

Jesus the Beloved Messenger of Allah

1.4 Authority and Authenticity of Scriptures Part 2

Summary

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Assalamualikum the basic theme of the whole series is that the idea of god incarnate can neither be explained with any intelligible terms nor are they supported by the text of the bible Old or New Testament assuming that we are taking the bible as it is. In the previous program we began to even examine as to whether the entire Bible from A to Z each and every word indeed is the word of God or not. In the previous program we indicated that there are several passages in the Bible both Old and New Testament which indicates that it is not really the word of God and that it contains ideas and opinions of human beings who at times negated that they received any command from God in what they say. Like for example Chapter 7 Verse 25. So we concluded from that that the internal evidence does not seem to indicate a consistent continuous claim of being from divine origin. We did not however touch on the external evidence relating to the authority of the Bible such as the freedom from actual errors and the freedom from any inconsistency or contradiction or any prophecy that was proven to be incorrect.

Host: First let's look at the external evidence. What did you mean when you were talking about the freedom of factual errors?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Or errors in factual methods to be more accurate. Well this has been discussed in previous series on the Quran the Ultimate Miracle and I will use this as a quick reference for this particular program. According to the book of Genesis for example it tells us that the creation of day and night and the creation of vegetation took place before the creation of firmaments such as the sun as we all know scientifically this is an impossibility. Following the chronology of the Bible also seems to indicate the first homosapien the first human being to live on earth Adam lived on earth less than fifty-eight hundred years ago and we know again from the standpoint of scientific and archaeological evidence that this is an impossibility. These examples and many others were discussed and reference was made to very interesting volume written by Dr.Maurice Bucaille *The Bible The Quran and Science* in which the same criteria was applied to the Quran also only to discover that there is no similar passage in the entire Quran that is at odds with any established I am not talking about theories but established scientific facts. There are also some problems which perhaps may be termed as logical impossibilities. For example, if one refers to the description of the Temple of Solomon as is described in the first book of Kings in Chapter 6 Verse 23 you will find that the measurement is approximately three thousand square feet. However the number of people that are working in that Temple elsewhere in the first chronicle Chapter 23 Verse 4 is a total of Thirty-eight thousand people including Twenty-four thousand servants, officers, worshippers, and so on. Well to divide Three

thousand square feet by Thirty-eight thousand people that would leave each person with one tenth of a square foot which is a clear impossibility. This seems to indicate that this kind of description could not be the product of divine revelation or guidance of the Holy Spirit but rather the understanding and perhaps even the exaggeration of the particular authors who wrote those descriptions.

Host: How about the question of inconsistency is there any evidence for this?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

This is a subject that has been dealt with in great detail not even by Non-Christian ethics but by many Biblical scholars themselves. In fact in September of 1957 a Christian publication called Awake came with the headline in bold letters *50,000 Errors in the Bible*. Actually in that they were referring to shortened summaries of many Biblical scholars of high repute indicating that there are numerous errors and problems of inconsistencies in the Bible both in the Old and New Testament. Let me just give a few examples because they say some of them have been reconciled and I have no dispute with that they can be possibly something that may appear different but it might be the description of the same event from two different angles but not with any errors. But there is no claim that has been made or is being made that all of them are reconcilable. For example, who provoked David to make a census or number for the children of Israel? Will in one answer it is said in the Bible for one version it said it was Satan and the other says it was God. This can be compared by looking into the first chronicle Chapter 21 and compare it to second Samuel Chapter 24 about the periods or duration of famine with David and there are two answers again just different places. One version is that it was three years and the other seven years. We can do that by comparing first chronicle Chapter 21 and second Samuel Chapter 24. The number of Syrians that were killed by David in one version it said that he killed seven hundred carriers and forty thousand horsemen. In the second version it says it was seven thousand carriers and forty thousand footmen. So you have difficulty here in terms of the numbers and difficulty with mixing horsemen and footmen. That again can be seen by comparing the second book of Samuel Chapter 10 and the first chronicle Chapter 19. A fourth example: how old was the ruler of Jerusalem? In one version it says that he was eight years old when he began to reign in Jerusalem and he ruled for three months and ten days. In another place in the Bible describing the same person it says that his age when he began to reign was eighteen not eight and that he reigned for three months. Again the comparison between the second book of chronicles Chapter 56 versus the second book of Kings in Chapter 24. A fifth example: the number of stalls of horses that David had. In one place it says that it was forty thousand and another place says it was four thousand. That is a margin of one thousand percent and both cannot be correct and at the same time this can be found by comparing the first Kings Chapter 4 with the second chronicle Chapter 9. As I indicated earlier the examples are numerous and the Biblical scholars themselves fix about problems by the thousands and the main conclusion one can come with really is that it is untenable that the entire Bible may be the word of God but to say that everything mentioned is a variety of authors who wrote in different times and places throughout history were all inspired by God or the Holy Spirit is simply untenable according to the Biblical scholars themselves.

Host: So far Dr.Jamal you have given examples from the Old Testament. Do you have any examples possibly from the New Testament?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

The classic example in the New Testament that many Biblical scholars have paid attention to is the lineage of Jesus Peace be Upon Him. Before I get into that it is interesting that two gospel writers that are Matthew and Luke have gone out of their way to try and show the human lineage through Jesus even though they believe him to be the son of God. But leaving that philosophical or theological problem aside which was raised by Michael Goldberg which he does in another program, if you just look at the information given compare Matthew Chapter 1 with Luke Chapter 3 we find that there are three basic problems. One, according to Matthew, Jesus Peace be Upon Him is said to be the descendant of David through Solomon: one of the sons of David. According to Luke, Jesus is a descendant of David through the other son Nathan. Again both cannot be correct at the same time. A second problem is that according to Matthew there are twenty-six generations between David and Jesus. According to Luke the number is given as forty-one generations. Well this is a big diversion. Thirdly, by comparing the means of the ancestors or the supposed ancestors of Jesus you find that no two names on the both lists, be it twenty-six or forty-one, are identical. Except for the last name of Joseph who was supposed to be the legal father of Jesus Peace be Upon Him. We have indicated in addition to this in the previous program or more than one program perhaps that by analyzing one segment of what the gospel speaks about the life of Jesus Peace be Upon Him that even in the area of crucifixion and the events immediately before and immediately after we have pointed out twenty-seven inconsistencies. So the problem actually as many Biblical scholars are aware of applies to the Old and New Testament. They take a separate position by saying the Bible contains the word of God but there are very few who can say with reasonable evidence from A to Z that it actually is.

Host: Now how about the question of prophecies? Do you have any specifics or examples of this?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Well for example the three synoptic gospels Mark, Matthew, and Luke attribute to Jesus that he said he is going to come back again to rule and reign in the lifetime of his contemporaries and that is found in Matthew Chapters 10, 16, and 24. In the gospel according to Mark Chapter 13, and in Luke Chapter 21 and all of which seem to indicate that this coming is imminent in the lifetime of his contemporaries. We all know that this never happened. Secondly, according to Matthew again Chapter 19 Verses 27 through 29 it is attributed to Jesus that he prophesized that each of the twelve disciples will be sitting to rule over one of the twelve tribes of Israel. We know that not only did this not happen but we also know that one of the twelve disciples is Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus and is a traitor and cannot be expected at any point of time to be a ruler, but above all it never happened. That is why a Muslim who has a great deal of respect of Jesus as a truthful messenger of God never believed that Jesus said that and actually conclude like many Biblical scholars that this could have possibly been words that were put in the mouth of Jesus but he never really prophesized that for a prophet's prophecies have to be fulfilled. These examples I

believe are more than enough to show that the theory of the Bible being written all by the guidance of the Holy Spirit and that it is all the word of God does not seem to be a tenable position at all and in order to sift through the Bible and discern the word of God with the words of other human beings there was a necessity to have a new revelation which the Muslims believe is the Quran that removed all of the confusion and put things back into their truthful original revealed form.

Host: Dr.Jamal now let's turn to the other aspect of the topic about the authenticity. Now what does this mean and how does it apply to the Bible?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Well when we speak about authenticity we speak about the extent that a given document or information or revelation has been preserved over time aside from the question of authority whether it is the word of God or not. I should note here that a document or information could possibly be authentic but not authoritative. In other words, it could be authentic in the sense that it has been preserved over time but it does not mean that it is necessarily the word of God. We can produce the preserved writings of Shakespeare but that does not mean it is the word of God. On the other hand, something could have been originally authoritative, the word of God, but over time it was not possible to preserve it in its purity separate from commentaries and ideas of other human beings. In that sense it could be originally authoritative but the way it exists and this given point in time it is not authentic it has not been preserved. Just to clarify that in the series that we had on the Quran we had given detailed evidence that the Quran is authoritative both internal and external evidence that it could not have been the words of Prophet Muhammad or any other human being and the examples were quite plentiful. In the second half of the series we examined the issue of authenticity of the Quran and how it was transmitted to us and how it was written down and memorized simultaneously by large number of peoples during the lifetime of the Prophet under his supervision and in the original language that the Prophet spoke and it has come to us and transmitted generation after generation through both means writing and memorization without the slightest change. It is true as we indicated in some of those programs that there might have been styles of recitation that the Prophet allowed for some tribes with the same words and meanings at least. It is true that there have been some unofficial collections that some of the companions like Ali, Ubayy, and Ibn Masood might have had. Yet we still are talking about the same Quran. Today we have translations of the Quran but that is different from versions. You can have Qira'at, connections, and translations but these are not really versions or different Qurans containing different things. In the situation of the Bible things are quite different, we are not talking about translations we are talking about versions.

Host: What do you see as the main differences between the Bible and the Quran?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

I think perhaps it centers around that version versus translation. Of course when we talk about the Bible or the Quran or any scripture it is possible to have different kind of translations for that matter even in the same language using the same original manuscripts. When you really speak about translations you really speak about as one

scholar once put it, the difference between spelling it color or colour but that in the case of the Bible really is really far from just talking about translations. There are really versions for example; we all know that the Catholic Bible is different from the Protestant Bible. The Catholic Bible contains seventy-three books total both Old and New Testament. The Protestant Bible is composed of sixty-six books and each side believes that the Bible A to Z or at least some groups believe that it is the word of God. Which one for there is a difference of seven books. In addition to this there are substantial differences between for example the King James version-and that is why it is called a “version” they admit- and the revised standard version of the Bible. First of all as indicated in a previous program in John 3:16 there is a crucial difference for in one case it says forgot the only begotten son and the other just says begotten which has a very important theological implication. The first apostle of John in Chapter 5 Verse 7 which speaks about the three that bear witness in heaven which is the closest thing describing the trinity and was proven to be unauthentic and did not exist in the most authentic and ancient manuscripts. So here one Bible contains it and the other one does not. The Gospel according to Mark we find again Verses 9 through 20 is there in the King James version in the revised standard version it is not in the text it is put in the footnotes with the observation that some misauthentic or other copies include those endings. We really don’t have any copy at all of the New Testament in the language that Jesus spoke. For example, the Quran is still available until today in the Arabic language in which Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him spoke. There is no parallel to that at all by having let’s say teachings of Jesus in Aramaic. Even if such manuscripts had existed at any point in time it was the sole and only source of other New Testament literature that was written in different languages afterwards. We all know that historically there have been dozens of Gospels not only before and it is not really clear and many scholars are not really clear of how these particular four were chosen as the canonical gospels and the rest were dismissed. For example, in the encyclopedia Americana in Volume 3 of the 59th editions pages 651 through 653 we find there is a clear indication of the difficulty of discerning how the gospels came to be chosen and I quote, “We have no certain knowledge as to how or where the four Gospel canons came to be formed.” Similar statements are made in encyclopedia Britannica the 1960 edition in the second volume page 514, but even if we take these four as you say canonical Gospels many of the Biblical scholars are not even sure whether these were the exclusive works of their respective authors alone. In fact, some of the scholars like reverend Jerome O’Connor who is a professor of the New Testament in Biblique in Jerusalem which by the way is a Roman Catholic school that was established some times back for Biblical studies. According to reverend O’Connor he says that if you examine some of those texts there is lack of what you call literal unity. So by analyzing the Gospel it doesn’t seem to indicate that it was written just by one man. So it seems that there was joint authorship. In addition to this we find that in fact most of the New Testament literature has been written by people who were not eye witnesses of the life and mission of Prophet Jesus Peace be Upon Him.

Host: Now you said most of these writers were not eyewitnesses how would you explain that?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Alright, it is known that the New Testament contains twenty seven books which includes the four Gospels. Now approximately one half of the New Testament was written by a non-eyewitness which was done by Paul who was never a disciple of Jesus during his mission. Fifteen books, and there is also another book by a man or called the book of Jude and that name never appears in the name of the disciples or anywhere in the synoptic Gospels. Then there is the book of Act written by Luke and we'll state again that Luke was not really an eyewitness of Jesus. In the New Testament you find also that there are three apostles accredited to John so is the book of Revelation and again there is a big dispute to whether this is the same John who is the author of the fourth Gospel and whether he had anything to do with John son of Zebedee who was a disciple of Jesus and this highly doubtful and most scholars believe that it was not really John from the disciples of Jesus or an eyewitness. Then if we look at the whole Gospels themselves, take for example the oldest according to most scholars Mark and the Gospel according to Mark. Now according to a well-known Biblical scholar by the name of Dennis Nineham in his book called Saint Mark he says that this Mark is quite different from the John Mark that was mentioned in the Act or other places and letters in the New Testament. He says that as a scholar there is no person who was as close to Jesus or famous in the early church that was known by the name of Mark. Secondly, many of the scholars indicate or believe that the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were based on Mark and who again is highly unlikely to be an eyewitness of Jesus, plus some additional material of course. Take Matthew for example, some Biblical scholars like John Fenton say that Matthew is not really as some people believe the same person as Levi. That is not the same as some people claim. It is interesting to notice here that in the older Gospel of Mark in Chapter 2 Verse 14 it describes an incident when Jesus Peace be Upon Him was passing by and the he saw a man by the name of Levi who was a tax collector and he asked him to follow him and he did follow him. Then the Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 9 Verse 9 it describes the identical story but instead of calling him Levi it calls him Matthew. That is why John Fenton says this is not really the same person and apparently the writer of the Gospel according to Matthew changed the names but this was not the name of the same person just changed the name somehow to deal authority to the Gospel because it relates to someone who used to be a disciple of Jesus. According to the Gospel of Luke as indicated before suffice to look into the introduction in which he says again clearly that he is basing his writing not off of eyewitness but what he has been told by others. Coming now to the non-synoptic Gospel of John many scholars believe it is not John the son of Zebedee as some people believe. In fact in John 19:35 he speaks and says he who saw it bear witness he knows that he tells the truth. Who is he? Apparently to say the Gospel according to my given impression that it was based on what was believed to be the teaching of John we do not even know if John was the disciple or not. That means that actually that the two letters one to Peter and one to James were both disciples if these were truth then they are nine pages out of 242 pages out of the New Testament which is less than four percent of the New Testament Literature. The problem is not just the authorship but even the manuscripts of the same gospel accredited to the same author we have some difficulties also.

Host: Can you now explain the last point of the manuscripts under the same author of not being consistent?

Dr.Jamal Bawadi:

Well many of the scholars say that even though we have many great manuscripts for example many of them have variant forms and that some of those variants were written as two or three centuries later. We indicated for example previous indications from Biblical scholars that selection arrangement and preservation of materials were based on the faith of the writers more than anything else. That interpretative material was placed upon the lips of Prophet Jesus Peace be Upon Him

Host: Actually I thought we would be able to conclude this but it looks like we might have to carry over partially into our next program and we will see how it goes. Thank you Dr.Jamal Badawi

1.2 Comparative Christology - The Quran and Deification Part 2

Summary

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Last week's program we started the discussion of comparative Christology especially in respect to the portrait of Jesus in the Quran and comparing that to what Christian theologians usually present. We indicated that there are of important similarity between Muslims and Christians at least so far as accepting, loving, and honoring Jesus Peace Be Upon Him and the authority of the Quran for the Muslims. We indicated also that there are areas of difference relating to the scope of his mission, the question of crucifixion, second coming, the nature of his message, but most importantly it was indicated that all of these differences really center around the question of divinity. Whether Jesus was a human or divine and in order to analyze and study this issue we suggested that you can either scrutinize the authority, authenticity, and history of both scriptures the Quran and the Bible to see how they are used for a support for one position or the other. Secondly, to scrutinize the positions themselves which are based on these holy books to see if they have a sound basis and to whether they make sense, and to whether they have any valid proof. Thirdly, is to begin with something even more fundamental, to find out whether any claim made by Muslims or Christians for that matter is substantiated by their own scriptures. More specifically, we can assume that the Muslim has no basis in the Quran to say Jesus was a human and the Quran says he was divine for example, or to again assume on the other hand the Christians may not have a strong sound basis from the Bible to say that Jesus indeed was divine. We began with the first assumption that Muslims and we indicated the points that some Christian writers say that they claim the Quran implies that Jesus was divine and we indicated that this was absolutely incorrect and we went through some of the discussion of issues such as: Jesus being called holy and pure, spirit from Allah, a word from Allah, *Maseeh* or anointed, and we explained that none of these really implied any divinity and that the Quran is very explicit when describing him as a messenger, a Prophet, and a faithful servant of Allah.

Host: Well Dr.Jamal I have realized that there have been a lot of literature on this particular issue, but I would like to ask you however to explain the main reason for the erroneous estimations suggested by some Christian writers.

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Well to start with, I do not make any claim that I have read all or even most of that literature but from the little I have read for Christian missionaries, especially Christian missionaries in Muslim countries, and by reading what they have said and trying to analyze it I noted that there are a number of reasons or number of category of errors. First, there are sometimes fictitious quotations that is referring to something and saying that this is in the Quran and if you go and check in the Quran you see it does not exist anywhere. Secondly, there are problems with misquotations. The Quran says something but the quotation says something different and it doesn't give the meaning that is being implied. Thirdly, there is a problem with partial quotations in a sense that stopping in the middle in a way that changes the meaning. The fourth type of error is to make claims or statements without quoting specific verses of the Quran just giving a general reference to the Quran, but if you refer to the text they are referring to you find their claim is not really substantiated by the Quran. The fifth type of error is basically is what I call hellenization of the language of the Quran.

Host: What are the specifics of the matter then? Maybe you can give us an example of the first type of error, in other words where the passage does not actually exist in the Quran

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Alright, this is something that really struck me and I wouldn't believe unless I saw it with my own eyes. I have seen an article that was distributed recently when I was giving a lecture at MIT and the title of the article was *The Significance of Jesus Christ in Islam* and it was written by Elvin Gill who was identified in the article as the national director of campus crusade for Christ in Pakistan and it says also that this article is condensed from his book *The Christ in Islam*. He says and I'm quoting, "According to Surah *Yaseen* and *Mary*, these are two chapters in the Quran, Jesus is the only one who can advise God concerning each individual on The Day of Judgment." The chapter that he refers to *Yaseen* is Chapter 36 in the Quran and I went through the entire chapter several times there is absolutely no verse in the chapter that has anything to do with Jesus Peace be Upon Him. Then we went to the second Surah he refers to without giving a verse number 19 and while Surah 19 is called *Mary* it obviously speaks about the story of Jesus but there is no single verse in the entire Surah that refers in a direct or indirect way to the statement that Jesus is the only one who will advise God on The Day of Judgment on the fate of every human being. I would suggest for any viewer to examine that by himself and again the Chapter number is 36 and 19, find any verse that says what he has been quoting. He gives the Surah so the readers think and he even gives the name of the Surah but you look into it and find it is not true. It is very difficult to explain why would a responsible writer like this in this position write something like this. Did he read the Quran? Did he even read the Surahs he made reference to? Is it right to make a fictitious quotation that does not exist in the others scripture.

Host: Okay, how about misquotations now?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Well in the same reference and this is not the only one but it provides clearer examples, the writer also says that the Quran refers to Jesus as and I quote him, “The greatest above all in this world and in the world to come.” This time instead of just giving the Surah number he gives the verse number or the passage number. That is Surah 3 Passage 45, and if you actually refer to that text you find that it does not say that at all. It simply describes Jesus as

Which means in English that Jesus is held in honor in this world and the hereafter and of those, or in company of those, nearest to God. It is obvious by referring to the original text of the Quran that the big difference between what the Quran says and what the author is quoting and putting between brackets as if it is a verbatim quotation from the Quran. I really adhere also that the text of the verse, aside from being than what he quotes, simply described that Jesus is honored and among those who are nearest to God and this means there are others who are near God also. Where did he get that restriction?

Host: Okay, maybe I’ll ask you to elaborate on that last point. In other words, maybe you can give us evidence from the Quran if it is available.

Dr. Jamal Badawi:

Yes there are lots of available evidence. For example, there are two very nice words that are used to refer to Jesus. That is *Wajeehan* and *Min Al-Muqarabeen*, and *Wajeehan* in Arabic means honored and the very exact term that is used to refer to Jesus was used to refer to Prophet Moses. The reference to that is Surah 33 Passage 69. The other term describing Prophet Jesus Peace be Upon Him is not unique to Jesus because it says *Min Al-Muqarabeen* and that is in the company of those who are close to God. The word *Muqarabeen* or close to God is used in the Quran to refer to the angels in Surah 4 Passage 172, it is also used to refer to other humans or Prophets like Jesus an example is Prophet Moses it also talks about him in Surah 19 Passage 52 where Allah speaks of drawing him near to him. It is even used to describe people other than angels and Prophets just pious people and some examples of that among many are Surah 56 Passage 11, Surah 82 Passages 21 and 28. The point that I am trying to make is the problem with the writer is not interpretation but it is a straight misquotation and as indicated earlier he is not the only one. In fact, I saw another publication it’s called *Isa or Jesus In The Quran and The Bible* and there is no name of author or authors but it says it was published by an organization called Fellowship of Isa or Jesus based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. On page seven of that publication it says and I quote, “Jesus Christ is the word of God, God’s revelation of himself to us.” The reference given to the Quran here is again the same verse I mentioned before another part of it Surah 3 Passage 45. (As seen above) If you go back to that and read it, it simply says in the Quran, “Behold the angel said O Mary, God gives you glad tidings of a word from him his name will be Christ Jesus the son of Mary.” Not *the* word, *a* word and where does it say in that quotation that Jesus is God’s revelation to us. Obviously again it is not a problem of differential translation it is not just a matter of different type of translation it is a clear misquotation also.

Host: Dr. Jamal maybe I’ll ask you to give us a few examples of one other kind of errors you mentioned. Those of which the author only gives partial quotations

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Okay, first of all I'd like to make a comment about when you say partial quotations and what that actually means because we know that any writer does not have to quote everything in full a writer usually chooses something that relates to the topic. That is legitimate in general, but what I meant here in an error in the form of partial quotations is when you break the verse or saying of the Prophet in the middle in such a way it gives it a different meaning altogether. You will get a completely different meaning if you keep reading the complete passage. I will give an example for that: if the weather outside is quite miserable and I asked you how was the weather outside and you tell me well it's pretty bad. If I quote you and say that Dr.Maneesh says that the weather is pretty I am exactly giving the opposite. Even by misquoting one word the meaning is exactly opposite and that is what I mean by partial quotation giving half-truths which can be misleading. An example in that especially in the writings of Christian missionaries is the same publication I referred to *Jesus in The Quran and Bible* published in Minnesota and he makes a reference of a saying of the Prophet Peace be Upon Him in Bukhari, and he used verbatim quotations. He quotes the following, "By him whose hand my soul is Jesus son of Mary will shortly descend among you (among you O Muslims) as a just ruler." Then he stops there and does not complete the Prophetic saying. The writer then concludes and I quote him from page 5, "No other prophets before or after Jesus Christ is mentioned in the Quran to fulfill two functions: ruler and judge." What is obvious in the intent of the writer is to say according to the saying of the Prophet Jesus actually was divine. I referred to that quote he was saying and I discovered he omitted a very important concluding statement and one that would contradict what he was trying to conclude. The missing statement which he didn't quote which completes the saying the Prophet says, "Then he (Jesus) will break the cross and kill the swine" The elimination of that statement from the Prophetic saying is very serious because it shows the first task that Jesus will do in his second coming is to express his displeasures and disapproval of those who defied him rather than to consider him as a servant and messenger of Allah as he actually was. The cross is the symbol of the divine who died on the cross. In addition to the omission of this important part of the quotation it is noted that the saying of the Prophet when he says, "Jesus the son of Mary" he didn't say the son of God, and also his statement that no Prophet before or after Jesus will fulfill the function of being a judge and a ruler. I think it is erroneous because Jews, Muslims, and Christians all know that there are many Prophets or there were many Prophets in the past that actually were judges and ruled. Prophets David and Solomon were both rulers and judges and a reference in the Quran to that is Surah 21 Passage 78. Prophet Moses also was a ruler we all know that and he judged among his people. Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him was both a ruler and a judge and a Prophet. Just to give a few examples in the Quran in Surah 5 Passage 52 Prophet Muhammad is a ruler and judge among them according to what Allah has revealed. Similar statements are found in Surah 5 passage 51, Surah 4 Passage 65, and Surah 4 Passage 105 and the evidence is overwhelming and I wonder how the writer came with that statement that in the Quran no other Prophet other than Jesus is mentioned to be a ruler and a judge. I would also like to say a person can be a ruler and a judge but still a follower of Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him and we discussed in the second coming of Jesus the topic led into that Prophet Jesus is coming in the capacity of a follower of Islam which was taught by all of the Prophets in its final form as completed through the mission of the last Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him.

Host: Now you also mentioned to us that there are some claims that are not sustained by the text of the Quran. Could you elaborate on that?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Okay the thing again in *Jesus in the Quran and Bible* they also have described Jesus on page 7 and it says according to the Quran because he puts quotations from the Bible on one hand and the Quran on the other hand and he says Jesus is the author of creation. He gives the evidence not only from the Bible but also from the Quran and he gives the reference Surah 5 Passages 113 and 114. Now let us read the translation and let us see if that says Jesus was the author of creation. "Then God will say O Jesus son of Mary recount my favor to you and your mother. Behold I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit so you did speak to the people in childhood and immaturity. Behold I taught you the book and wisdom and the law and the Injeel and behold you make out of clay as it were the figure of a bird by my leave and you breathe into it and it becomes a bird by my leave And I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I

wake up the dead, by Allah's leave." It is very clear and very interesting to notice that in this citation of the Quran the term "by my leave" is mentioned four times. I think anyone can easily conclude that this repetition of by my leave or by the name of God negates that Jesus is the author of creation. Every time Jesus says that this is simply a favor from Allah not something on my own. The fact is that this is not too much different if you look objectionably to what Jesus is quoted in the Gospel of John. For example in Chapter 5 Verse 30 he says I do nothing by myself and in Chapter 6 Verse 38 he says he is not doing his own will but the will of he who sent him. So what the verse is obviously saying is that I am not doing anything by my own I am only a messenger of Allah and God or Allah speaks to him that he is his servant and messenger and you are not my equal obviously. Again the author forgot as he forgot in another place that the very quote that he uses to show Jesus is divine and the author of creation begins with *Ya Isa Ibna Maryam* O Jesus son of Mary it does not say son of God or my divine son or my equal in essence Godhood. It means that you are one of my favorites or one of my holiest and one of my most honored creatures, but still a creature.

Host: Now let us move to the last category that you mentioned earlier in the program about the Hellenization of the language of the Quran. Now what is meant by that?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Well to explain that I think we have to begin with pointing out that the Quran unlike other scriptures is still available in the exact original language it was uttered. It has not been lost it is still there, and the language the Quran has been revealed was not English it was not Hebrew or Greek it was the Arabic language. What happened was that some writers take the translations of the Quran for example taking an English term which is a translation of the meaning of the Quran and try to seek the definition of that term in the English dictionary. Then pretend the English dictionaries definition

not the Arabic as the meaning which is intended in the Quran without any consideration to what the term means in Arabic and without consideration to the context which that term is used in the Quran. An example of this is one of the verses we cited earlier but I am looking at it now from a different angle. The Quran describes Jesus as a word from Allah and that is in Surah 3 Passage 45. We have explained before in a previous program that all of the creatures are words of Allah. You are the word of Allah, I am a word from Allah, all creatures and the Quran sometimes uses the word in plural. That is we are all created by the creative command of God *Kun* or Be the word of God. However we find that the author of that publication *Jesus in the Quran and the Bible* says that according to the Quran Jesus is and I quote him, "Gods revelation of himself to us" Not Gods revelation of his will or command, Gods revelation of himself to us. Well we have already indicated in a previous question that the text does not say that at all and any viewer can check on their own in Surah 3 Verse 45. Where does it say Jesus is Gods revelation of himself to us? He based it on a very roundabout type of erroneous reasoning. He refers to Webster's dictionary and he says that Webster's dictionary defines Word as a "manifestation and expression of the mind and will of God. The mind of God is what God is. His expression of himself to us, the will of God, deals with what God requires and desires on us." Well this to me is a clear example of what I called the Hellenization of the language of the Quran. Instead of taking the original word, the Arabic word, trying to find out the proper usage of the word in the Quran in its context, he tried to give an English definition from an English writer who himself is influenced by the Hellenistic philosophy. This approach has not only been criticized by Muslims, it is criticized by other fair Christian theologians. For example, Razanen and I made reference to him before in his article in the Muslim World indicated that in the Quran Jesus is a word from Allah and this a reference to Gods creation word of command to create Jesus. Then he says on page 146 and I quote, "It is due time to engage in a dialogue at this point in attempt to Christianize he language of the Quran.

Host: Earlier in this program you spoke of the errors Non-Muslim writers have in explaining the Quran, how about if there was similar problems with Non-Christians interpret the Bible?

Dr.Jamal Badawi:

Well first of all I would like to say that the point will become clearer if we refer back just for a quick reference to the ninth program in this series on that particular topic. It was indicated that in any comparative study is not enough for a Muslim for example to quote from the Quran or a Christian to quote from the Bible because it is a problem sometimes with one or the other excepting the authority the other person is quoting from. We indicated that one of the means to examining this is to examine both the Quran to see if Muslims misinterpreted the Quran perhaps and the divinity of Jesus is established, on the other hand looking at it the other way around by examining the Bible itself from a Biblical perspective and finding out whether the claim for the divinity of Jesus is really based on a sound and strong Biblical context. Now, in our discussion so far we have already explained in full I hope even though we

didn't cover all points but at least some of the major areas were discussed in full to show that the Quran is quite clear and conclusive. Any argument that is made to show that the Quran is in any way shown to support the divinity of Jesus Peace be Upon Him is erroneous and we gave specific reasons for that. In addition to this, the Quran is consistent and clearly repeats that Jesus was a Prophet of Allah, as a messenger of Allah, and as a servant of Allah and we believe that there is absolutely no room to make an argument on the basis of the Quran that Jesus was actually divine. Like I said this was attested to by well-known Christian theologian Razanen and I was recently speaking to a well-known friend of mine again a Christian theologian and again I asked him what he thought about the Christian writers that try to show that the Quran supports the claim of the divinity of Jesus. His answer was I don't sympathize with them because their claim does not have any basis at all.

1.1 Comparative Christology - Methodology Part 1

2 Summary

3 Dr.Jamal Badawi:

4 Last week's program was a wrap up of the first segment of the topic Jesus Beloved Messenger of Allah because it continued the discussion about the profile of Jesus in the Quran and the sayings of the Prophet. Continuing with the second coming and especially the nature of life when he comes and the period of time when he is going to live on earth and the end of his human life on earth and how he will be buried next to the grave of Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him. Then the question was raised as to what was the reaction of Christian brothers to the profile provided in the Quran and again indicated that some have no idea of what the Quran says about Jesus some get the erroneous information through second hand or erroneous sources. Some officiated and some have been so touched by the beauty and testimonies in the Quran of the story that they themselves turned to Islam and we will give the story of Negus the King Of Abyssinia in the seventh century who actually embraced Islam after hearing the section or the part of the Chapter 19 in the Quran or Surah 19 Mary which is all about Jesus. We ended the program with citation of that section in the Surah as well as another section from Surah 3 which is also about Jesus and his profile.

5 Host: Now to touch up on another project. How do you personally see the relevance of comparisons of how Jesus is perceived?

6 Dr.Jamal Badawi:

7 Well I think the comparison here could be quite helpful and useful provided that it is put into the right context and hopefully also using the appropriate methodology. It then could be quite informative but if we were to discuss of how Jesus was viewed in the Bible as compared to in the Quran or to open any dialogue between the communities of believers then I think the first point to realize is that comparison by definition means you must examine areas of similarities and differences. Now I realized to talk about similarities is a lot easier and definitely more pleasant than speaking about the areas of differences but I think it would be worthwhile to examine both really. If you examine the area of similarities then both communities perhaps will be aware of each other's youth that are similar to theirs and that will derive some common ground for understanding for both sides. As far as points of differences in understanding or conviction obviously the requires a great deal of openness and requires less dogmatism and approaching the matter with an open mind and open heart which is a little bit more difficult but we'll accept the challenge.

- 8 Host: Now what do you see as the main area of similarities between the Muslims and Christians in terms of their perception on Jesus?
- 9 Dr.Jamal Badawi:
- 10 Well I would say the most important area of similarity between Muslims and Christians regarding Jesus Peace be Upon Him is acceptance of Jesus and respecting, loving, and honoring him. I have given already throughout the previous programs substantial evidence to show that we have seen first of all the complete absence of a single word in the Quran that may be construed or seem unfavorable or disrespectful of Jesus Peace be Upon Him. But it is not only the negative part to access. Secondly we find that in numerous verses in the Quran the profile of Jesus is very highly honorable and I'll dare to say even that in some places it is more honorable and respectful than even The New Testament itself. I think I might have given the story before when Jesus's mother went to him and asked him while complaining there is not enough wine during the wedding and this is narrated in John Chapter 2 Verse 4 and he addressed his mother "woman" which of course no one would expect a Prophet to speak to his mother like that. We don't find an analogy of that in the Quran not only because Muslims believe that the Prophet had nothing to do with wine but if you compare it to the Quran for example in Surah 19 where it speaks of Jesus as a person who was extremely respectful and kind and considerate of his mother I don't think and I dare say that the Quran shows even more respect to Jesus than the New Testament itself. Not only this, but we find a great deal of honor bestowed on Jesus without mixing him into divinity. Keeping a human as a human and the creator remains the creator. How the Quran called him the Maseeh or a pure or holy child, a mercy from Allah, and an honor in this life and the hereafter of being close to Allah. We have seen how the Quran called him a messenger and a Prophet of Allah which is a title much greater than a mere moral teacher or preacher. A Prophet and Messenger is a title that is reserved in Islam for the purest of the pure of all the human beings according to the Quranic profile of Prophets. The Quran speaks about his verse from a version that he was a spirit preceding from Allah and we explained previously the meaning of this honorary title. A common practice of Muslims is that when any name of a Prophet including Jesus is said we say "Alaheeh Al Salam" meaning Peace be With Him or Peace be Upon Him. The same formula that is used for all other great prophets a formula that I don't know of any Jew or Christian who uses that formula not to refer to Muhammad but to refer to his own Prophet. I have never heard a Jew for example repeatedly saying Peace be Upon Him when Moses is mentioned or a Christian say that about Jesus Peace be Upon Him. I wonder giving this what more accommodation and respect can be expected of Muslims. Were the Christian or Jewish writers who write to the Western leaders, were they to show a small fraction of respect that the Quran shows about Jesus when they speak about Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him. Were they to speak about the Prophet in a more objective and a sympathetic way the Quran speaks about Jesus the situation could have been far better than what it is.
- 11 Host: Okay, now how about the differences
- 12 Dr.Jamal Badawi:
- 13 Well there are some differences in both profiles some relate to the scope of Jesus Peace be Upon Him. Was he sent exclusively or specifically for the Israelites or for the whole world as Prophet Muhammad was. Secondly, differences pertaining to the understanding and interpretation of what happened in the event

or what was believed to be the crucifixion, and what happened in respect to ascending to the heavens, and differences pertaining to the second coming of Jesus and that is in what capacity he is coming and we will discuss that to extent and what he is going to do on Earth. Differences that might also relate to whether he came to shed his blood as the only begotten son of God so that God may forgive humanity and reconcile them to themselves or did he come to guide humanity like all other Israelite Prophets before him and like the last Prophet after him to guide humanity to the right path of the creator. You can enumerate these differences and others but it appears to me that perhaps the central difference in Muslim and Christian thinking is divinity of Jesus. Was he a human or something divine or both as some people claim. Before I leave that question I think I should make a distinction here between holy and divine. A Muslim has no problem at all saying Jesus was holy or Muhammad was holy and all prophets in fact were holy prophets and there is no difficulty in saying that at all, but I think holy does not mean divine because when you take divine to mean something that is God incarnated in some form or another that is when Muslims say that this is the line. The problem is divinity and to believe that Jesus was in some form or other diving, god incarnate, or the son of God in the way it was interpreted more commonly.

14 Host: Dr.Jamal what methodology would you suggest for somebody to go off and study and analyze these areas of difference?

15 Dr.Jamal Badawi:

16 Well let me include some methodologies that I would suggest and some others would not necessarily suggest but this is just a survey of what usually happens when this issue of comparative Christology between Muslims and Christians is brought up. One approach is to simply avoid discussion altogether and suppress any discussions. "Alright you have this belief and we have this belief let's not have a discussion about it." Of course this may reflect a lack of motive to learn or explore and as far as the reason behind that only God knows. Some people might say I do not want to understand anything that might cause some confusion to me and some people might say I do not want to understand or explore anything more because of the fear of the unknown or the fear of believing one thing as a Muslim or a Christian and now you are telling me something that may make me reconsider or critically examine some of the cherished beliefs that I have as a Muslim, or Christian for that matter. That is one approach and there are cases where Muslims and Christians discuss the issue of Jesus Peace be Upon Him but the discussion becomes nothing more than each side quoting from his holy book. So the Christians would come and read from the New Testament and say look this is what Jesus is and what Jesus was and the Muslim says no the Quran says this. That discussion could be quite informative and useful for acquainting one side or the other for what the other scriptures say about Jesus. But on the other hand it does not fully satisfy someone who is seeking the truth or trying to understand or come up with more clarity on this important topic. In one sense when the Christians are saying alright I am quoting to you Muslims from the New Testaments the Muslim might say alright but I do not recognize the full authority of what you are quoting from. You are quoting the opinions of followers of Jesus and that is not authoritative to me. Then when the Muslim quotes from the Quran the Christians might say you are quoting from your book which holds no authority for me. Like I said this could be informative but it doesn't lead to any clear dialogue or understanding. What I meant however

would be to approach it perhaps with multiple ways with more than one approach other than these first two. Let's leave aside the subject of my scripture or your scripture and let us try to scrutinize both holy books the Bible and the Quran to find out which of them or both is that is true is indeed the word of Allah and his revelation or is it the word of humans and their own biographies and interpretations which could be right or wrong. This might call for both the analysis of authority and authenticity of both scriptures. Authority by seeking internal and external evidence that claims that it is indeed the word of God and to see if there is any cooperating external evidence to show that the context of that scripture is totally free from error scientific or otherwise or contradictions or inconsistencies and as such we can be certain that from A to Z this is the word of God. That also calls for examination of authenticity that even if there is the claim of authority that it is God's revelation one has to be sure also whether it was written down in the lifetime of its prophet and was it written in its original language and was it preserved. Is there any evidence historically, logically, or otherwise that shows that the words we have today are exactly as they were uttered by their Prophets whether it was Jesus or Muhammad Peace be Upon Them Both. This can also be quite productive but again it requires a great deal of impartiality and objectivity on both sides and the willingness to take the most sacred books and writings and to examine both evidence of authority and authenticity which is not easy for many. Another possible approach that could be productive also would be to study the consequences of deification or lack of deification of Jesus. To examine the set of beliefs that are set on dogmas that are set on assumption and to see whether those beliefs in themselves are consistent. Do they make any sense? Do they provide any substantive explanation of the nature of God? (Or something about the nature of God because you cannot fully comprehend the nature of God) Is there any proof or reasonable proof of the validity those beliefs or not? So that could be by analysis of the content based on either Christological assumptions you might say. Another way is to encourage both sides to reexamine their own holy books even as they stand. Even if we leave aside the question of authority or authenticity just to examine their own books. A Muslim to reexamine his own book the Quran and for Christians to examine the Bible also just to make sure there is any form conclusive and clear scripture foundation for claiming that either Jesus is divine and I think all these approaches could be used as to arrive at some kind of explanation or understanding.

- 17 Host: Actually all those approaches are very interesting but I am going to ask you to elaborate on that very last one because that seems to be the most interesting out of all three.
- 18 Dr.Jamal Badawi:
- 19 It's weird because it might not require as heavy research like questioning authority and authenticity might require for example. What I meant by that to be more explicit is that for example, if the Christian brethren say Jesus was divine and Jesus was God incarnate or God made himself from divine attributes and became man and the Muslims uphold strongly that Jesus was a prophet and messenger of Allah and that he was not divine. That leaves us with one of two approaches or two ways. Either that the Muslims claim is not founded on the Quran and that there is no basis for saying Jesus was not divine that indeed the Quran could say that Jesus was divine but the Muslims were not aware of that so they don't have a firm ground to say that he was not divine. This is one

possibility to examine. The second possibility to examine is the exact reverse of that it is also consumable that what a Christian claims that the divinity of Jesus is based on the Bible in fact lacks a structural basis. If the Bible was examined carefully it negates that Jesus was divine and there is no coherent foundation to say that Jesus was God, or the son of God, or God incarnate in the specific meaning that is normally presented. That is what I meant by reexamination of on the part of both sides on either assumptions and I think that would be quite useful provided of course that if somebody suggesting to the other side to reexamine his or that passage it has to be examined of course with frame work and terminology used in that particular scripture and within the context of that scripture.

20 Host: Well let's begin with the Quran first. Now is there any passage in the Quran that Christian scholars use to show Muslims that this is divine according to the Quran?

21 Dr.Jamal Badawi:

22 There is a lot of literature about that and I probably won't be doing justice by summarizing it in headlines but I think it might help and if you wish we can explore it as we go further on. Some for example say many times when God speaks or Allah speaks in the Quran he uses the plural *we* and that this is a proof in the Quran itself when God says *we* that means persons in Godhood. They also say that the Quran acknowledges the virgin birth and Jesus has a human mother then his father must be God. They also say that the Quran and we recited that in the previous program that Jesus was pure, sinless, and holy and since all human beings are sinful then he is different from a human he is something above human and divine. Fourthly, they say that in the Quran there is no command for Jesus to seek forgiveness of Allah whereas in the Quran we find that several prophets were told to seek forgiveness of Allah. This means again that he is sinless and that is why he is not asked to seek any forgiveness i.e he is divine. Fifthly, that the Quran refers to him as Messiah and they say Messiah is someone who really died for the sins of humanity and he is the Messiah capital M. Six, they say the Quran acknowledges that Jesus is a word from God and this is consistent with what John and the Gospel that God became or the word became flesh because the word of God is with God so it became divine because the word of God is divine. Seven, they also say that the Quran calls Jesus as a spirit from Allah or preceding from Allah and they say that this is what it means when you really speak about the Holy Spirit i.e the third person in the trinity of Godhood. Eight, they say the Quran simple negates only the physical friendship of Jesus towards God or the belief in the trinity or three Gods or the deification of Mary but there is nothing in the Quran that really rejects the trinity the way we understand it as the Testaments say. Some of these points as you may have noted that we have discussed before in one form or another in some of the previous programs but it might provide some similes of some of the main issues that are usually presented for Muslims to reconsider this could be their own scriptures.

23 Host: Now that you have mentioned some of these points that are made by the Christian scholars I will ask you to respond to them.

24 Dr.Jamal Badawi:

25 Well I spoke briefly about some of this and again we have discussed in some other forms and we just have to put them together since the topic seemed to call for this slight overlap. Of course the question of God or Allah using the term *we* this is simply a royal language. Kings when they issued edicts they don't say I the king they say *we* the king, and if human kings can do that then the king of

kings Allah is definitely entitled to use we. Plurality does not mean plurality of persons it means Godhood. Secondly, the question of virgin birth has nothing to do with divinity and we indicated before that Adam was created without a mother or father. Not from his mother or fathers side this does not mean that he was divine. One was created without the normal methods that Adam was born without the normal methods that is Jesus and both are miracles of Allah. Third, the question of describing Jesus as holy and sinless as some translated which is ok. The Muslims believe that all prophets are as such not of course in the absolute sense because absolute protection is only Gods but in the human sense all prophets are sinless and are all pure. The purest of the pure as we call them and the very exact term Zakat which is the same root given in the Quran as prophet John the Baptist in Chapter 19 Verse 12 so nobody says that John the Baptist is also because he is sinless is divine and no Muslims or Christians say that. Fourthly, on the issue of seeking forgiveness in Allah the argument as I have said before is that no other Prophet was told and even though Jesus was never told to seek forgiveness the same applies to other Prophets like John the Baptist and there is no verse in the Quran that says to John the Baptist to seek forgiveness it doesn't mean he is divine at all or that we should deify him. On the other hand, when we deal with the Quran teaching Prophets when it says to the Prophets seek forgiveness it is basically teaching his followers so that the followers say look this is the purest of the pure the Prophet himself is commanded to seek forgiveness even though we see him do nothing wrong really then we should be more humble and we should always seek forgiveness of Allah. The fact that they say in the Quran he is called the Messiah that term in the Quran used is *Maseeh* from *Masseh* which means anointed but this is not the same meaning to give to it as the one who carried the sins of the world. So *Maseeh* in the Quran doesn't imply divinity or some or others. If the question is raised to why Jesus is the only one who is called *Maseeh* or Messiah well the answer to that is very simple, some prophets were given specific titles which apply to all prophets but it is more famous for them. Abraham was called *Khaleel Allah* or the friend of Allah and it doesn't mean that the other prophets are enemies of Allah they are also friends of Allah but this happened to be his name. Moses was called to the one Allah spoke or in Arabic *Kaleem Allah* and it doesn't mean Allah didn't speak to any other Prophets at all. In other words, a title that has set relevance to a Prophet that could be applicable to others especially if we take the term Messiah in the sense of one appointed. The other point about Jesus being mentioned in the Quran as a word from Allah we explained that before that the Quran uses the word to refer to the command of Allah to the word *Kun* or be when Allah wishes to create something and this has nothing to do with what John says in his Gospel or the Greek philosophy. Similarly we discussed in this program that the mention of Jesus being a spirit from Allah has nothing to do with the Holy Spirit as a component of one person and trinity but we said that Quran indicates in 32:9 and 15:29 that all human beings have something of the spirit of Allah in them. Finally to say that the Quran only rejected heretical ideas like tritheism or believing in the physical concept of Jesus is not correct and we indicated before that there is evidence in the Quran like in Surah 4 Passage 170 and Surah 5 Passage 76 negating also trinity in some translations some translators translate trinity as *Thalathah* which is appropriate in the context of what the Quran speaks. This is sort of a quick

rundown and I know some of these points might require a further clarification but that is what we can do for the time being I suppose.