviticus 19:18: *“but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* (See also Deuteronomy 6:5, Mark 12:30-31 and Luke 10:27.)

Matthew 22:37–39: *Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’³⁸“This is the first and great commandment.³⁹“And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”* (see also Deut. 6:5; Mark 12:30–31; Luke 10:27)

This is God’s law—His command—that one must always act in love (care and goodwill) toward God and toward one’s neighbour. Any unloving action toward God or neighbour is a violation of God’s command, His law. One’s neighbour is one’s fellow human being, every person with whom one comes into contact, including one’s enemies. Acting in love (care and goodwill) toward someone means doing everything possible for his or her benefit, and nothing for his or her harm. It is obvious that if all people lived this way, no one would be wronged and God would always be honoured. **The motive behind such a law is clearly love.** If everyone lived accordingly, the law would be fulfilled and all would flourish.

This love is not a feeling or emotion. It is a choice to show care and goodwill toward someone despite how one feels about them. It includes everyone—strangers as well as enemies. This command confirms the love of God:

Leviticus 19:34: *“The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself;”*

Deuteronomy 10:19: *“Therefore love the stranger,”*

Matthew 5:44 & Luke 6:27: *“Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you.”*

Proverbs 25:21: *“If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;”*

Romans 12:14: *“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.”*

1 Peter 3:9: *“Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing;”*

There are a few texts in the Bible that may, at first glance, appear to suggest that God hates certain people—for example Malachi 1:2–3: *“I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau,”*.

The word “hate” here is used in the sense of “I regard one more highly than the other,” or “I prefer one above the other,” and the reason is obvious. God is all-knowing and always knew that Esau would become His enemy. According to Vine’s *Expository Dictionary*, the expression was also used in Old Testament times when a person preferred one wife or child above the other. In such cases it was said: “I love the one and hate the other.”

Another example is Jesus’ statement in Luke 14:26: *“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”* The word translated “hate” cannot mean lovelessness, because this is the same Jesus who repeatedly taught that one must love one’s neighbour—even one’s enemy—as oneself. Linguists note that the word can also mean “to regard less,” “to esteem less,” or “to love less.”

It is clear that the God of the Bible loves all people—not because they deserve His love, but because He *is* love. It is His very nature. When God’s love is persistently rejected, His wrath is indeed stirred. Yet it must be understood that when God commanded the destruction of certain peoples in the Old Testament, it was not because they did not worship Him, but because they posed a threat to His plan of redemption for humanity through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The God of the Bible is serious about love toward others, and this includes strangers—people of other cultures who live and think differently from oneself. This is further evidence that when God commanded the destruction of certain nations, it was because there was no other option. He loved them and would have preferred to spare them if there had been any hope of salvation for any among them. The God of the Bible says in Ezekiel 18:32:

*"For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD.
"Therefore turn and live!"*

How is a true Christian recognized? Jesus Himself gives the answer in John 13:35:

"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

But what is sin, and how is it punished and forgiven?

6. Sin, Punishment and Forgiveness

According to the Bible

The Bible makes it very clear what sin is. God gave the Ten Commandments as His law (His instruction). The Lord Jesus summarized the meaning of God's law: in essence, it is love for God and for one's fellow human being (see Matthew 22:37–39, as quoted in the previous chapter). One must love God above all and one's neighbour as oneself. If a person lives this out, he fulfils the law. Sin is therefore the violation of the law, or lawlessness:

1 John 3:4: *"Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."*

God's law (His instruction) is love. Therefore, any violation of the command to love is sin and lawlessness. In other words, sin is lovelessness or loveless behaviour. Anything a person does that dishonours God or harms one's neighbour is lovelessness, and therefore sin. According to the Bible, the wages of sin is death—eternal separation from God.

Romans 6:23: *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* - This death means eternal separation from God.

Sin and its punishment, according to the Bible, are clear and entirely understandable. The punishment is the death of the sinner, both physical and spiritual (eternal perdition). This death does not mean being tortured, brutally murdered, or suffering in any other way. Apart from death as the required penalty for sin, God alone decides how discipline is applied during a person's earthly life. He does not inflict unnecessary or ongoing torture or suffering.

God loves humanity and desires to save us from this death. In His love, God ordained that He Himself, in the Lord Jesus Christ, would provide the sacrifice that would bear the punishment for human sin. Every person who believes and accepts this is forgiven based on Christ's merit and released from punishment.

Those who have believed and accepted God's gift of salvation through the Lord Jesus belong to Him, and His love is poured out into their hearts.

Romans 5:5: *"Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us".*

When His love is poured into a person's heart, His law is written there as well. Through the power He provides, one has the ability to live accordingly.

If a believer, due to human weakness, does sometimes sin, the following applies:

1 John 1:9: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

God does sometimes allow suffering or serious difficulties in the lives of devoted Christian believers whose sins have already been forgiven. Hardship and severe problems are not always punishment for sin—except perhaps when a true believer has acted lovelessly again. Normally, suffering is simply the consequence of sin that has already been forgiven. Severe suffering or fatal persecution in the lives of devoted Christians is the result of other people's sin.

According to Islam's Books

The Qur'an does not give a clear definition of what sin is. Instead, various offences and sins are listed by name, and statements are made about them. Sin in Islam is therefore simply the violation of Allah's commands and prohibitions. Allah decides whether a specific act is sinful, and he may change his mind:

Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1987, Vol. 9:343): "Something forbidden by the Prophet is legally prohibited unless there is proof that (later on) it was (made) legal."

Karim, 1998, Vol. 3:128 lists 53 sins, but a Muslim may not know whether the list has changed: *"The following have been enumerated by the jurists to be the great sins:"* Examples include: nr. 1: *"To set up a partner with Allah."* no. 12: *"Rebellion without just cause"*, nr. 20: *"To have friendship with the unbelievers to the detriment of Islam."*

Apart from such lists in the Qur'an and Hadith, a person does not necessarily know whether his actions are sinful. Some actions are sinful in certain circumstances and not in others—for example, alcohol and gambling (Sura 2:219; 5:90–91), killing (Sura 5:32; 9:5), and adultery:

Sura 17:32: "Nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils)."

Versus Sura:

23:5–6: The Man - "Who abstain from sex, 6. Except with those joined to them in the marriage bond, or (the captives) whom their right hands possess,- for (in their case) they are free from blame,"

When Allah decides an act is sinful, he also decides what the punishment is. Except in cases involving actions against the Islamic faith, a person often does not know whether his deed is sinful, nor what the punishment will be. There is at least some clarity for certain offences. One example is theft:

Sura 5:38–39: "As to the thief. Male or female, cut off his or her hands, a punishment by way of example, from Allah, for their crime: and Allah is exalted in power. But if the thief repents after his crime, and amends his conduct, Allah turns to him in forgiveness;" (Ali, 2000:88). Note that in the same author's earlier translation, (Ali, 1946:254) these two verses are numbers 41 and 42.

The following quotation is one of many commands in the Qur'an regarding punishment. Fortunately for women, the punishment is not as violent as for most

other offences. Allah gives clear instructions on how Muslim men must treat their wives, whom he clearly regards as inferior:

Sura 4:34 34. "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance)."

Further punishments are prescribed throughout the Qur'an. It is impossible to list them all, and the punishment is not always the same for the same offence. It depends on what Allah considers sufficient.

Muslims do not always know whether they have sinned, how serious the sin is, or what the punishment will be. Punishment in Islam can be extremely severe. For non-Muslims, the situation is even worse:

Sura 3:56: "As to those who reject Faith (Islam), I will punish them with terrible agony in this world and in the Hereafter, nor will they have anyone to help." (Ali, 2000:137) (Emphasis added).

Sura 33:68: This is what will happen to a person who disobeys Allah and Mohammed: "Our Lord! Give them double Penalty and curse them with a very great Curse!"

"Sura 24:19: "Those who love (to see) scandal published broadcast among the Believers, will have a grievous Penalty in this life and in the Hereafter: Allah knows, and ye know not."

Sura 8:12–13: "Remember thy Lord inspired the angels (with the message): I am with you: give firmness to the Believers: I will instil terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers: smite ye above their necks and smite all their finger-tips off them. This because they contended against Allah and His Messenger. If any contend against Allah and His Messenger, Allah is strict in punishment."

Sura 73:12–13: "With Us are Fetters (to bind them), and a Fire (to burn them), And a Food that chokes, and a Penalty Grievous."

Even Muslims themselves may not know how severe their punishment will be. The following example illustrates this:

Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1987, Vol. 2:100): "The Prophet recited Surat-an-Najm (specific prayer where the forehead must get dirty as proof of prostration before Allah) at Mecca and prostrated while reciting it and those who were with him did the same except an old man who took a handful of small stones or earth and lifted it to his forehead and said, 'this is sufficient for me.' Later on, I saw him killed as a non-believer."

Further examples of how Muhammad administered punishment:

Khan, 1987 Vol.8:794 bl.520: *"The Prophet did not cauterize (the amputated limbs of) those who fought (against Allah and His Messenger) and of those who were renegades (reverted from Islam) (therefore they bled) till they died."*

Khan, 1987:796 Vol.8 bl.521: *"the Prophet ordered for some iron pieces to be made red hot, and their eyes were branded with them and their hands and feet were cut off and were not cauterized. Then they were put at a place called Al-Harra, and when they asked for water to drink they were not given till they died."*

A Muslim does know, however, that if he leaves Islam (becomes an apostate), his life is in danger unless he escapes successfully. *Al-Bukhari* understands and explains the Qur'anic command on this matter as follows:

Khan, 1987, Vol. 9:45: *"Allah's Messenger said, 'Whoever changed his Islamic religion, then kill him'."*

Khan, 1987, Vol. 9:50: *"So, where-ever you find them, kill them, for who-ever kills them shall have reward on the Day of Resurrection."*

Punishment in Islam is, as shown above, often extremely violent. (See chapter 9 for more information on warfare and jihad.)

Fortunately, there is sometimes forgiveness for a Muslim—if Allah decides so:

Sura 4:48: *"Allah forgiveth not that a partner should be ascribed unto Him. He forgiveth (all) save that to whom He will"* (Pickthall, 1997:59). Yusuf Ali's translation says: *"He forgives anything else, to whom He pleases"*.

Sura 4:17: *"Forgiveness is only incumbent on Allah towards those who do evil in ignorance (and) then turn quickly (in repentance) to Allah."* (Pickthall, 1997:56)

How does a Muslim know whether his repentance was quick enough, or whether Allah is willing to forgive? How does he qualify for "heaven" or "paradise"? There are certain requirements, but the matter remains uncertain. A few quotations follow:

Sura 2:82: *"And those who believe (Muslims) and do good works, such are rightful owners of the Garden. They will abide therein."* (Pickthall, 1997:11)

Sura 23:102–103: *"Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy,- they will attain salvation: But those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls, in Hell will they abide."*

Sura 11:114: *"Allah revealed: 'And offer prayers perfectly at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night. Verily! Good deeds remove (annul) the evil deeds.'"*

Sura 57:21: *"Race one with another for forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden whereof the breadth is as the breadth of the heavens and the earth, which is in store for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. Such is the bounty of*

Allah, which He bestoweth upon whom He will," (Pickthall, 1997:396) (Emphasis added).

Good deeds may help, but it is often unclear which deeds are good. Allah must first decide whether he wishes to forgive. It remains an uncertain matter. According to Islam's books, Muslims will only know in the afterlife whether their good deeds were sufficient to cancel their sins and qualify them for paradise.

As shown, the Bible is very clear about what sin is, what its punishment is, and how forgiveness is obtained. Sadly, many Christians do not know these things because they are not serious enough about their faith and the Bible.

So, what is Islam's Paradise, and how does a Muslim qualify for it?

7. Islam's Paradise

In general, Muslims qualify for Paradise on the following basis:

Sura 33:35: "For Muslim men and women, - for believing men and women-for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise, - for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward."

However, there are other ways to qualify. One of these is:

Al-Bukhari Vol. 4, B 53, No. 352: "Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "Allah guarantees him who strives in His Cause and whose motivation for going out is nothing but Jihad in His Cause and belief in His Word, that He will admit him into Paradise (if martyred) or bring him back to his dwelling place, whence he has come out, with what he gains of reward and booty."

(See chapter 9 for additional ways—especially for men—to ensure they qualify.)

For those who do qualify for Paradise, great pleasure awaits, and it will continue forever. It is a place of sensual enjoyment in which eating, drinking, and – by implication – sexual pleasure forms the central elements. The Qur'an contains an abundance of references to this Paradise or Garden, the place where Muslims who deserve it—whose good deeds outweigh their bad deeds—will dwell eternally. Only a few examples are quoted:

Sura 2:25: "And give glad tidings (O Mohammed) onto those who believe and do good works; that theirs are Gardens underneath which rivers flow; ...Therefore to them are pure companions; there for ever they abide." (Pickthall, 1997:6)

The "they" in this verse are most likely men who qualify, and the "pure companions" who will be with them in the gardens are women (specifically virgins). After warnings of a "Grievous Penalty" (see Sura 37:29–39) for those who refuse to convert to Islam or who do not respect Allah's prophet, there is good news for the "purified" in Sura 37:40–44 and 48:

"Fruits (delights); and they (shall enjoy) honour and dignity, in Gardens of Felicity (bliss, happiness), facing each other on raised couches (of dignity); ... And besides them will be chaste women, restraining their glances, with big eyes (of wonder and beauty)." (Ali, 2000:398)

Another promise of what awaits qualifying men appears in Sura 38:50–52:

"Gardens of eternity, whose doors will (ever) be open to them; therein they will recline (at ease): therein can they call (at pleasure) for fruit in abundance, and

(delicious) drink; And beside them will be chaste women restraining their glances, (companions) of equal age.” (Ali, 2000:409)

The reward for men remains primarily women. Sura 44:52, 54 states that those who fulfil their duty (in Jihad) will find themselves:

“Among gardens and springs; So; and We (Allah) shall join them to Companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes.” (Ali 2000:451)

Allah also promises in Sura 47:15:

“(Here is) a Parable of the Garden which the righteous are promised: in it are rivers of water incorruptible; rivers of milk of which the taste never changes; rivers of wine, a joy to those who drink; and rivers of honey pure and clear. In it there are for them all kinds of fruits; and Grace from their Lord.”

And again, in Sura 52:17, 19, 20:

“As to the righteous, they will be in Gardens, and in happiness, .. (To them will be said:) ‘Eat and drink with good pleasure because of your (good) deeds.’ They will recline (with ease) on couches (of dignity) arranged in ranks; and We (Allah) shall wed them to maidens, with beautiful, big and lustrous eyes.” (Ali, 2000:484)

Things go very well in Paradise for the men who qualify, according to Sura 55:70, 72, 74, 76:

“Wherein (are found) the good and beautiful - ... Fair ones, close-guarded in pavilions - ... Whom neither man nor jinni (spirit) will have touched before them - ... Reclining on green cushions and fair carpets”. According to Pickthall (1997:390) “close-guarded in pavilions”. And according to Ali (2000:496) the maidens are “restrained in pavilions.”

It appears from two of the translations above that these “pure maidens” are being kept there against their will; otherwise, it can be assumed that there are other beings in the Paradise who could pose a threat to them. If they are there voluntarily, terms like *close-guarded* and *restrained* would hardly be necessary. Is Islam’s paradise really such a dangerous place for virgins? One cannot help wondering where these maidens come from and why they are there. Are they perhaps simply part of the pleasure promised to the men who qualify for Paradise?

Sura 56 also describes what awaits Muslims whose “good deeds” are sufficient to enter Paradise:

“There wait on them immortal youths” (v.17) “And (there are) fair ones with wide, lovely eyes, Like unto hidden pearls” (v. 22,23), “We (Allah) have created them a (new) creation and made them virgins, lovers, equal in age.” (V.35-37) (Pickthall, 1997:391)

There are many more examples in the Qur’an—too many to quote here. If each man receives more than one virgin in Paradise, as some sources claim; for example Karim,

1998:23:44 Vol. 2 p. 358, suggesting as many as 72 virgins per man, it seems there will be more women than men in Paradise. Yet this does not align with another claim: that there will also be more women in hell. According to *Sahih Al-Bukhari's* compilation of the Hadith, (Khan 1987:28, 301 Vol. 1 & 2:161), Muhammad said:

"I was shown the hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women."

It will also be shown that these promises of eternal pleasure are largely intended to motivate Muslim men toward Jihad. Any man who truly believes these promises would be willing to sacrifice his life in Jihad to obtain them.

Violence in Christianity will be discussed next. After that, in chapter 9, violence in Islam will be examined, including Jihad and the reasons behind it.

8. Violence in Christianity

Yahweh, the God of the Bible, hates violence. He views violence so seriously that He decided to wipe out humanity because of their violent behaviour. In Genesis 6:13 God says to Noah before the flood:

“The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”

The God of the Bible also expresses His displeasure over the violence of His chosen people, Israel, in Isaiah 59:6b:

“Their works are works of iniquity, And the act of violence is in their hands.”

Likewise, in Amos 3:10 Yahweh speaks out against the violence and oppression committed by His people:

“For they do not know to do right,’ Says the LORD, ‘Who store up violence and robbery in their palaces.’”

No one can deny that “Christians” and Christian institutions have committed horrific acts of violence in the name of Christianity. Consider the Inquisition, during which the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) brutally tortured and killed thousands of so-called heretics (apostates). These were often the true Christians who suffered under such persecution. Then there were the Crusades, also initiated by the RCC, during which thousands were killed simply because they were not “Christians.” Thousands of Jews and Arabs were slaughtered in the name of Christianity.

Even Reformers were involved in violence. Martin Luther encouraged violence against Jews. Calvin was involved in the execution of at least one “opponent,” Michael Servetus. The Swiss Reformer Zwingli died on the battlefield after an attack by Roman Catholic forces.

So-called Protestants and Catholics fought each other for decades in Northern Ireland under the banner of Christian groups, which in reality functioned as political factions. These groups developed from traditional religious views that had already drifted far from true biblical Christianity.

In none of these cases can “Christians” justify their violent actions from the Bible. Already in the Old Testament, God commands His people to love their neighbour, including strangers. This has already been discussed. God says in Leviticus 19:18:

“... but you shall love your neighbor as yourself:” And in Leviticus 19:34: *“The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself;”*

God insists on love toward foreigners in Deuteronomy 10:19:

“Therefore love the stranger,”

God is serious about this. Deuteronomy 27:19:

“Cursed is the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, ...”

Violence in Christianity is not Yahweh’s fault, nor is it likely the fault of true Christians. Although Christians under deception may sometimes be involved in violence, it is far more likely that those who are regarded as Christians, but are not truly so, are the guilty ones. These “Christians,” like most people today who pass as Christians, do not know the biblical definition of true Christianity.

It has already been shown that a righteous and loving God, precisely because of these attributes, needs to punish and to protect. It was therefore unavoidable that God sometimes had to discipline His people and sometimes act firmly against pagan nations through Israel. This was the result of His love for humanity. He wanted to redeem humanity in a just way, and His plan of salvation was under threat. It was the only way to keep it on course.

From the beginning, Satan attempted to sabotage God’s plan for humanity’s redemption from the power of darkness. For this reason, he tried from the start to destroy Israel, the nation through whom God intended to bless the world (Genesis 12:3). He also tried to lead them into idolatry and sometimes succeeded. God therefore sometimes punished His chosen people through other nations for their idolatry, and sometimes commanded Israel to act against certain hostile and pagan nations. There was a valid reason for each of these commands. It was primarily about purifying and preparing the nation through whom God would bless the world through His Redeemer, Jesus Christ. It was never intended as a rule for how Israel should treat other nations, nor as a mandate for Israel to dominate others.

The Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Redeemer for every person who believes, comes in the New Testament and makes it clear that love for God above all, and love for one’s neighbour as oneself, is the summary of God’s law:

Matthew 22:37–39: *“Jesus said to him, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’”*

Only the person whose *“mind the god of this world has blinded”* (2 Corinthians 4:4) cannot see the great love of God in this.

How can one claim to love God while committing violence and shedding blood in direct violation of His command? How can one claim to love one’s neighbour as oneself while committing violence against that neighbour?

Christian believers often wonder, and sometimes ask: “If the true living God is a God of love and almighty, as the Bible teaches, why then all the violence and senseless suffering in this world?” The Bible provides enough information to understand why this is so. What follows is a brief summary of the Bible’s answer:

Humanity was created to live in a relationship of love with God (Gen. 1:26–27). They were in His presence and under His care. They had the ability to choose (free will), and they chose to place their own interests above God's and disobeyed His warning (Gen. 3:6). God is just, and therefore they died spiritually that same day (Gen. 2:17). God sent them out of His presence, immediate care, and protection (Gen. 3:23) into a world that was cursed and under the power of the Evil One (Gen. 3:17), and made it impossible for them to return to Him (Gen. 3:24). Because God is righteous, He never says one thing and does another. He acted according to His warning. It was their choice; God had warned them.

Every person born after The Fall of Man is spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1–5; Col. 2:13) and physically in a world still under the power of the Evil One. Mankind cannot return to God by its own will or effort (Gen. 3:23–24). Only God can rescue people from this condition. God is love and desires that people return to Him (1 Tim. 2:3–4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

God determined that He Himself would pay the price for mankind's redemption from spiritual death. To accomplish this, God worked through people He could use—prophets, kings, and others. From these people He prepared a nation for Himself through covenants. Through this nation, Israel, He provided redemption from sin and reconciliation with Himself. He did this by sending His Son, Jesus, who is a blessing to the world (Genesis 12:2–3), as the ransom and atonement for humanity's sin.

The true God forces no one to worship Him. God listens to the prayers of people who are genuinely seeking Him and who are open to His gift of salvation. Those who accept His gift of salvation are spiritually reborn and reconciled to God. Only then does a person receive the privilege of praying to God in the Name of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the only way by which God has made it possible for human beings to be saved from their condition of eternal ruin.

Many people call themselves Christian believers but have not truly repented, heard, believed, and accepted the saving work of the Lord Jesus, nor surrendered themselves to Him. Some are part of the church merely out of tradition. Others join for selfish motives, hoping for worldly advantage. These people have not denied themselves and are not willing to trust God with their lives. God is love, and He loves such people too. He desires that they return to Him through the salvation He has provided in the Lord Jesus. Then, according to His righteous will, He will hear their prayers.

*God is good and “... **He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous**” (Matt. 5:45). However, if people have not received God's gift of salvation through the Lord Jesus and have not truly surrendered to Him, they cannot insist on God's protection and help at all times. According to the Lord Jesus, God does not know them: **"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'** Matthew 7:21–23*

True believers still live physically as strangers and sojourners in this world (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11), which is still under the power of the Evil One, and they are often subject to pain and suffering because of the sins of others (and sometimes their own). Yet God is with them every moment, and in His almighty power He ensures that everything—no matter how severe—ultimately works for their good (Rom. 8:28).

From this, the reasons for violence, pain, and suffering within Christianity should be clear. The God of the Bible is against violence, and only human sin (lovelessness) sometimes necessitates violence from His side—violence He would have preferred to avoid. Violence initiated by Yahweh is primarily to protect His plan of salvation for humanity. The motive behind it is love. All other violence, except self-defence against unlawful attacks, is contrary to God's will and is sin against Him.

But what, then, would be the reasons for violence in Islam?

9. Violence in Islam

Islam is involved in much violence in the world. No attempt will be made to prove this, because anyone who follows the news is aware of it. Muslims are, however, not necessarily violent people. It has already been shown that a Muslim is a person who is subject to the Islamic faith. This faith, Islam, is based on their sacred books, the Qur'an and the compilations of the Hadith (the traditions of Muhammad). Because of their deep respect and reverence for these books, Muslims live in obedience to them and follow their teachings faithfully. The more faithfully a Muslim follows Allah, the more faithfully he obeys the teachings of Muhammad in the Qur'an and the Hadith. The following teachings from these books regarding violence, including Jihad (holy war), determine whether a Muslim is allowed to always act peaceful, regardless of how peaceful he may be by nature.

Allah, through His messenger Muhammad, calls Muslims to, among other things, violence against the enemy. In Islam, the enemy is all non-Muslims, who are called "unbelievers" in Islam's books. Christians and Jews are specifically named as unbelievers against whom action must be taken. This is called Jihad, but Muslims also refer to it as a holy war, because its purpose is the dominance of Islam. Allah frequently commands his followers in the Qur'an to fight for him. Muslims offer various explanations of what Jihad is, but it includes "fighting" or "striving" for the dominance of Islam.

A few quotations from the Qur'an, among many, in which Muslims are urged to violence against "unbelievers," meaning non-Muslims:

Sura 4:74: "Let those fight in the cause of Allah Who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter. To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah, - whether he is slain or gets victory - Soon shall We give him a reward of great (value)."

Sura 4:76: "Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject Faith Fight in the cause of Evil: So fight ye against the Friends of Satan:"

Non-Muslims are described here as "friends of the Satan," while Muslims are described as "those who believe." Muslims have no choice but to carry out Allah's commands.

Sura 4:84: "So fight in the way of Allah - ... - and urge on the believers (Muslims). Peradventure, Allah will restrain the might of those who disbelieve." (Pickthall, 1997:63)

Sura 4:89: "They long that ye should disbelieve even as they disbelieve, that ye may be upon a level (with them). So choose not friends from them till they forsake (flee from) their homes in the way of Allah; if they turn back (to enmity), then take them and kill them wherever ye find them," (Pickthall, 1997:63)

Sura 38:2–3: *“But the Unbelievers (are steeped) in Self-glory and Separatism. How many generations before them did We destroy? In the end they cried (for mercy)- when there was no longer time for being saved!”*

Muslims must fight and kill — this is Allah’s command. Yet they often claim that they fight only in self-defence. This passage, however, refers to people who have already fled for Allah’s sake, and who must then be killed wherever they are found. They must be sought out and killed. This cannot reasonably be described as self-defence. See also Sura 4:104:

“Relent not in pursuit of the (hostile) people.” (Pickthall, 1997:65), and: *“And slacken not in following up the enemy.”* (Ali, 2000:74)

If you pursue the enemy, it means the enemy is fleeing. What does Allah mean when he says the pursuers must not “slacken in following up the enemy”? They must be unyielding toward non-Muslims. *“Relent not in pursuit”* means at the very least that Allah does not want them to escape, but to be overtaken. What will happen after the successful pursuit of non-Muslims will become clear from the rest of the discussion.

Sura 48:29: *“Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. and those who are with him are strong against Unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other.”* (Ali) Pickthall (1997:372) renders it as follows: *“Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. And those with him are hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.”*

How strict and unyielding must they be toward non-Muslims? When the “children of Israel” in the following passage defend themselves against attacks from Muhammad’s forces because they refused to accept his “reasoning,” they must be punished as follows:

Sura 5:33: *“The only reward of those who make war upon Allah and His messenger and strive after corruption in the land will be that they will be killed or crucified, or have their hands and feet on alternate sides cut off, or will be expelled out of the land.”* (Pickthall, 1997:76)

Muslims must fight, they are encouraged to do so by Allah’s prophet, Muhammad:

Sura 8:65: *“O Prophet! Exhort the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty steadfast they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred steadfast they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, because they (the disbelievers) are a folk without intelligence.”* (Pickthall, 1997:125). Ali (2000:147) renders this verse as: *“O Prophet, rouse the Believers to the fight. If there are twenty among you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred; if a hundred, they will vanquish a thousand of the Unbelievers, for these are people without understanding.”*

Note that in this case they must fight not to repel an attack, but because the non-Muslims are “without understanding.” But the Qur’an’s command is clear, they must fight:

Sura 2:216: *"Fighting (Jihad) is prescribed for you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you,"* (Ali, 2000:270). (Pickthall, 1997:25) renders it as: *"Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you: but it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you,"*

This is a direct encouragement to war by Islam's prophet Muhammad, acting on Allah's command. The same applies to the following quotations:

Sura 9:73–74: *"O Prophet! strive hard against the unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be firm against them. Their abode is Hell, - an evil refuge indeed. ... Allah will punish them with a grievous penalty in this life and in the Hereafter:"*

Sura 9:111: *"Lo! Allah hath bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs: they shall fight in the way of Allah and shall slay and be slain."* (Pickthall, 1997:137)."

Sura 9:123: *"O ye who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are near you, and let them find harshness in you, ..."* (Pickthall, 1997:138).

Sura 61:4: *"Truly Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure."*

Sura 66:9: *"O Prophet! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be stern with them"* (Pickthall, 1997:415).

Not every Muslim can fight physically, and the "peace-loving" subjects of Allah must provide the finances and resources for Jihad or holy war. Muslims must pay Zakat – compulsory "charity" – which is also used to cover the costs of Jihad. They must also make their possessions available for the purpose of Jihad. Islam also obtains funds from Jizya — a form of tax paid by non-Muslims (called *zimmis* or *dhimmis*) to a Muslim authority, if they are fortunate enough not to be killed. In his footnote on the word *Jizya*, Ali (1946:447) says:

"the root meaning is compensation. ... was a poll-tax levied from those who did not accept Islam,"

There are also many highly successful Muslim businessmen, especially in non-Muslim countries, who make large contributions used for Jihad. The money and possessions of Muslims — including resources gathered in non-Muslim countries — are meant to be used for Allah's holy war against unbelievers (all non-Muslims). The Qur'an and Hadith are clear on this, and every Muslim is obliged to obey, because it is Allah's command.

Sura 9:34: *"And there are those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah: announce for them a most grievous chastisement"* (Ali, 2000:154) *"a painful doom"* awaits them according to Pickthall (1997:130).

Sura 9:41: *"Go forth, light-armed and heavy-armed, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the way of Allah! That is best for you if ye but knew"* (Pickthall, 1997:131).

But why is Jihad — this never-ending war that is called holy — so important in Islam? Why is it necessary? What must be achieved? It is already clear from the above quotations that it is done for Allah's sake. One wonders why Allah, if he is God, cannot take care of himself. The following quotations show that no one may worship anyone other than Allah, and that this is the reason for war against all non-Muslims:

Sura 9:29: *"**Fight against such of those** who have been given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) **as believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His messenger, and follow not the Religion of Truth, until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low.**"* According to Dawood's (1999) rendering, unbelievers must be fought *"until they pay tribute out of hand and are **utterly subdued.**"* (Pickthall (1997:129)

Sura 48:28: *"It is He (Allah) who has sent His Apostle with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, **to make it prevail over all religions;**"*

Sura 2:193: *"And fight them until persecution is no more, **and religion is for Allah.**"* (Pickthall, 1997:22)

Sura 8:39: *"And fight them until persecution is no more, and **religion is all for Allah.**"* (Pickthall, 1997:123).

The Hadith agrees with the Qur'an. A few quotations from Al-Bukhari confirm the above:

Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1987, Vol. 4:viii): *"Holy fighting in the cause of Allah or any other kind of effort to **make Allah's Word (Islam) superior**, which is regarded as one of the principles of Islam."*

Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1987, Vol. 9:167): *"And fight them until there are no more afflictions (i.e. **no more worshipping of others beside Allah.**)"*

Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1987:196, Vol. 4:124): *"Allah's Messenger (Mohammed) said, 'I have been ordered **to fight with the people till they say, 'none has the right to be worshipped but Allah.'** and whoever says, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah,' his life and property will be saved by me.'"*

Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1987:355, Vol. 4:228): *"A Bedouin asked the Prophet: 'A man may fight for the sake of booty, and another may fight so that he may be mentioned by the people, and a third may fight to show his position (i.e. bravery); which of these is regarded as fighting in Allah's cause?' The Prophet said, 'He who fights **so that Allah's Word (i.e. Islam) should be superior**, fights for Allah's cause.'"*

Al-Bukhari Vol. 9, 93: 550: Narrated Abu Musa: *The Prophet said, "The one who fights **that Allah's Word (Islam) should be superior**, fights in Allah's Cause."*

Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1987:594 bk 26 Vol. 2): Narrated Abu Huraira: *The Prophet was asked, "Which is the best deed?" He said, "To believe in Allah and His*

*Apostle." He was then asked, "Which is the next (in goodness)?" He said, "**To participate in Jihad in Allah's Cause.**"*

A few examples of statements by other Muslim leaders:

Ahmed Deedat, A man who, for years, had been left completely incapacitated by a stroke — unable to help himself in any way and no longer able to speak — had previously been a fiery and zealous South African Muslim apologist and propagandist. It had been his great passion to run down and ridicule Christianity, and especially the Lord Jesus Christ. in his pamphlet *What is his Name?* (Islamic Propagation Centre, Durban, 1986), quoted in Hunt (*Cup of Trembling*, 1995 p. 275):

"Our armour, sword and shield in this battle of Faiths are in the Koran (Qur'an), we have been chanting it for centuries ... now we must bring them forth into the battlefield."

Ayatollah Khomeini, former religious and political leader of Iran, after large-scale killings of non-Muslims including Christians, under his leadership, said:

"In Persia (Iran) no people have been killed so far – only beasts!" and elsewhere: *"The purest joy in Islam is to kill and be killed for Allah."* (from Moshay, 1994 p. 31-32)

Do the quotations above, taken from Islam's most important books and some Muslim leaders, appear to be peace-loving?

10. The Importance of Treaties and Oaths

In the Bible

For the God of the Bible, breaking a covenant (agreement), an oath, or a vow is without exception sin, because it is deceitful, and deceit is nothing other than loveless behaviour. The Bible contains many examples of covenants, not only between God and people but also between people. No provision is made for breaking a covenant without sin. A party is released from a covenant only when the other party has already broken it.

The Bible contains many warnings against lying, breaking one's word, and making false oaths. Some quotations:

Matthew 5:33: "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.'

Psalms 24:4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully.

Yahweh further tells His people, Israel, in:

Sag 8:16-17: "These *are* the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace; Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these *are things* that I hate,' Says the LORD."

The God of the Bible is the God of truth, and in Him there is no falsehood. The Lord Jesus says in John 14:6:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

In truth there is no place for lies, and therefore the Bible forbids lying:

Leviticus 19:11: "You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another."

Proverbs 19:9: "A false witness will not go unpunished, And *he who* speaks lies shall perish.

Colossians 3:9: "Do not lie to one another,"

For sinners, including liars, there is the warning in Revelation 21:8:

"But the ... murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

This applies to all who have not repented, who have not accepted Jesus as Saviour, and who persist in their sin.

To enter into an agreement (treaty) with someone, whether under oath or not, and then not honour it, is loveless behaviour because it is to the detriment of the other

party. According to the biblical definition, it is unquestionably sin. We know that many people, including Christians, break agreements and promises, but this is a violation of the command to love and therefore sin.

In Islam

Muslims, however, have Allah's permission to break oaths and agreements under certain circumstances. The Qur'an makes such exceptions:

Sura 9:1–5): *"A (declaration) of complete absolution on the part of Allah and His Apostle, from all agreements made with idolators."* (Ali, 2000:150) See also Pickthall (1997:127): *"Freedom from obligation (is proclaimed) from Allah and his messenger toward those of the idolators with whom ye made a treaty."*

2): *"Move about for four months, (as you will), throughout the land, but know that you cannot frustrate Allah (by your falsehood) but that Allah will cover with shame those who reject Him."* (Ali, 2000:150) and *"Travel freely in the land four months, and know that ye cannot escape Allah and that Allah will confound the disbelievers (in his guidance)"* (Pickthall, 1997:127).

3): *"And an announcement from Allah and His Apostle, to the people (assembled) on the day of the Great Pilgrimage that Allah and His Apostle dissolve (treaty) obligations with the Pagans. If then, you repent, it were best for you; but if you turn away, know that you cannot frustrate Allah. And proclaim a grievous Chastisement to those who reject Faith (Islam)"* (Ali, 2000:150). (Emphasis added).

5): *"But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem; But if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity (become Muslims and pay Zakat), then open the way for them,"*

See also:

Sura 2:225: *"Allah will not take you to task for that which is unintentional in your oaths"* (Pickthall, 1997:26)."

Sura 5:89: *"Allah will not call you to account for what is futile in your oaths, but He will call you to account for deliberate oaths: for expiation, feed ten indigent persons, on a scale of the average for the food of your families; or clothe them; or give a slave his freedom. If that is beyond your means, fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths you have sworn."* (Ali, 2000:95) (Emphasis added).

One wonders what the difference is between "futile in your oaths" and "deliberate oaths" One would expect all oaths to be sworn deliberately. Yet even oaths sworn deliberately can be undone — if one has money or can fast for three days. A convenient escape clause, with divine permission:

Sura 66:2: *"Allah has already prescribed for you, (o men), the absolution (undoing or getting out of - according to footnote) of your oaths (in some cases)."* (Ali, 2000:525).

Allah therefore gives Muslims the right to break treaties or agreements with non-Muslims. In some cases, they must wait four months before doing so (see verses 2, 3, and 5 above).

The Hadith supports the Qur'an

Al-Bukhari Vol. 6, B 60, No. 137: Narrated 'Aisha: This Verse: "Allah will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths."

Al-Bukhari Vol. 6, Book 60, Number 138: Narrated Aisha: That her father (Abu Bakr) never broke his oath till Allah revealed the order of the legal expiation for oath. Abu Bakr said, "If I ever take an oath (to do something) and later find that to do something else is better, then I accept Allah's permission and do that which is better, (and do the legal expiation for my oath) "

Al-Bukhari Vol. 8, Book 78, Number 656: Narrated 'Aisha: regarding: 'Allah will not call you to account for that which is unintentional in your oaths...'

Al-Bukhari Vol. 8, Book 79, Number 715: Narrated 'Abdur-Rahman bin Samura: Allah's Apostle said, And if you take an oath to do something and later on find another thing, better than that, then do what is better and make expiation for (the dissolution of) your oath."

Regarding the breaking of agreements, the compiler of *Al-Hadis*, Karim, 1998:23:133 Vol. 2 p. 397, explains in a footnote the following:

"Treaties and contracts which are consistent with the Quran and Hadis were ordered to be observed. Islam did not encourage laxity in disobeying the treaties as they are solemn pledges, but such contracts and treaties as are unlawful are not ordered to be observed."

Karim, 1998:24:24 Vol. 2 p. 479: *"the Apostle of Allah said: The expiation of a vow is the same as for an oath."*

Karim, 1998:4:208 Vol. 1 p. 467: *"the messenger of Allah (Mohammed) said: Falsehood is not lawful except in three things: falsehood of a man to his wife to please her, falsehood in war and falsehood in restoring peace among men."*

The problem is that a non-Muslim has no way of knowing whether an agreement is "unlawful" according to the Qur'an or Hadith, and therefore whether it may later be broken. In practice, this means a Muslim may enter into an "unlawful" agreement with a non-Muslim and later break it whenever it suits him. That is what Muslim leaders do in war because Allah allows it.

As shown earlier, Allah expects his messenger, Muhammad, to be obeyed. When Muhammad therefore gives permission to lie under certain circumstances, it is

effectively Allah giving permission. Jihad, a so-called “holy war,” is included — meaning the circumstances in which lying and false oaths are permitted are quite broad.

In light of this, one cannot help wondering what value any peace negotiations with Muslims can have. There is always a “lawful” escape opportunity from any agreement, undertaking, oath or promise. If the agreement is not considered unlawful according to the Qur’an, the fact that it is a war situation may release the Muslim from his obligation.

We have already seen that a Muslim has no choice. He must be violent for the sake of Allah in Jihad if he wishes to be faithful to Allah’s commands. He may, however, lie about it — with his God’s permission. He may, for example, pretend to be peaceful and claim that Islam is a peaceful religion, even though he knows it is not true. War is one of the three exceptions in which lying is permitted, and here it concerns Jihad, which is war in Islam — and which continues as long as non-Muslims exist.

11. Islam, Israel and Violence

After God called Abra(ha)m out of Ur of the Chaldeans, He gave him the following promise in:

Genesis 17:8: "Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

In Genesis 48:4 God repeats this promise:

"Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession."

This promise of the land as an everlasting possession was given to Abraham's descendants through his son Isaac by his wife Sarah. This is confirmed in:

Genesis 25:5–6: "And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east."

Deuteronomy 14:2: "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

1 Chronicles 16:13–17: "O seed of Israel His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones! He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth. Remember His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac, And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant,"

Psalms 89:3-4: "I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 'Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.'"

Romans 11:1–2: "I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel,"

The Qur'an says something similar when it speaks of the Israelites and the Holy Land in Sura 5:20–21:

"And (remember) when Moses said unto his people: O my people! Remember Allah's favour unto you, how He placed among you prophets, and He made you kings, and gave you that (which) He gave not to any (other) of (his) creatures. O

my people! Go into the holy land which Allah has ordained for you." (Pickthall, 1997:75)

The Qur'an teaches that Israel is the people chosen by Allah, yet it also teaches that Israel has been rejected as Allah's people and that Islam is now the community regarded as the chosen ones of their god, Allah. The Qur'an teaches that the Israelites were "cursed ... over their unbelief" (Sura 2:88–89). According to Islam, the Jews have no right to exist, and both the Jewish people and the state of Israel must be removed from the earth.

This hatred toward Israel is fuelled in the Qur'an, where numerous hostile statements about Jews appear. Sura 5:13 is one example:

"You will ever find them deceitful, except for a few of them."

In their book, *The Facts on Islam*, Ankerberg and Weldon (1991:8) quote Surah 5:51 from another English translation (unknown but appropriate in the context) of the Qur'an as follows:

"O, true believers, take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends. They cannot be trusted. They are defiled-filth."

It is claimed that the Jews received the Qur'an from God, but that they distorted it, and that the Bible is a corruption of the Qur'an. This is, of course, entirely unfounded and historically impossible: the Qur'an only became a book in the seventh century AD (see chapter 2). Apart from distorted extracts from the history of Israel—from Abraham to Jesus, the Qur'an deals mainly with battles, conflicts, and disputes involving Muhammad and his followers. It also contains threats of hardship and misery for non-Muslims, and descriptions of the pleasures awaiting Muslims (mainly men) who qualify for "Paradise." Where the Qur'an touches on biblical truths, they are consistently half-truths or distortions. It is clear that Muhammad knew something about the Bible, but he reshaped what he knew to fit his supposed revelations.

It is therefore understandable that Muslim extremists feel justified in committing acts of terrorism as part of their holy war, including attacks against the USA because of its support for Israel. Listening to the statements of more "moderate" Muslims, it quickly becomes clear that - no matter how diplomatically they phrase it - their sympathies lie with Islamic terrorism, and that they strongly oppose America's support for Israel.

Israel, and Jews in general, must be eliminated at all costs, and this is not new. According to *Al-Bukhari*, Muhammad already said the following:

Vol. 4, B 52, No. 177: Narrated Abu Huraira: *Allah's Apostle said, "The Hour will not be established until you fight with the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say. 'O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him.'"*

Although Israel is a very small state, with less than 1% of the land area of its Arab (Muslim) neighbours, and although the Jewish population is tiny compared to its Muslim neighbours, Israel has had to endure the hostility and attacks of its Arab

neighbours since its modern establishment in 1948 - and has successfully defended itself. Israel's survival and victories are a miracle of God and proof that He has not rejected them, even if they are not yet where Yahweh wants them to be. This is a major embarrassment for Islam and only intensifies its hatred and violence against Israel and Jews in general.

Israel is not only a spiritual blessing to the world but is also at the forefront of defending itself and the Western world against Islam's Jihad war. Meanwhile, many Westerners - and sadly many Christians - believe devil-inspired conspiracy theories about Israel and Jews, thereby promoting hatred against Israel to Islam's advantage. The USA's support for Israel is sometimes inconsistent, though under President Trump it has been stronger. Any country or organisation attempting to reach a peace agreement with Islam will eventually regret it. As already discussed, an agreement with Islam is meaningless, and dangerous, especially regarding their "holy" war against all who do not worship Allah.

Dave Hunt (1995, *A Cup of Trembling*, p. 199), an expert on violence in Islam, wrote the following:

"In fact, it is Islam which inspires a large part of terrorism worldwide. As we have seen, violence and terrorism have been the means of spreading Islam from the very beginning by Mohammed and his successors. That is the teaching of the Koran. The teachings of Islam, in fact, inspire Arab terrorism around the world, terrorism which is directed by such Islamic groups as the Palestinian Liberation Movement (PLO), Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hizbullah, and others. The bombings and murders come from a sincere religious motivation: the destruction of Israel and eventual subjugation of the entire world to Islamic law. And yet, somehow, it is all blamed upon Israel. It is her fault that she is the target of terrorist attack and thus that those friendly to her suffer the same onslaught."

What is happening in the Middle East, and even in the Western world, is therefore not new. Islamic violence is now even more visible in events since Hunt wrote those words. It is especially clear in what has taken place since 7 October 2023 in Israel and the Middle East, after the violence in Israel by Hamas and the murder of more than a thousand innocent civilians. The attacks from various Muslim countries and terrorist groups on Israel, and the threats and assaults against Jews worldwide in Western countries, are severe—but not new. There are many more examples, the worst being the destruction of the World Trade Center in America on 11 September 2001, where thousands of innocent civilians were murdered in the name of Allah.

All the above, together with the violence against Jews worldwide - especially in Europe and even the USA, with its masses of illegal, mostly Muslim immigrants – is overwhelming evidence of Islamic violence, particularly against Israel and the Jewish people.

12. Jesus, Son of God and Mohammed

The prophet, sometimes referred to as the messenger, of Islam claims to be superior to the Lord Jesus of the Bible. Yet when one considers the character, dispositions, goals, and the way these were carried out in the lives of these two individuals, the difference is so vast that there is, in fact, hardly any real basis for comparison. Just as Satan attempted to make himself equal to God and even exalt himself above God, without success, so no one else can successfully claim equality with, or superiority over, the Lord Jesus Christ. The biblical presentation of the Lord Jesus is briefly discussed first, followed by that of Mohammed. There is some overlap with what was covered in chapters 5 and 6.

According to the Bible, Jesus is the Son of God, and He is Himself God, who came into the world in human form for a specific purpose. God, who is love, desires to redeem humanity, which is spiritually dead because of the fall. Therefore, He creates within the body of the virgin Mary the God-Man through whom He intends to deliver humanity from this spiritual death. The Lord Jesus is born and becomes the Redeemer, sent by God as a blessing to the world. A short quotation follows concerning God's message, delivered by an angel, to the virgin Mary, through whom God chose to send Jesus into the world:

Luke 1:31–35: "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."

As stated above, according to the angel, Jesus, the Son of God, is the Word who became flesh:

John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

But why was this necessary? Because:

*John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
1 John 3:8: "... For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."*

The Lord Jesus came in humility to serve, not to be served. He served by obtaining redemption for humanity through His suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection:

Matthew 11:29: *"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls,"*

Matthew 20:28: *"..., just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

Philippians 2:6–8: *"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*

Therefore, the sinful person who believes and gratefully accepts the Lord Jesus' gift of redemption can say with the apostle Paul:

Ephesians 1:7: *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"*

Furthermore, the love of God is evident in everything the Lord Jesus teaches, and His actions confirm this love. Jesus was without sin, and His sinlessness is nothing less than perfect love. Love is the fulfilment of the law, and He came to fulfil the law.

Yet there are liars who refuse to acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is the Anointed One of God:

1 John 2:22–23: *"Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also."*

Can the Son of God be anything other than a divine being, despite the humanity He received from His earthly mother? Why would God exalt an ordinary man like Mohammed above His Son Jesus Christ, as claimed in the Qur'an and the Hadith?

Mohammed permits himself to speak in the Qur'an about Jesus' birth. It partially corresponds to the true account in the Bible. According to the Qur'an, Mary experienced a supernatural conception for Jesus' birth:

Sura 3:46: *"She (Mary) said: 'O my Lord, How shall I have a son when no man has touched me?' He said: 'Even so; Allah creates what He wills; when He has decreed a matter, He but says to it, 'be' and it is.'"*

The Qur'an is correct in denying that Allah had a son. According to the Qur'an, Allah does not wish to call the son he supposedly caused by saying "Be" his son. If Allah were the true God, Islam would struggle to explain whom Jesus could call His Father. A father is not merely someone who physically begets but also mean the source of origin or the cause of something. Therefore, Jesus of the Bible can call Yahweh, the true God, His Father.

The Qur'an denies Jesus' crucifixion and death. Sura 4:157 claims that the Messiah, Jesus, was not killed, but was instead taken alive into heaven, according to:

Sura 4:157–158: That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah, but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not:- Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself; ..."

Thus, according to the Qur'an, Allah takes Jesus alive into heaven, while the so-called final prophet, Mohammed, died at 62, was buried, and has never appeared again.

The Qur'an also refers to Jesus as "the Messiah" (Sura 4:171). *Messiah* is a Hebrew word meaning "Anointed One," also translated as *Christ* in some English versions of the Qur'an. Messiah means that He (Jesus) was anointed by God for the work of redemption He came to accomplish. Yet the Qur'an denies that Jesus is the Redeemer. The Qur'an is correct only in the sense that Allah is not the father of Jesus. Allah had, in fact, nothing to do with the birth of Jesus, for Jesus is the Son of the true God, Yahweh, who came to redeem and reconcile to Himself those who would believe and accept Him.

As in the Qur'an, Mohammed also claims in the Hadith that Jesus did not die and rise again. He does, however, claim that Jesus is still alive in heaven after 2,000 years, and that He will return to earth in the last days to judge humanity and reign:

Al-Bukhari Vol. 4, Bk 55, No. 657: "Narrated Abu Huraira: "Allah's Apostle said, 'By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, surely (Jesus,) the son of Mary will soon descend amongst you and will judge mankind justly (as a Just Ruler);'"

According to Karim, Vol. 4: bl. 50 Jesus will subdue and kill a strange being named Dajjal, establish Islam as the only religion on earth, and then die:

"Then Jesus who is alive in heaven will descend from heaven and kill Dajjal with his own hand." On page 80 Jesus shall then, among other things, establish the Shariat (Mohammed's law): "After this Jesus will die and he will be buried ..."

Because of this distortion of the facts concerning Jesus' coming to earth, Muslims do not realize that Jesus also accomplished redemption and reconciliation with God for them, if only they would believe and accept it. Yet this is made extremely difficult by the severe punishment for apostasy in Islam.

In contrast to the humility of Jesus, as discussed above, the Qur'an is filled with Muhammad's grandiose self-exaltation. Numerous passages insist on obedience to him. A few examples:

Sura 3:132: "And obey Allah and the Messenger. that ye may obtain mercy."

Sura 4:80: "He, who obeys the Apostle (Mohammed), obeys Allah,"

Sura 5:92: "Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger,"

Sura 8:20: "O ye who believe! Obey Allah and His Messenger, and turn not away from him when ye hear (him speak)."

Sura 24:54: Say: "Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger."

Those who do not obey Mohammed face severe consequences:

Sura 48:13: *"And if any believe not in Allah and His Messenger, We have prepared, for those who reject Allah, a Blazing Fire!"*

Sura 58:5: *"Those who resist Allah and His Messenger will be humbled to dust, as were those before them: for We have already sent down Clear Signs. And the Unbelievers (will have) a humiliating Penalty,"*

Sura 58:20: *"Those who resist Allah and His Messenger will be among those most humiliated."*

Sura 59:4: *"That is because they resisted Allah and His Messenger. and if any one resists Allah, verily Allah is severe in Punishment."*

The Hadith agrees concerning Mohammed's exalted status:

Al-Bukhari Vol. 4, Bk 55, No. 626: Narrated Abu Huraira: "The Prophet became angry, till anger appeared on his face, and said, "Don't give superiority to any prophet amongst Allah's Prophets, for when the trumpet will be blown, everyone on the earth and in the heavens will become unconscious except those whom Allah will exempt. The trumpet will be blown for the second time and I will be the first to be resurrected to see Moses holding Allah's Throne."

Karim, Vol. 4, p. 323: "the Messenger of Allah said: I shall be the leader of the children of Adam on the day of Resurrection and there's no boast, and in my hand will be the standard of praise and there's no boast, and there will be no Prophet on that day, Adam or anybody who will not be under my standard, and I shall be the first of those who will burst out of the earth and there's no boast."

According to the Bible, Jesus committed *no sin*, and Islam does not dispute this. This creates a difficulty for Islam, because both the Hadith and the Qur'an make it clear that Muhammad did commit sin. Although Karim's *Al-Hadis* claims Mohammed was sinless, this is contradicted by *Al-Bukhari's* Hadith and the Qur'an:

Al-Bukhari Vol. 8, p. 213: "I heard Allah's Messenger saying. 'By Allah! I ask forgiveness from Allah and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day.'"

And from the Qur'an:

Sura 48:1-2: "Verily We (Allah) have granted you (Mohammed) a manifest Victory:: That Allah may forgive you your faults of the past and those to follow; fulfil His favour to you; and guide you on the Straight Way;"

Clearly, the victory he achieved on the battlefield earned him forgiveness for past and future "faults." In Islam, good deeds cancel out bad deeds, and in this case Mohammed's military success was enough to cover all his sins. This presents a translation problem if he were supposedly sinless. If "faults" are not sins, why must they be forgiven or covered? And why must a sinless person be guided on the "straight way"?

As noted earlier, the Qur'an does not clearly define sin, making it difficult to determine whether someone has sinned. Yet from the Qur'an and Mohammed's traditions (the Hadith), including those quoted here, many of Mohammed's actions would, according to the biblical definition, be considered serious lovelessness, and therefore sin.

Mohammed's loveless actions are repeatedly confirmed in the quotations. All loveless actions are sin. His love for women, however, is so important to him that Allah grants him a special exemption concerning wives. According to the Qur'an, he may have more wives than other Muslim men. This is discussed next.

13. Mohammed's Wives

The Lord Jesus, as the Son of God, never married during His earthly life and ministry, and He was sinless in every respect. Muhammad, however, had more wives than a Muslim is permitted to have according to the Qur'an. According to Sura 4:3, four is the maximum number of wives a Muslim man may have. For convenience, the Qur'an grants Muhammad special privileges regarding women that were not granted to other Muslims. Allah gives Muhammad special permission in Sura 33:50:

"O Prophet, We (Allah) have made lawful to you your wives to whom you have paid their dowers; and those whom your right hand possesses out of the prisoners of war whom Allah has assigned to you; and the daughters of your paternal uncles and aunts, and the daughters of your maternal uncles and aunts, who migrated (from Makkah) with you; and any believing woman who dedicates her soul to the Prophet if the Prophet wishes to wed her; this only for you, and not for the believers (at large). We (Allah) know what We have appointed for them as to their wives and the captives whom their right hand possess; in order that there should be no difficulty for you."

Muhammad made full use of this privilege and took many wives, some of whom were still children when they became his wives. Muslim sources differ on the number of wives he had. *Al-Bukhari* mentions nine in one place and eleven in another — likely correct at different times. The following quotations from *Al-Bukhari* shed considerable light on Muhammad's sexual appetite and activities:

Khan, 1987:268 Vol. 1 p. 165: *"Anas bin Malik said, 'The Prophet used to visit all his wives in a round, during the day and night and they were eleven in number.' I asked Anas, 'Had the Prophet the strength for it?' Anas replied, 'We used to say that the Prophet was given the strength of thirty (men).'"*

According to *Al-Bukhari* (Khan, 1987:6 Vol. 7 p. 5), Anas also reported:

"The Prophet used to go round (have sexual relations with) all his wives in one night, and he had nine wives."

The age of Muhammad's wives was also not important to him. One of his wives was so young that, in modern terms — and without Allah's special approval — Muhammad would be considered a paedophile. According to *Al-Bukhari* (Khan, 1987:64 Vol. 7 p. 65):

"The Prophet wrote the (marriage contract) with Aisha while she was six years old and consummated his marriage with her while she was nine years old and she remained with him for nine years (i.e. till his death)."

Karim, 1998:27:28 Vol. 2 p. 636, writes similarly about Aisha (Ayesha):

"Ayesha reported that the messenger of Allah married her while she was a girl of seven years. She was sent to him while she was nine years with her toys."

Regarding Muhammad's number of wives, Karim 1998 Vol. 4 p. 478, lists twelve names. Morey (1992:85–86) provides a list of twenty-two women compiled by Muslim scholar Ali Dashti — sixteen married to Muhammad, two slaves he kept as wives, and four devout Muslim women who offered themselves to Muhammad for his sexual gratification.

When Muhammad wanted to marry Zaynab, the wife of his adopted son Zaid, and they were reluctant, another convenient revelation from Allah appeared in the Qur'an:

Sura 33:36–37: "It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Apostle to have any option about the decision; if any one disobeys Allah and His Apostle, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path. Behold, you did say to one who had received the grace of Allah and your favour: 'Retain (in wedlock) your wife, and fear Allah.' But you did hide in your heart that which Allah was about to make manifest; you did fear the people but it is more fitting that you should fear Allah. Then when Zaid had dissolved (his marriage) with her, with the necessary (formality), We (Allah) joined her in marriage to you in order that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the Believers in (the matter of) marriage with the wives of their adopted sons, when the latter have dissolved with the necessary (formality) (their marriage) with them."

The Lord Jesus offered Himself to reconcile humanity to God, but for Muhammad it was about power, honour, status, and pleasure. May the Lord open the eyes of any reader who has not yet chosen, so that he or she may discern between a false prophet and the true Redeemer.

But who is God?

14. The Same God?

Can Yahweh, the God of the Bible, and Allah, the God of the Qur'an, be the same God? From the facts discussed so far, it is clear that the God of the Bible and Allah possess entirely different moral qualities and characteristics, which should make it beyond doubt that the two beings cannot be the same person. It should be evident that Yahweh, the God of the Bible, is a God of love. Please also keep the following facts in mind.

When the God of the Bible sent Moses to lead His people Israel out of Egypt, Moses asked, according to Exodus 3:13:

"Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"

God answered and revealed Himself to Moses as follows, in verse 14:

"And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

The "I AM" is understood by His people as "Yahweh, the God who is, who was, and who will be." The God who has always existed, who exists now, and who will always exist can be none other than the true and only God. Yahweh says through His prophet Isaiah to His chosen people Israel:

Isaiah 46:9–10: "Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'"

King David of Israel, who is recognised as a prophet in Islam, confirms this and says according to:

2 Samuel 7:22: "Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You,"

The true God has an eternal covenant with His chosen people, Israel, requiring them to worship Him alone and reject all idols. Therefore, He dealt firmly with Israel and often allowed severe hardship when they failed to keep their part of the covenant. This discipline was directed at Israel, not at other nations. God did act against other peoples, but only when they had become utterly corrupt and lost. One example is the cruel idolatry of certain Canaanite peoples who worshipped the idol Moloch by, among other practices, burning children alive as offerings. He also acted firmly against other nations when their actions threatened His plan of redemption and blessing for the world through His chosen people, Israel, as discussed in chapter 8.

The true God is worthy of worship. Those who worship Him are not threatened with violence to do so. They worship Him out of admiration and gratitude when they realise that He is God, that He is love, and that He desires to save humanity from eternal destruction. In the Bible, the Lord Jesus teaches according to:

John 4:24: *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

It is noteworthy that this text simply teaches *how* God must be worshipped by those who choose to worship Him. It is not a threat demanding that all people worship Him. True worship, for the God of the Bible, is not an end but a means to enter His presence with gratitude and to participate in His Kingdom, where love, peace, and harmony reign.

For Allah, the worship of himself by all people in the world is the goal. He makes this clear in the Qur'an:

Sura 51:56: *"I created the jinn (spirit beings) and humankind only that they might worship Me."* (Pickthall, 1997:379).

If they do not worship him: *"Allah will punish them with a grievous penalty in this life and in the Hereafter:"* according to Sura 9:74.

Sura 38:2–3: *"But the Unbelievers (are steeped) in Self-glory and Separatism. How many generations before them did We destroy? In the end they cried (for mercy)- when there was no longer time for being saved!"*

From what has already been discussed, it is clear that Allah expects his followers to ensure—at times through force—that all people in the world worship him.

It is well documented that Christians in certain Muslim-majority countries face persecution because of their faith in the Lord Jesus. It is also known that Muslims who leave Islam may face severe punishment in places where Islamic law is enforced, and some have been killed. This is evident from the quotations from Islamic sources discussed here. If this is denied, it would not only be untrue but also an admission that the Qur'an and Hadith are not being followed. Individuals must decide for themselves, which is worse, since lying is not necessarily considered a serious offence in Islam, whereas failing to follow prescribed religious duties may lead to serious consequences.

Foreign Christians are, in some of these countries, relatively safe if they do not attempt to share the Good News of salvation through the Lord Jesus. However, it is a fact that Christians in parts of the world dominated by Islam are tried, executed, or killed for apostasy. For the sake of Islam's public image, these matters are not widely publicised. In cases where international attention arises, the bodies of murdered high-profile Christians are discovered, and the matter quietly disappears.

One example is the case of Mehdi Dibaj, an Iranian Christian leader who, after nine years in detention, was convicted of "apostasy from Islam" in 1993 and sentenced to death. Due to international publicity, the government denied this and unexpectedly released him in January 1994. Three days later, Bishop Haik Hovsepian-Mehr, who had

publicised Dibaj's case, disappeared, and eleven days later officials contacted his family with a photograph of his body for identification. Five months later, Dibaj's body was found in a forest with rope marks around his neck and stab wounds. The injuries showed he had been tortured and then hanged. (Estabrooks, 1996, pp. 54–56). Christian mission organisations report that many similar—and worse—cases occur regularly.

In Western countries, which are predominantly “Christian” in culture, there is religious freedom, and Muslims can practise their religion without hindrance. Islam makes use of this freedom—freedom that Christians and other religions do not enjoy in Muslim-majority countries—to strive for what is described as peace, where all are submitted to Allah.

If Islam means “peace,” it is clear that peace, according to Islam, is reserved for those who are within Islam and worship Allah. Outside Islam, there is conflict. If one does not accept Islam and does not worship Allah, one is considered an aggressor against whom Islam may wage Jihad (war), so that peace can be maintained through force, as previously shown. Islam also strives for peace with other religions. Once these groups accept Islam, there is peace. If they have not accepted Islam, Islam continues to strive for peace through Jihad (war).

These facts may easily stir feelings of resentment, anger, or hatred in some people. If this booklet provokes such a reaction, it has not achieved its purpose. Non-Muslims do have reason to feel threatened. As already indicated, the God of the Bible expects a Christian not to hate anyone but to love all people, including their enemies:

Romans 13:8: “Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.”

Praying for your enemy's conversion to the true God, and refusing ever to use violence against him—except in cases where self-defence is unavoidable—is not an unloving act. This is therefore a test of the Christianity of anyone who calls themselves a Christian. It will not be easy, because emotions such as resentment, anger, and hatred are natural human reactions in certain circumstances, especially for those who believe they are in control of their own lives. However, when one is fully surrendered to God, one is under the guidance of His Holy Spirit, who enables loving (benevolent) behaviour toward all.

The Christian must trust God to give wisdom in every situation so that their actions will honour God and benefit their neighbour, including their enemy. The greatest blessing any person can receive is knowledge of—and salvation through—the Lord Jesus. Remember, firm action can also be good for someone. Consider a child who needs discipline. Discipline must be carried out in love and for the benefit of the person or group involved.

It is completely impossible that the true God, Yahweh, could also be Allah of Islam. Yahweh, the God of love, desires to save all people from the state of spiritual death

into which all humans are born. He does not want anyone—including the person reading this—to be lost. He desires to reconcile every person to Himself.

1 Timothy 2:3–4: *“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

This desire of God for the salvation of all people—reconciliation with Him—is not something He forces through violence. The Bible is clear about how a person can be saved and reconciled to God.

15. Reconciliation with God?

After the fall, humanity was sent out of God's presence and cannot return to Him. Human beings now find themselves in a world that is cursed and under the power of the evil One. Therefore, every person born, is spiritually dead in a condition of being forsaken by God and condemned to eternal destruction. Salvation from this lost condition is, through the grace of God, available to every person. Yahweh, the God of the Bible, has made a new spiritual birth possible — a new life of reconciliation with Him. No one who refuses this new life needs to fear violence during their earthly existence. It is about spiritual renewal and an eternal life of restored fellowship with God. The only true and living God does not want anyone, including the person reading this now, to be lost.

1 Timothy 2:3-4: *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."*

2 Peter 3:9: *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."*

No one can ever do enough to earn salvation and thereby reconciliation with God.

John 14:6: *"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'"*

Romans 3:23: *"... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"*

Ephesians 2:12: *"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:"*

The Lord Jesus came to bear the punishment that humanity deserves, and in doing so to obtain salvation and reconciliation with God for every person.

Romans 5:8: *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

Ephesians 1:7: *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"*

The price has been paid, and salvation is available to every person on earth. However, it must be believed and accepted, just as every gift one receives in this life must be believed and accepted.

John 1:12-13: *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*

John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

The ability to believe, which every person possesses, is a gift from God; therefore, those who do believe have nothing to boast about.

Ephesians 2:8-9: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."*

Those who believe and accept this are spiritually reborn and begin a new life of reconciliation with God.

Romans 3:24-25: *"... being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,"*

Romans 5:10: *"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."*

Colossians 1:21: *"And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled"*

1 John 2:1-2: *"And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."*

1 John 4:10: *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

Everyone who believes that the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus on the cross also paid for their sin, and accepts it as God's gift of salvation, can know that they have eternal life; see:

1 John 5:11-13: *"And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God."*

Romans 10:9-10: *"... if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."*

For those who desire reconciliation with God, there is this good news:

James 4:8: ***"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."***

One can draw near to God in prayer. Believe and accept God's gift of salvation through the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus with gratitude, confess your sins, and turn from them. This is new birth — leading to a new life in Christ.

A newly reborn Christian believer needs growth in faith. For this, study of the Bible and fellowship with other believers is essential.

"... we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:20b

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