

SLB-010

The Spiritual Life Basics

**Introduction: The Need for a Spiritual Life -
The Times in Which We Live Part 10**

Pope remarks reveal harder stance



- **Pope 'sorry' for offence to Islam**
- **Pope Benedict XVI has said he is sorry that a speech in which he referred to Islam has offended Muslims.**
- In a statement read out by a senior Vatican official, the Pope said he respected Islam and hoped Muslims would understand the true sense of his words.
- In Tuesday's speech the Pope quoted a 14th Century Christian emperor who said the Prophet Muhammad had brought the world only "evil and inhuman" things.

Pope remarks reveal harder stance



- **The Holy Father is very sorry that some passages of his speech may have sounded offensive to the sensibilities of Muslim believers**
- Tarcisio Bertone
- Vatican secretary of state
- The BBC's Christian Fraser in Rome says the speed with which the Vatican has reacted shows just how seriously it views the situation.
- Reading the statement, new Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone said the Pope's position on Islam was in line with Vatican teaching that the Church "esteems Muslims, who adore the only God".

Pope remarks reveal harder stance



- "The Holy Father is very sorry that some passages of his speech may have sounded offensive to the sensibilities of Muslim believers," the statement said.
- But Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood said the statement did not go far enough and called on the pontiff to apologise in person.
- "The Vatican Secretary of State says that the Pope is sorry because his statements had been badly interpreted, but there is no bad interpretation," Abdel Moneim Abul Futuh, a senior official from the opposition party told AFP.

Pope remarks reveal harder stance



- But the Pope is known to have strong feelings about the relationship between religion and violence and is thought unlikely to retract the sentiment of his speech.
- There will still be concerns about whether to go ahead with the Pope's planned visit to Turkey in November, our correspondent says.
- The BBC's David Willey in Rome says Pope Benedict, a theologian who has led a sheltered life in the Vatican for more than two decades, may not have understood the potential implications of his remarks.

Pope remarks reveal harder stance



- He says the Cardinal Bertone, the newly-appointed top Vatican official, faces the task of serious damage control in the coming days.
- Security at the Vatican is being stepped up, although the pontiff remains closeted with his closest advisers at his summer villa at Castelgandolfo near Rome.

Pope remarks reveal harder stance



- Reactions to the speech have come from such leaders as Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, who said efforts to link Islam and terrorism should be clearly opposed.
- Street protests have been held in Pakistan, India, Turkey and Gaza.
- In the West Bank city of Nablus, two churches were firebombed on Saturday in attacks claimed by a group which said it was protesting against the Pope's remarks.
- But German Chancellor Angela Merkel has come to the pontiff's defence, saying the aim of the speech had been misunderstood.

Pope remarks reveal harder stance

- ISTANBUL -- Turkey's top Islamic cleric asked Pope Benedict XVI yesterday to take back recent remarks he made about Islam and unleashed a string of counteraccusations against Christianity, raising tensions before the pontiff's November visit to Turkey -- his first to a Muslim majority nation.

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Pope remarks reveal harder stance

- In a speech Tuesday, at Regensburg University in Germany, the pope quoted from a book recounting a conversation between 14th-century Byzantine Christian Emperor Manuel Paleologos II and an educated Persian on the truths of Islam and Christianity.

"The emperor comes to speak about the issue of jihad, holy war," the pope said.

"He said, I quote, 'Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached.' "

Pope remarks reveal harder stance

- The Vatican hastened to defend the pope, saying that the pontiff wanted to promote respect toward and dialogue with other religions, "obviously also toward Islam."

But Ali Bardakoglu, head of Turkey's powerful Religious Affairs Directorate, said he was deeply offended by the remarks about Islamic holy war, calling them "extraordinarily worrying, saddening and unfortunate."

Mr. Bardakoglu said that "if the pope was reflecting the spite, hatred and enmity" of others in the Christian world, it would be even more troubling.

Pope remarks reveal harder stance

- Mr. Bardakoglu said that he expected an apology from the pope and that it was Christianity, not Islam, that popularized conversion by the sword, according to Turkey's state-owned Anatolia news agency.
- "The church and the Western public, because they saw Islam as the enemy, went on Crusades. They occupied Istanbul; they killed thousands of people. Orthodox Christians and Jews were killed and tortured," he said.

Koran & Terror

- 3:151 We will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve, because they set up with Allah that for which He has sent down no authority, and their abode is the fire, and evil is the abode of the unjust.
- 8:60 And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to terrorize thereby the enemy of Allah...
- 8:12 I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them. Moreover Allah says of those who reject him. Because, Allah has already sentenced them to death.

Koran & Unbelievers

- Unbelievers
- 2:191, And slay them wherever ye catch them
- 2:193, And fight them on until there is no more Tumult or oppression
- 2:216, Fighting is prescribed for you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you
- 3:28, Let not the believers Take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah

Koran & Unbelievers

- 4:48 "Allah forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else, to whom He pleaseth; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin Most heinous indeed."
- 4:84, Then fight in Allah\'s cause - Thou art held responsible only for thyself - and rouse the believers. It may be that Allah will restrain the fury of the Unbelievers; for Allah is the strongest in might and in punishment.
- 4:141, And never will Allah grant to the unbelievers a way (to triumphs) over the believers

Koran & Unbelievers

- 5:33, The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter;
- 8:12, I will instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers: smite ye above their necks and smite all their finger-tips off them

Koran & Unbelievers

- 8:15-16, O ye who believe! when ye meet the Unbelievers in hostile array, never turn your backs to them. If any do turn his back to them on such a day - unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own) he draws on himself the wrath of Allah, and his abode is Hell,- an evil refuge (indeed)!
- 8:17, It is not ye who slew them; it was Allah: when thou threwest (a handful of dust), it was not thy act, but Allah\'s: in order that He might test the Believers by a gracious trial from Himself

Koran & Unbelievers

- 8:60, Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom Allah doth know. Whatever ye shall spend in the cause of Allah, shall be repaid unto you, and ye shall not be treated unjustly.

Koran & Unbelievers

- 8:65, O Prophet! rouse the Believers to the fight. If there are twenty amongst you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred: if a hundred, they will vanquish a thousand of the Unbelievers
- 9:5, But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem.

Koran & Unbelievers

- 9:3, And an announcement from Allah and His Messenger, to the people (assembled) on the day of the Great Pilgrimage,- that Allah and His Messenger dissolve (treaty) obligations with the Pagans. If then, ye repent, it were best for you; but if ye turn away, know ye that ye cannot frustrate Allah. And proclaim a grievous penalty to those who reject Faith.
- 9:14, Fight them, and Allah will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you (to victory) over them, heal the breasts of Believers,

Koran & Unbelievers

- 9:23, O ye who believe! take not for protectors your fathers and your brothers if they love infidelity above Faith: if any of you do so, they do wrong.
- 9:28, O ye who believe! Truly the Pagans are unclean; so let them not, after this year of theirs, approach the Sacred Mosque.
- 9:29, Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.

Koran & Unbelievers

- 009.029 YUSUFALI: Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.
- 009.029 PICKTHAL: Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture 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.

Koran & Unbelievers

- 009.029 SHAKIR: Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.
- 9:39, Unless ye go forth, (for Jihad) He will punish you with a grievous penalty, and put others in your place; but Him ye would not harm in the least.

Koran & Unbelievers

- 9:73, O Prophet! strive hard against the unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be firm against them. Their abode is Hell,- an evil refuge indeed.
- 9:111, Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the garden (of Paradise): they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur'an

Koran & Unbelievers

- 9:123, O ye who believe! fight the unbelievers who gird you about, and let them find firmness in you: and know that Allah is with those who fear Him.
- 22:9, (Disdainfully) bending his side, in order to lead (men) astray from the Path of Allah: for him there is disgrace in this life, and on the Day of Judgment We shall make him taste the Penalty of burning (Fire).

Koran & Unbelievers

- 22:19-22; These two antagonists dispute with each other about their Lord: But those who deny (their Lord),- for them will be cut out a garment of Fire: over their heads will be poured out boiling water. With it will be scalded what is within their bodies, as well as (their) skins. In addition there will be maces of iron (to punish) them. Every time they wish to get away therefrom, from anguish, they will be forced back therein, and (it will be said), "Taste ye the Penalty of Burning!"
- 25:52, So obey not the disbelievers, but strive against them herewith with a great endeavour.

Koran & Unbelievers

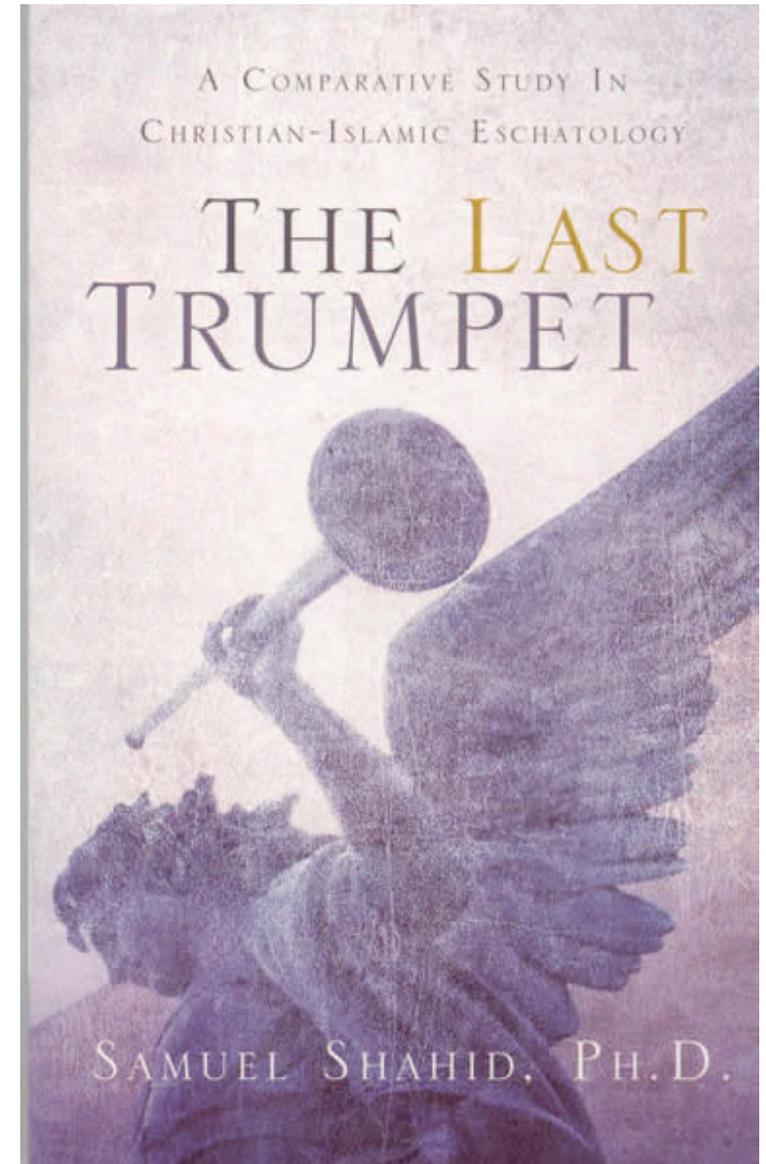
- 47:4, Therefore, when ye meet the Unbelievers (in fight), smite at their necks; At length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly (on them): thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom: Until the war lays down its burdens.

Koran & Unbelievers

- 25:68 "Those who invoke not, with Allah, any other god, nor slay such life as Allah has made sacred except for just cause, nor commit fornication; - and any that does this (not only) meets punishment. "(But) the Penalty on the Day of Judgment will be doubled to him, and he will dwell therein in ignominy,-
- 37:22-23, "Bring ye up", it shall be said, "The wrongdoers and their wives, and the things they worshipped- Besides Allah, and lead them to the Way to the (Fierce) Fire!

Gog and Magog

- "The Last Trumpet" is available
- online at
- www.lifewaystores.com,
- or by calling Good News
- for the Crescent World
- at 817-275-3413.
- by Lauri Arnold



Gog and Magog

- FORT WORTH, Texas (SWBTS) -- Christians will be surprised to learn that some of the end times predictions in the Quran are very similar -- even identical -- to end times passages in the Bible, according to a professor of Islamic studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.
- Samuel Shahid, who has served on the faculty of the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary since 1998, is the author of a newly-released book titled, "The Last Trumpet: A Comparative Study in Christian-Islamic Eschatology."

Gog and Magog

- Shahid writes, for example, that the Quran describes the end of time coming "suddenly and like the twinkling of an eye." It also says that only Allah "has the knowledge of the Hour."
- Also, passages in the Quran teach that "a trumpet will blast on that day."
- These Quranic statements about the end times should sound familiar to Christians, Shahid said.

Gog and Magog

- The similarities between the Quran's eschatological language and that of the Bible "are very striking," Shahid said.
- But that doesn't imply that the God of the Bible revealed the statements in the Quran to Muhammad.
- "There is no doubt that they are not revealed; they are borrowed," Shahid said of specific eschatological statements found in the Quran.

Gog and Magog

- Shahid, who began research on the topic three years ago, sets forth both a side-by-side comparison of Christian and Islamic eschatology, and an in-depth look at the sources of Islamic eschatology.
- "Maybe this is the only book on the market that is an analytical comparative study between Islamic eschatology and Christian eschatology," he said.

Gog and Magog

- Shahid said that during his research for the book, new dimensions and ideas related to the topic began to take shape in ways that he had never anticipated or thought of before.
- He said that even though he suspected that Islamic eschatology might be influenced by Christian eschatology even before making a scholarly comparative study, his research revealed that Islamic eschatology also was influenced by Judaism, Zoroastrianism, apocalyptic materials, apocryphal materials and even Christian legends.

Gog and Magog

- "When we talk about Islamic paradise and we compare it with the Zoroastrian paradise, you will be amazed to see the similarities between the two," he said.
- Shahid also describes a story from the Quran called dhu al-qarnayn.
- He said many Muslims believe the person described in this story is the historical figure Alexander the Great.
- The man is said to be a righteous person, an old man, given certain power and the person who built a wall around the tribes of Gog and Magog.

Gog and Magog



Gog and Magog

- "In my research, I came across what is called the Syrian-Christian legend of Alexander the Great, and I found out that this story is the story that is recorded in the Quran itself," Shahid said. "And this one predates the Quran at least by 200 years."
- Further, Shahid noted that many of the events described in Ezekiel 38 and 39, which speak of Gog and Magog, are also recorded in later Islamic traditions.
- "The only difference between what we have in Ezekiel 38 and 39 is that Gog and Magog are coming to attack the people of Israel, while in Islam they are coming to attack the Muslims," he said.

Gog and Magog

- Shahid said his new book turns up differences between Islamic traditions and the teachings in the Quran. Writings of Islamic traditions, he said, are open to interpretation; but statements in the Quran are taken literally and believed by all Muslims to be the revealed word of God.
- Shahid said that the explanation for the different approaches taken to these two sources is unclear. "I am not here really to argue with Muslims about that," he said. "But there must be an answer."

Gog and Magog

- He said that the book was written with both Christians and Muslims in mind.
- "Some Muslims will find out some material that they were not aware of which has to do with their own Islam," Shahid said. "Very few people, whether they are Christians or Muslims, have a good idea about Islamic eschatology. They have general knowledge about it, but there are so many details that very few know about."

Gog and Magog

- Other chapters in Shahid¹'s book compare Christian and Islamic views of heaven, paradise, hell, the "day of judgment" and the Antichrist.
- Shahid, who was born and raised in Lebanon, has spent his academic career studying, teaching and writing about the beliefs, culture, history and literature of that area of the world. In addition to teaching at Southwestern Seminary, Shahid serves as the director of Good News for the Crescent World. He is a sought after speaker on Islam and is the author of more than 45 books in both English and Arabic.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- Who Will Be Able to Recognize Jesus (pbuh)?
- Another subject that has received a great deal of attention is how Jesus will be recognized or by what features we will know him. As a person who was created superior in terms of knowledge, intelligence, physical appearance, and character, he will have the facial expression of a Prophet. His God-fearing nature and deepest faith will shine on his face so much so that people will instantly realize that they are looking upon someone quite superior.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- God revealed that Jesus is "of high esteem in this world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near" (Qur'an, 3:45). Like all Prophets, he will be known to those people surrounding him as an embodiment of God's Word, as well as his respectability, distinction, and dignity. Those who meet him will recognize him instantaneously, and no doubts will cloud their hearts. And those who rejected his arrival will realize their error.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- It will be possible to identify him by a Prophet's attributes, which are described in the Qur'an. Other circumstances also will cause people to recognize him. One of the most important ones will be that he will be solitary: He will have no family or relatives, and no one will have known him from before. This is because all of the people who knew him lived and died 2,000 years ago. His mother Mary, Zachariah, the disciples who spent years with him, the Jewish leadership, and everyone who heard him preach are all dead.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- Therefore, when he comes again no one will have witnessed his birth, childhood, youth, and adulthood, and no one will know anything about him. There will be no childhood photos of him, and no one will have any memories of him.
- No doubt, this situation does away with the nuisance of "false messiahs." When Jesus returns, there will be nothing to cast any doubt on his identity. Nobody will find any cause to deny who he is, because Jesus will return just as he was before God raised him to His presence, including his garments, and will have superior qualities that no human being could imitate.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- The Qur'an, either in the verses or in particular stories, provides us various explanations regarding the past prophets. Many common attributes of the prophets and of the true believers are mentioned in the Qur'an. Furthermore, it is also possible to find all the attributes of the believers in the verses. In this context, the superior attributes of Jesus (as) related to faith are also discernible in the Qur'an. Accordingly, referring to the Qur'an, sincere believers can assess these superior attributes observable on him and accordingly recognise him.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- At this point, one has to keep in mind that recognising Jesus (as) may not be possible for everyone. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi states the following about this subject:
- When Jesus (Upon whom be peace) comes, it is not necessary that everyone should know him to be the true Jesus. His elect and those close to him will recognize him through the light of belief. It will not be self-evident so that everyone will recognize him.1

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- As Beduuzzaman also agrees, during the early years of his second coming, the people knowing Jesus (as) will be limited to the small group of people who are close to him. Furthermore, this will only be possible by "the light of belief". Of course this phrase needs further explanation: "The light of belief" is the comprehension granted by Allah to those who believe in the existence and unity of Allah and who observe the commands of the Qur'an.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- With such comprehension, believers can evaluate situations precisely and grasp the details of the events with no difficulty. As the Qur'an informs us, believers are those people who ponder upon everything surrounding them and thus never miss the details or subtle aspects of things.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- Indeed, Allah informs man that He will grant discrimination (to judge between right and wrong) to those who reflect upon each thing in an endeavour to comprehend the greatness and might of Allah and to those who have fear for Him:
- You who believe! If you have taqwa of (heed) Allah, He will give you discrimination and erase your bad actions from you and forgive you. Allah's favour is indeed immense. (Surat al-Anfal: 29)

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- Thus, those who will recognise Jesus (as) during his second coming and adhere to him will actually be the ones who believe in Allah and the Qur'an, and think deeply over things. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, too, draws attention to this issue:
- In fact, although when Jesus (Peace be upon him) comes he himself will know he is Jesus, not everyone will know.2

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- In the history of mankind, that Jesus (as) will be sent back to earth for a second time by Allah is surely a divine favour to all humanity. Only a minority of people will enjoy this occasion. He will then be a blessed "saviour" sent to all mankind. Indeed, in times when violence and disorder were increasingly experienced in the world, human beings begged a "helper" from Allah. Accordingly, Allah responded to their plea:
- What reason could you have for not fighting in the Way of Allah – for those men, women and children who are oppressed and say, "Our Lord, take us out of this city whose inhabitants are wrongdoers! Give us a protector from You! Give us a helper from You!"?
(Surat an-Nisa: 75)

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- As mentioned earlier, the "saviour" in our time is the penetration of the Qur'anic values to our souls and society. Upon his second coming, Jesus (as) will wholeheartedly adhere to these revealed values favoured by Allah and strive purely to spread them to people all over the world.
- The knowledge of unseen and future events is something only known to Allah. Yet, it is certain that those who expect this blessed period and this person must at that time undertake important obligations. Just as Jesus (as) will protect and guide all believers, the believers will also have to give wholehearted support to Jesus (as) and help him in the services he renders for the sake of Allah.

HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE PROPHET JESUS?

- This time, in other words, during his second coming, believers should never make him ask again, "Who will be my helpers to Allah?" (Surah Al 'Imran: 52)
Otherwise, one will feel deep regret and torment both in this world and hereafter. Allah clearly threatens those who are ungrateful:
- Then we sent our Messengers one after another, at intervals. Each time its Messenger came to a community they called him a liar so We made them follow one another too and turned them into myths and legends. Away with the people who have no faith! (Surat al-Muminun: 44)