CHAPTER – 5

INFLUENCE OF THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS
AND THE FOUR TRADITIONAL GOSPELS ON
MUSLIMS AND AHL AL-KITAB (THE PEOPLE
OF THE BOOK)

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CHAPTER – 5


1. The Influence of the Four Traditional Gospels

1.1 Development of Anti-Semitic (Anti-Judaism)

   Historians have noted that the New Testament has been singled out for its progressive change in tone and attitude toward Jews. Particularly, the Gospel of John has been singled out in Anti-Semitic texts, because it includes many anti-Jewish episodes, and it contains many references to Jews in a pejorative manner.¹

   Any study of Anti-Semitism in the New Testament must come to terms with 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16. The message of this verse is that the Jews killed Jesus Christ (PBUH), displease God, and oppose all men. The verse has created significant debate among scholars because it contradicts many other writings attributed to Paul, and because Paul did not have an attitude of revulsion toward his life before Christianity.

   “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the

¹ Anti-Semitism (alternatively spelled anti-semitism or anti-Semitism, also known as judeophobia) is prejudice and hostility toward Jews as a group. The prejudice is usually characterized by a combination of religious, racial and ethnic biases. While the term's etymology might suggest that antisemitism is directed against all Semitic peoples, since its creation it has been used exclusively to refer to hostility towards Jews. Antisemitism may be manifested in many ways, ranging from individual expressions of hatred and discrimination against individual Jews to organized violent attacks by mobs or even state police or military attacks on entire Jewish communities. Extreme instances of persecution include the German Crusade of 1096, the expulsion from England in 1290, the Spanish Inquisition, the expulsion from Spain in 1492, the expulsion from Portugal in 1497, various pogroms, and the most infamous, the Holocaust under Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Germany.
word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."

1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

The New Testament states that while on trial, Jesus Christ (PBUH) was struck in the face by a Jewish guard for allegedly speaking ill of the high priest. Such incidents were the source of one of the great myths about the Jews, that the Jew was doomed to the punishment of endless roaming and suffering fated to never die.

The death of Jesus Christ (PBUH), according to the New Testament, was done in brutal mockery by the Roman soldiers. Pontius Pilate’s words imply that the Jews were entirely responsible for the killing. When Jesus Christ (PBUH) is nailed to the cross, the New Testament states that the Jews (chief priest, the scribes and elders)

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3 John 18:20-22

4 Pontius Pilate (Latin: Pontius Pilatus) was the Prefect of the Roman Judaea province from the year AD 26 until AD 36. He is typically known as the sixth Procurator of Judea, but some sources cite him as the fifth. He is best known as the man who was the judge at the trial of Jesus Christ (PBUH) and ordered his crucifixion, according to the Bible. He is one of only three individuals mentioned by name in the Creeds of the Christian Church (the other two being Jesus Christ (PBUH) and his mother, Mary). Pilate appears in all four canonical Christian Gospels. Mark, demonstrating Jesus Christ (PBUH) to be innocent of plotting against Rome, portrays Pilate as extremely reluctant to execute Jesus Christ (PBUH), blaming the Jewish hierarchy for his death, even though he was the sole authority for this action. In Matthew, Pilate washes his hands of Jesus Christ (PBUH) and reluctantly sends him to his death. In Luke, Pilate not only agrees that Jesus Christ (PBUH) did not conspire against Rome, but Herod, the tetrarch, also finds nothing treasonous in Jesus’ actions. In John, Jesus Christ (PBUH) makes no claim to be the Son of Man or the Messiah to Pilate or to the Sanhedrin. Pilate’s biographical details before and after his appointment to Judaea are unknown, but have been supplied by tradition, which include the detail that his wife’s name was Claudia (she is canonized as a saint in the Greek Orthodox Church) and competing legends of his birthplace.

5 Matthew 27:24-25
mocked Jesus Christ (PBUH). The overall impression on Christians was that the Jews controlled the events that lead to the death of Jesus Christ (PBUH).

The process by which Christians began to see Judaism first as a rival, and then as a scapegoat can be traced though many passages in the New Testament, early Christian writings, and the Apostolic fathers. The destruction of the Second Temple was seen as judgement from God to the Jews for the death of Jesus Christ (PBUH).

The majority of the books of the New Testament were written by Jews who became followers of Jesus Christ (PBUH), and all but two books (Luke and Acts) are traditionally attributed to such Jewish followers. Nevertheless, there are a number of passages in the New Testament that some see as Anti-Semitic, or have been used for Anti-Semitic purposes, most notably:

“I know that ye are Abraham’s seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham.”

John 8:37-39

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will de. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of

Matthew 27:41

The Second Temple (Hebrew: meaning ‘Holy House’) was the reconstructed Temple in Jerusalem which stood between 516 BCE and 70 CE. During this time, it was the center of Jewish worship, which focused on the sacrifices known as the *korbanot*. Solomon’s Temple, also known as the First Temple, was destroyed in 586 BCE when the Jews were exiled into Babylonian Captivity. Construction of a new temple was begun in 535; after a hiatus, work resumed ca. 521, with completion occurring in 516 and dedication in 515. As described in the Book of Ezra, rebuilding of the Temple was authorized by Cyrus the Great and ratified by Darius the Great. The Romans destroyed Jerusalem and its Second Temple on August 4th 70 CE, ending the Great Jewish Revolt that began in 66 CE.

-The Holy Bible: King James Version, N.2, p.1109.
his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”

John 8:44-47

However, Muslims were not Anti-Semitic in the way Christians were for the most part because:

1. The gospels are not part of the educational system in Muslim society and therefore Muslims are not brought up with the stories of Jewish deicide; on the contrary the notion of deicide is rejected by the Holy Qur’an as a blasphemous absurdity.

2. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.) and his early followers were not Jews and therefore they did not present themselves as the true Israel nor felt threatened by survival of the old Israel.

3. The Holy Qur’an was not viewed by Muslims as a fulfillment of the Hebrew Bible but rather a restorer of its original messages that had been distorted over time; Thus no clash of interpretations between Judaism and Islam could arise.

4. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.) was not killed by the Jewish community and he was victorious in the clash with the Jewish community in Medina.

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9 Ibid., p.1109.

10 Medina (Arabic: المدينة المنورة; also transliterated into English as Madinah; officially al-Madinah al-Munawwarah) is a city in the Hejaz region of western Saudi Arabia, and serves as the capital of the Al Madinah Province. It is the second holiest city in Islam, and the burial place of the prophet Muhammad. It is historically significant for being Muhammad’s home after the Hijrah. Medina currently has a population of more than 1,300,000 people (2006). It was originally known as Yathrib, an oasis city dating as far back as the 6th century BCE. It was later inhabited by Jewish refugees who fled the aftermath of the war with the Romans in the 2nd century CE. Later the city’s name was
5. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.) did not claim to have been Son of God or Messiah but only a prophet; a claim to which Jews reproached Jesus Christ (PBUH).

6. Muslims saw the conflict between the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.) and the Jews as something of minor importance in the Prophet Muhammad’s career.11

1.2 First Crusade and Gospels

In order to obtain wealth by usurping the property and money in Muslim countries, Christian attacked Muslims and organized Crusade12 expeditions with a pretext to recover Jerusalem, which they deemed sacred (1096-1270).13 In 1094 or

changed to Madinat(u) ‘n-Nabiy (مدينة النبي “city of the prophet”) or Al-Madinat(u) ‘l-Munawwarah (“the enlightened city” or “the radiant city”), while the short form Madinah simply means “city”. Medina is celebrated for containing the mosque of prophet Muhammad, and so ranks as the second holiest city of Islam, after Mecca (Makkah). Medina is 210 miles (338 kilometres north of Mecca and about 120 mi (193 km) from the Red Sea coast. It is situated in the most fertile part of all the Hejaz territory, the streams of the vicinity tending to converge in this locality. An immense plain extends to the south; in every direction the view is bounded by hills and mountains.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antisemitism

The Crusades were a series of military conflicts of a religious character waged by much of Christian Europe against external and internal threats; there was also rioting. Crusades were fought against Muslims, pagan Slavs, Jews, Russian and Greek Orthodox Christians, Mongols, Cathars, Hussites, and political enemies of the popes. Crusaders took vows and were granted an indulgence for past sins. The Crusades originally had the goal of recapturing Jerusalem and the Holy Land from Muslim rule and were originally launched in response to a call from the Eastern Orthodox Byzantine Empire for help against the expansion of the Muslim Seljuk Turks into Anatolia. The term is also used to describe contemporaneous and subsequent campaigns conducted through to the 16th century in territories outside the Levant usually against pagans, heretics, and peoples under the ban of excommunication for a mixture of religious, economic, and political reasons. Rivalries among both Christian and Muslim powers led also to alliances between religious factions against their opponents, such as the Christian alliance with the Sultanate of Rum during the Fifth Crusade.

The Crusades had far-reaching political, economic, and social impacts, some of which have lasted into contemporary times. Because of internal conflicts among Christian kingdoms and political powers, some of the crusade expeditions were diverted from their original aim, such as the Fourth Crusade, which resulted in the sack of Christian Constantinople and the partition of the Byzantine Empire between Venice and the Crusaders. The Sixth Crusade was the first crusade to set sail without the official blessing of the Pope, establishing the precedent that rulers other than the Pope could initiate a crusade. The Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Crusades resulted in Mamluk and Hafsid victories, as the Ninth Crusade marked the end of the Crusades in the Middle East.

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1095, Alexios I Komnenos, the Byzantine emperor, sent to the Pope, Urban II, and asked for aid from the West against the Seljuk Turks, who had taken nearly all of Asia Minor from him. At the Council of Clermont, Urban addressed a great crowd and urged all to go to the aid of the Greeks and to recover Palestine (Jerusalem) from the rule of the Muslims. Consequently, He had mentioned the Gospels (Matthew 5:13,

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14 Alexios I Komnenos, or Comnenus (1048 – August 15, 1118), Byzantine emperor (1081–1118), was the son of John Comnenus and Anna Dalassena and the nephew of Isaac I Comnenus (emperor 1057–1059). The military, financial and territorial recovery of the Byzantine Empire began in his reign.

15 Pope Urban II (1042 – July 29, 1099), born Otho de Lagery (alternatively: Otto or Odo), was Pope from March 12, 1088, to July 29, 1099. He is most known for starting the First Crusade (1095–99) and setting up the modern day Roman Curia, in the manner of a royal court, to help run the Church.

16 The Council of Clermont was a mixed synod of ecclesiastics and laymen of the Catholic Church, which was held on November 27, 1095 at Clermont, France and triggered the First Crusade. In 1095 the Byzantine emperor Alexius I Comnenus sent envoys to the west requesting military assistance against the Seljuk Turks. The message was received by Pope Urban II at the Council of Piacenza; later that year, in November, Urban called the Council of Clermont to discuss the matter further. In convoking the council, Urban urged the bishops and abbots whom he addressed directly, to bring with them the prominent lords in their provinces. The Council lasted from November 19 to November 28, and was attended by about 300 clerics from throughout France. Urban discussed Cluniac reforms of the Church, and also extended the excommunication of Philip I of France for his adulterous remarriage to Bertrade of Montfort. On November 27, Urban spoke for the first time about the problems in the east, as he declared bellum sacrum against the Muslims who had occupied the Holy Land and were attacking the Eastern Roman Empire. There are six main sources of information about this portion of the council: the anonymous Gesta Francorum (“The Deeds of the Franks”) influencing others: Fulcher of Chartres, Robert the Monk, Baldric, archbishop of Dol, and Guibert de Nogent, who were apparently present at the council; also a letter survives that was written by Urban himself in December of 1095. According to Fulcher of Chartres who wrote a version of the speech in Gesta Francorum Jerusalem Expugnantium, Urban addressed various abuses of the church such as simony and the lack of adherence to the Peace of God:

Let those who have been accustomed unjustly to wage private warfare against the faithful now go against the infidels and end with victory this war which should have been begun long ago. Let those who for a long time, have been robbers, now become knights. Let those who have been fighting against their brothers and relatives now fight in a proper way against the barbarians. Let those who have been serving as mercenaries for small pay now obtain the eternal reward. Let those who have been wearing themselves out in both body and soul now work for a double honor.

Urban then went on to cite the need of the eastern Byzantine Empire for aid against Muslim attack:

Freshly quickened by the divine correction, you must apply the strength of your righteousness to another matter which concerns you as well as God. For your brethren who live in the east are in urgent need of your help, and you must hasten to give them the aid which has often been promised them. For, as the most of you have heard, the Turks and Arabs have attacked them and have conquered the territory of Romania [the Greek empire] as far west as the shore of the Mediterranean and the Hellespont, which is called the Arm of St. George. They have occupied more and more of the lands of those Christians, and have overcome them in seven battles. They have killed and captured many, and have destroyed the churches and devastated the empire. If you permit them to continue thus for awhile with impurity, the faithful of God will be much more widely attacked by them. On
Matthew 15:14 and Luke 16:19) as a pretext to take place and action in the First Crusade.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

Matthew 5:13

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In *Gesta Dei per Francos* by Robert the Monk, writing about twenty years after the council, an extended version of the speech presents the call to the "race of the Franks" as a peroration climaxing Urban's call for orthodoxy, reform and submission to the Church. Robert records that the pope asked western Christians, poor and rich, to come to the aid of the Greeks in the east, because "Deus vult," ("God wills it"), the rousing cry with which Urban ended his final address. Robert records that Urban promised remission of sins for those who went to the east, although he probably did not mean what later came to be called indulgences. Robert recorded that Urban's emphasis was on reconquering the Holy Land rather than aiding the Greeks; the intervening decades and the events of the First Crusade had certainly shifted the emphasis. According to Robert, Urban listed various gruesome offenses of the Muslims:

*They circumcise the Christians, and the blood of the circumcision they either spread upon the altars or pour into the vases of the baptismal font.*

and more alleged atrocities expressed in inflammatory images that were derived from hagiography, but did not mention indulgences. Perhaps with the wisdom of hindsight, Robert makes Urban advise that none but knights should go, not the old and feeble, nor priests without the permission of their bishops, "for such are more of a hindrance than aid, more of a burden than advantage... nor ought women to set out at all, without their husbands or brothers or legal guardians." About the same time, Baldrick, archbishop of Dol, also basing his account generally on *Gesta Francorum*, focused on the offenses of the Muslims and the reconquest of the Holy Land in terms likely to appeal to chivalry. Like Fulcher he also recorded that Urban deplored the violence of the Christian knights of Gaul. "It is less wicked to brandish your sword against Saracens," Baldrick's Urban cries, comparing them to the Amalekites. The violence of knights he wanted to see emnobled in the service of Christ, defending the churches of the East as if defending a mother. Baldrick asserts that Urban, there on the spot, appointed the bishop of Puy to lead the crusade. Guibert, abbot of Nogent, was an eye witness; he also recorded that Urban's emphasis was reconquest of the Holy Land, but not necessarily to help the Greeks or other Christians there; Urban's speech, in Nogent's version, emphasized the sanctity of the Holy Land, which must be in Christian possession so that prophecies about the end of the world could be fulfilled. On the last day of the council, a general call was sent out to the knights and nobles of France. Urban apparently knew in advance of the day that Raymond IV of Toulouse, exemplary for courage and piety, was fully prepared to take up arms. Urban himself spent a few months preaching the Crusade in France, while papal legates spread the word in the south of Italy, during which time the focus presumably turned from helping Alexius to taking Jerusalem; the general population, upon hearing about the Council, probably understood this to be the point of the Crusade in the first place. Urban's own letter, addressed to the faithful "waiting in Flanders," does not mention Jerusalem at all; he only calls for help for the Eastern Churches, and appoints Adhemar of Le Puy to lead the Crusade, to set out on the day of the Assumption of Mary, August 15.

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“Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”

Matthew 15:14

“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.”

Luke 16:19

The Speech of the Pope Urban II at Council of Clermont, 1095:

“Most beloved brethren: Urged by necessity, I, Urban, by the permission of God chief bishop and prelate over the whole world, have come into these parts as an ambassador with a divine admonition to you, the servants of God. I hoped to find you as faithful and as zealous in the service of God as I had supposed you to be. But if there is in you any deformity or crookedness contrary to God’s law, with divine help I will do my best to remove it. For God has put you as stewards over his family to minister to it. Happy indeed will you be if he finds you faithful in your stewardship. You are called shepherds; see that you do not act as hirelings. But be true shepherds, with your crooks always in your hands. Do not go to sleep, but guard on all sides the flock committed to you. For if through your carelessness or negligence a wolf carries away one of your sheep, you will surely lose the reward laid up for you with God. And after you have been bitterly scourged with remorse for your faults, you will be fiercely overwhelmed in hell, the abode of death. For according to the gospel you are the salt of the earth [Matt. 5:13]. But if you fall short in your duty, how, it may be asked, can it be salted? O how great the need of salting! It is indeed necessary for you to correct with the salt of wisdom this foolish people which is so devoted to the pleasures of this-world, lest

\[^\text{18}\text{Ibid., p.1009.}\]
\[^\text{19}\text{Ibid., p.1083.}\]
the Lord, when He may wish to speak to them, find them putrefied by their sins unsalted and stinking. For if He shall find worms, that is, sins, in them, because you have been negligent in your duty, He will command them as worthless to be thrown into the abyss of unclean things. And because you cannot restore to Him His great loss, He will surely condemn you and drive you from His loving presence. But the man who applies this salt should be prudent, provident, modest, learned, peaceable, watchful, pious, just, equitable, and pure. For how can the ignorant teach others? How can the licentious make others modest? And how can the impure make others pure? If anyone hates peace, how can he make others peaceable? Or if anyone has soiled his hands with baseness, how can he cleanse the impurities of another? We read also that if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch [Matt. 15:14]. But first correct yourselves, in order that, free from blame, you may be able to correct those who are subject to you. If you wish to be the friends of God, gladly do the things which you know will please Him. You must especially let all matters that pertain to the church be controlled by the law of the church. And be careful that simony does not take root among you, lest both those who buy and those who sell [church offices] be beaten with the scourges of the Lord through narrow streets and driven into the place of destruction and confusion. Keep the church and the clergy in all its grades entirely free from the secular power. See that the tithes that belong to God are faithfully paid from all the produce of the land; let them not be sold or withheld. If anyone seizes a bishop let him be treated as an outlaw. If anyone seizes or robs monks, or clergymen, or nuns, or their servants, or pilgrims, or merchants, let him be anathema [that is, cursed]. Let robbers and incendiaries and all their accomplices be expelled from the church and anathematized. If a man who does not give a part of his goods as alms is punished with the damnation of hell, how should he be punished who robs another of his goods? For thus it happened to the rich man in the gospel [Luke 16:19]; he was not punished because he had stolen the goods of another, but because he had not used well the things which were his.

“You have seen for a long time the great disorder in the world caused by these crimes. It is so bad in some of your provinces, I am told,
and you are so weak in the administration of justice, that one can hardly
go along the road by day or night without being attacked by robbers; and
whether at home or abroad one is in danger of being despoiled either by
force or fraud. Therefore it is necessary to reenact the truce, as it is
commonly called, which was proclaimed a long time ago by our holy
fathers. I exhort and demand that you, each, try hard to have the truce kept
in your diocese. And if anyone shall be led by his cupidity or arrogance to
break this truce, by the authority of God and with the sanction of this
council he shall be anathematized.”

After these and various other matters had been attended to, all who
were present, clergy and people, gave thanks to God and agreed to the
pope’s proposition. They all faithfully promised to keep the decrees. Then
the pope said that in another part of the world Christianity was suffering
from a state of affairs that was worse than the one just mentioned. He
continued:

“Although, O sons of God, you have promised more firmly than
ever to keep the peace among yourselves and to preserve the rights of the
church, there remains still an important work for you to do. Freshly
quickened by the divine correction, you must apply the strength of your
righteousness to another matter which concerns you as well as God. For
your brethren who live in the east are in urgent need of your help, and you
must hasten to give them the aid which has often been promised them.
For, as the most of you have heard, the Turks and Arabs have attacked
them and have conquered the territory of Romania [the Greek empire] as
far west as the shore of the Mediterranean and the Hellespont, which is
called the Arm of St. George. They have occupied more and more of the
lands of those Christians, and have overcome them in seven battles. They
have killed and captured many, and have destroyed the churches and
devastated the empire. If you permit them to continue thus for awhile with
impurity, the faithful of God will be much more widely attacked by them.
On this account I, or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ’s heralds to
publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot-
soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those
Christians and to destroy that vile race from the lands of our friends. I say
this to those who are present, it meant also for those who are absent. Moreover, Christ commands it.

“All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested. O what a disgrace if such a despised and base race, which worships demons, should conquer a people which has the faith of omnipotent God and is made glorious with the name of Christ! With what reproaches will the Lord overwhelm us if you do not aid those who, with us, profess the Christian religion! Let those who have been accustomed unjustly to wage private warfare against the faithful now go against the infidels and end with victory this war which should have been begun long ago. Let those who for a long time, have been robbers, now become knights. Let those who have been fighting against their brothers and relatives now fight in a proper way against the barbarians. Let those who have been serving as mercenaries for small pay now obtain the eternal reward. Let those who have been wearing themselves out in both body and soul now work for a double honor. Behold! on this side will be the sorrowful and poor, on that, the rich; on this side, the enemies of the Lord, on that, his friends. Let those who go not put off the journey, but rent their lands and collect money for their expenses; and as soon as winter is over and spring comes, let hem eagerly set out on the way with God as their guide.”

1.3 Pope and Papacy Based on Gospels

The Pope (from Latin: papa, “father” or more accurately “daddy,” “tutor”; from Greek “papa” or “daddy”, Papa in Italian) is the Bishop of Rome, the spiritual leader of the Roman Catholic Church and head of state of Vatican City. Faith

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20 http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-fulcher.html

21 Vatican City, officially State of the Vatican City (Italian: Stato della Città del Vaticano), is a landlocked sovereign city-state whose territory consists of a walled enclave within the city of Rome. At approximately 44 hectares (110 acres), and with a population of around 800, it is the smallest independent state in the world by both population and area. Vatican City should not to be confused
communities which recognize a specific concept of Apostolic Succession acknowledge the Bishop of Rome as successor of St Peter. The office of the pope is called the Papacy; his ecclesiastical jurisdiction is called the “Holy See” (Sancta Sedes in Latin) or “Apostolic See” (the latter on the basis that both St. Peter and St. Paul were martyred at Rome). Early bishops occupying the See of Rome were designated “Vicar of Peter”; for later popes the more authoritative Vicar of Christ was substituted; this designation was first used by the Roman Synod of 495 to refer to Pope Gelasius I, an advocate of papal supremacy among the patriarchs. Marcellinus (d. 304) is the first Bishop of Rome whom sources show used the title of pope. In the 11th century, after the East-West Schism, Gregory VII declared the term “Pope” to be reserved for the Bishop of Rome. The current (265th) pope is Pope Benedict XVI, who was elected as Pope on April 19, 2005 in papal conclave.

with the Holy See, which existed long before the foundation of the state of Vatican City. The city-state came into existence by virtue of the Lateran Treaty in 1929, which spoke of it as a new creation (Preamble and Article III), not as a vestige of the much larger Papal States (756-1870) that had previously encompassed central Italy. Most of this territory was absorbed into the Kingdom of Italy in 1860, and the final portion, namely the city of Rome with a small area close to it, ten years later, in 1870. Vatican City is a non-hereditary, elected monarchy that is ruled by the Bishop of Rome — the Pope. The highest state functionaries are all clergymen of the Catholic Church. It is the sovereign territory of the Holy See (Sancta Sedes) and the location of the Pope’s residence, referred to as the Apostolic Palace. The Popes have resided in the area that in 1929 became the Vatican City only since the return from Avignon in 1377. Previously, they resided in the Lateran Palace on the Caelian Hill on the opposite side of Rome, which was out of repair in 1377. The signing of the agreements that established the new state took place in the latter building, giving rise to the name of Lateran Pacts, by which they are known.


23 Pope Saint Gelasius I (died November 19, 496) was pope from 492 until his death in 496. He was the third and last pope of African origin in the Roman Catholic Church, Gelasius was a prolific writer whose style placed him on the cusp between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Gelasius had been closely employed by his predecessor, Felix III, especially in drafting papal documents. His reign was characterized by his call for strict orthodoxy, a more assertive push for papal authority, and increasing tension between the Western and Eastern Orthodox, churches.

24 Pope Saint Marcellinus, according to the Liberian Catalogue, became bishop of Rome on June 30, 296; his predecessor was Pope St Caius. He is not mentioned in the Martyrologium hieronymianum, or in the Depositio episcoporum, or in the Depositio martyrum.

25 Pope Saint Gregory VII (c. 1015/1029 – May 25, 1085), born Hildebrand of Soana (Italian: Hildebrando di Soana), was pope from April 22, 1073, until his death. One of the great reforming
The Pope in Roman Catholic Theology

The dogmas and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church teach that the institution of the Papacy was first mandated by Biblical passages:

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Matthew 16:18-19

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of popes, he is perhaps best known for the part he played in the Investiture Controversy, his dispute with Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor affirming the primacy of the papal authority and the new canon law governing the election of the pope by the college of cardinals. He was at the forefront of both evolutionary developments in the relationship between the Emperor and the papacy during the years before becoming pope. He was beatified by Gregory XIII in 1584, and canonized in 1728 by Benedict XIII as Pope St. Gregory VII. He twice excommunicated Henry IV, who in the end appointed the Antipope Clement III to oppose him in the political power struggles between church and Empire. Hailed as one of the greatest of the Roman pontiffs after his reforms proved successful, Gregory was during his own reign despised by many for his expansive use of papal powers.

Pope Benedict XVI (Latin: Benedictus PP. XVI; Italian: Benedetto XVI; German: Benedikt XVI; born Joseph Alois Ratzinger on 16 April 1927) is the 265th and reigning Pope, by virtue of his office of Bishop of Rome, the head of the Roman Catholic Church and, as such, Sovereign of the Vatican City State. He was elected on 19 April 2005 in a papal conclave, celebrated his Papal Inauguration Mass on 24 April 2005, and took possession of his cathedral, the Basilica of St. John Lateran, on 7 May 2005. Pope Benedict XVI has both German and Vatican citizenship. He succeeded Pope John Paul II.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope

Isaiah 22:20-22: “On that day I will summon my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah; I will clothe him with your robe, and gird him with your sash, and give over to him your authority. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. I will place the key of the House of David on his shoulder; when he opens, no one shall shut, when he shuts, no one shall open.”
Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

*John 21:15-17* 29

“Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?”


“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”


For Catholic Apologists the most important passage used to defend the Papacy is Matthew 16:18-19. Catholics believe that this passage shows Jesus Christ (PBUH) establishing his church on the shoulders of Simon son of John, whom Jesus Christ (PBUH) re-named Peter (meaning rock). Thus Peter was the rock upon which Christ’s Church was built, therefore Jesus Christ (PBUH) established a head to his earthly Church, calling for a successor to that head and thus the Papacy was established.

However, this interpretation of events is challenged by non-Catholics. Some say it was Peter’s confession of faith that Jesus Christ (PBUH) referred to. However,

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30 Ibid., p.1078.

31 Ibid., p.1092.
others propose that Jesus Christ (PBUH) never called Peter rock at all but instead he was called “small stone.”

1.4 Gospel of John and Modern Christianity

A. Christology

The Gospel of John is easily distinguished from the three Synoptic Gospels, which share a considerable amount of text. John omits about 90 percent of the material in the Synoptics. The Synoptics describe much more of Jesus’ life, miracles, parables, and exorcisms. However, the materials unique to John are notable, especially in their effect on modern Christianity. John portrays Jesus Christ (PBUH) as “a brief manifestation of the eternal Word, whose immortal spirit remains ever-present with the believing Christian.”

The gospel gives far more focus to the mystical relation of the Son to the Father. Many have used his gospel for the development of the concept of the Trinity while the Synoptic Gospels focused less directly on Jesus Christ (PBUH) as the Son of God. John includes far more direct claims of Jesus being the only Son of God than the Synoptic Gospels. The gospel also focuses on the relation of the Redeemer to believers, the announcement of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter (Greek Paraclete), and the prominence of love as an element in the Christian character.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope


The Trinity:
1. The Father.
2. The Son (incarnate as Jesus Christ).
3. The Holy Spirit.

John 1: 14, John 3:16

“And the word was made 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.”

John 1:14

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

John 3:16

B. John’s Historical Importance

Since the advent of critical scholarship, John’s historical importance has been considered less significant than the synoptic traditions by some scholars. The scholars of the 19th century concluded that the Gospel of John had little historical value. Over the next two centuries scholars such as Bultmann and Dodd looked closer and began finding historically important parts of John. Many scholars today believe that parts of John represent an independent historical tradition from the Synoptics, while other parts represent later traditions. The scholars of the Jesus Seminar still assert that

37 The Holy Bible: King James Version, N.2, p.1097.

38 Ibid., p.1100.

39 The Jesus Seminar is a group of about 200 individuals who include “scholars with advanced degrees in biblical studies, religion or related fields [as well as] published authors who are recognized authorities in the field of religion” founded in 1985 by the late Robert Funk and John Dominic Crossan under the auspices of the Westar Institute. One of the most active groups in biblical criticism, the seminar uses controversial methods (votes with colored marbles) to determine what Jesus, as a historical figure, may or may not have said or done. In addition, the seminar popularizes research into the historical Jesus. The public is welcome to attend the twice-yearly meetings. They produced new translations of the New Testament plus the Gospel of Thomas to use as textual sources. They published their results in three reports The Five Gospels (1993), The Acts of Jesus (1998), and The Gospel of Jesus (1999). They also run a series of lectures and workshops in various U.S. cities. The seminar’s reconstruction of Jesus portrays him as an itinerant wise man who did not die as a substitute for sinners or rise from the dead, but preached a “social gospel” in startling parables and aphorisms. He often turned common-sense ideas upside down, confounding the expectations of his audience. He preached of “Heaven’s imperial rule” (traditionally translated as “Kingdom of God”), which was already present but unseen. He depicts God as a loving father. He fraternizes with outsiders and criticizes insiders. The seminar treats the gospels as historical artifacts, representing not only Jesus’ actual words and deeds.

The seminar treats the gospels as historical artifacts, representing not only Jesus’ actual words and deeds.
there is little historical value in John, and consider nearly every Johannine saying of Jesus Christ (PBUH) to be non-historical. However, most scholars agree that John is a very important document on Christian theology.

but also the inventions and elaborations of the early Christian community and of the gospel authors. The fellows placed the burden of proof on those who advocate any passage’s historicity. Unconcerned with canonical boundaries, they asserted that the Gospel of Thomas has more authentic material than the Gospel of John. While analyzing the gospels as fallible human creations is a standard historical-critical method, the seminar’s premise that Jesus Christ (PBUH) did not hold an apocalyptic world view is controversial. Rather than revealing an apocalyptic eschatology, which instructs his disciples to prepare for the end of the world, the fellows argue that the authentic words of Jesus Christ (PBUH) indicate that he preached a sapiential eschatology, which encourages all God’s children to repair the world.

Johannine literature is the collection of New Testament works that are attached by tradition to the person of John the Evangelist. The collection is usually considered to include:

- The Gospel of John
- The First Epistle of John
- The Second Epistle of John
- The Third Epistle of John
- The Book of Revelation

The five works show some similarity in imagery, but differ greatly in style and presentation. Some biblical scholars reject entirely the idea of a unified corpus of Johannine literature, whereas others see the works as the product of an early Christian community with links to John the Evangelist.

2. The Role of Paul in the Formation of Christianity

2.1 Paul and Christianity

The Bible was formerly in the Hebrew language. In the Middle Ages, it was translated into Latin and entitled “Itala.” When Christianity began to spread, pagans and Jews opposed it. So much so that the Christians had to keep their faith a secret. They worshipped in temples which were built under ground, in caves, in mountains, and in other secret places. The Jews, in spite of all their treachery and oppression, could not prevent Christianity from spreading. Saul, a preeminent Jew and one of the greatest enemies of Christianity, lied about being a Christian inciting all nations, except the Jews, to become Christians. He changed his name to Pavlos. He pretended to be a pious Christian so that he could corrupt Christianity from within. The concept of “Oneness” was replaced by the “Trinity.” Jesusism (Isaism) became Christianity. He falsified the Bible. He preached that Jesus Christ (PBUH) was the son of God. He made it permissible for Christians to drink wine and to eat pork. He changed the direction of their kiblah (qibla) towards the east so that it faced the rising sun.42 He

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42 Qibla (قبلة, also transliterated as Qiblah, Kibla or Kiblah) is an Arabic word for the direction that should be faced when a Muslim prays during Salah. Most mosques contain a niche in a wall that indicates the qibla. The qibla has importance to more than just the salat, and plays an important part in everyday ceremonies. The head of an animal that is slaughtered using Halal methods is aligned with the qibla. After death, Muslims are buried with their faces in the direction of the qibla. Thus, archeology can indicate a Muslim necropolis if no other signs are present. At one point the direction of the qibla was toward Bayt al-Maqdis, Jerusalem (and it is therefore called the First of the Two Qiblas). At least since Mishnaic times (200 CE), Jews face the temple mount in Jerusalem while praying. The Mishnah speaks about this in Berakhot (Talmud) chapter 4, Mishnays 5 and 6 and this practice is even found as early as 1 Kings 8:35-36. In Islam, this only lasted for seventeen months after Muhammad's arrival in Medina, after which the qibla became oriented towards the Kaaba in Mecca. According to accounts from the prophet Muhammad's companions, the change happened very suddenly during the noon prayer in Medina, in a mosque known as Masjid al-Qiblatain (Mosque of the Two Qiblas). Muhammad was leading the prayer when he received a revelation from Allah instructing him to take the Kaaba as the qibla (literally, “turn your face towards the Masjid al Haram”). According to the historical accounts, Muhammad, who had been facing Jerusalem, upon receiving this revelation, immediately turned around to face Mecca, and those praying behind him also did so. The qibla, for any point of reference on the Earth, is the direction of the Kaaba. Some Muslims from North America determine this direction using a rhumb line, while most Muslims worldwide use a great circle. In Muslim religious practice, supplicants must face this direction in prayer. Muslims do not worship the Kaaba or its contents; the Kaaba is simply a focal point for prayer. If someone is inside the Kaaba, they are
also introduced many other false things which were not previously communicated by Jesus Christ (PBUH). Eventually his corrupt ideas began to spread among the Christians. Consequently, they divided into various sects. They deviated from the teaching of Jesus Christ (PBUH), and in their place they made up silly fables. They made imaginary pictures and statues of Jesus Christ (PBUH). They accepted and adopted the cross as their religious emblem (symbol). They began to worship these statues and the cross. In other words, they reverted to paganism. They considered Jesus Christ (PBUH) to be the son of God. Whereas, the Prophet Jesus Christ (PBUH) had never said such a thing to them; he had only mentioned the Holy Ghost (Ruh al-Quds), that is, the supernatural power endowed upon him by God. Believing in the divinity of Jesus Christ (PBUH), who is believed to be the son of God, and in the Holy Ghost along with the belief in God, caused them to stray from the belief in the one, unchanging Creator, which has been the basis of all the true religions, and without which reduces them to the ridiculous state of worshipping three deities, called the "Trinity."\(^{43}\)

2.2 Paul and Barnabas in the Christianity

A. Paul and Barnabas

The first of the twelve disciples to meet Paul after his spiritual transformation, and to stay with him for a long period, was Barnabas. What was his status amongst the disciples? This appears from the following statement of the Acts:

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“And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”

Acts 4:36-37

This was the Barnabas who certified Paul as true before all the disciples, and showed them that Paul has become like them in belief. Whereas, until that time, the disciples were not certain of this.

According to the Acts, both Paul and Barnabas were companions for a long period, and both preached Christianity together, to the extent that the other disciples testified in regard to them.

Until the fifteenth Chapter of the Acts, both Barnabas and Paul are portrayed as closely connected in all matters. But, thereafter, an event suddenly occurs which requires special attention. After staying together for such a lengthy period and jointly undertaking the task of preaching and propagation, there arises suddenly a very serious dispute between the two to the extent that it was not possible anymore for both to stay together.

Barnabas was amongst the leading figures of early Christianity and who devoted and risked his life in the propagation would for the sake of a relative sacrifice the noble objects of propagation. The simple truth is that the difference of opinion between Paul and Barnabas was theological. When Barnabas saw that Paul was altering the basic doctrines of Christianity, he separated himself from him. And Paul’s pupil, Luke (Luke is the student of Paul), has explained the difference in a manner

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44 Ibid., p.1133.

45 Acts 15:36-41.
that if blame were to be apportioned, then blame would be leveled at Barnabas, and Paul would be free of fault.

Paul refers to the differences amongst the Christians which appeared in Jerusalem and Antioch after the ascent of Jesus. The majority of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were Jews, and it was only later they embraced Christianity. The majority the people of Antioch were polytheists, and embraced Christianity after propagation by the disciples. The first group is referred to in the Bible as “Jewish Christians”, and the second as “Gentile Christians.” The Jewish Christians asserted that it was necessary to circumcision and to act on all the laws of the Law of Moses. Hence, they were also called “The Circumcised.” The Gentiles however, asserted that circumcision and the like was not necessary. The result was that the Jewish Christians who regarded as unlawful the slaughter of the Gentiles, did not like to eat and intermingle with the Gentiles. Paul was the founder and upholder of these views of the Gentiles. He made these endeavours in order to obtain support from the Gentiles, and to ensure that their views were same as his.

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46 Jewish Christians: The term “Early Jewish Christians” is often used in discussing the Early History of Christianity, see also Early Christianity. Jesus, his Twelve Apostles, the Elders, his family, and essentially all of his early followers were Jewish or Jewish Proselytes. Hence the 3,000 converts on Pentecost (Sivan 6), following the death of Jesus (Nisan 14 or 15), described in Acts of the Apostles 2, were all Jews and Proselytes. Samaritans were not Jewish (Judean), but are still identified with the tribes of Israel and also numbered among the early followers, as is the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8). Traditionally the Roman Centurion Cornelius is considered the first Gentile convert, as recorded in Acts 10, albeit he too is a “God-fearer” proselyte who participated in a Jewish synagogue. The major division prior to that time was between Hellenistic and non-Hellenistic Jews or Koine Greek (Acts 6) and Aramaic (Acts 1:19) speakers. The conversion and acceptance of the Gentile Cornelius can be described in terms of the Judaic teaching which describes strangers becoming part of the community (Isaiah 56:3-7). Acts does not use the term “Jewish Christians”, rather those led by James the Just, Simon Peter, and John the Apostle, the “Pillars of the Church”, were called followers of “The Way”. Later groups, or perhaps the same group by different names, were the Ebionites and Elkasites.

47 The word Gentile is an anglicised version of the Latin word gentilis, meaning of or belonging to a clan or tribe. In the King James and various other versions of the Bible it is used to refer to non-Israelite tribes or nations. It is also used to translate the New Testament. Today, the primary meaning of gentile is ‘non-Jew’.
Paul criticized Barnabas and Peter for this reason, namely, that both supported the party of circumcision whilst staying in Antioch, and separated themselves from the new followers of Paul who did not uphold circumcision and the Law of Moses.

It is most probable that the sharp contention between Barnabas and Paul referred to by Luke in strong words was due to these fundamental theological difference and not so much to the companionship of John Mark, because of no where in the letters of Paul is it stated that the cause of dispute between him and Barnabas was Mark. Paul did not consider necessary for his followers circumcision and abiding by the Law of Moses. And Barnabas was not willing to overlook the law which was greatly emphasized by the Bible, and in regard to which there was no possibility of abrogation.\(^48\)

B. After Separation

Now, we will attempt to see where Barnabas went after his serious contention with Paul. The Acts indicate only that after his separation with Paul he went to Cyprus\(^49\) with Mark. Apart from this, the Acts make no mention of him. Other Christian histories are totally silent of the later life of Barnabas. The Encyclopedia Britannica says:

“\(\text{When Barnabas sails away with Mark to resume work in Cyprus, the mists of history close about him. Only now and again we catch fugitive glimpses of him and his work.}\)”

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\(^49\) The Acts:

“\(\text{And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus.}\)”

*Acts 15:39*
The question is that Barnabas was a leading personality of early Christianity and devoted his whole life to preaching and propagating Christianity – was not worthy, after his separation from Paul, of being mentioned by the pupils of Paul (such as Luke), albeit in a few lines? The conclusion is inescapable that Barnabas knew the reality of Paul, and thereafter endeavoured to inform people of the distortions being introduced by Paul in Christianity. Hence, the pupils of Paul would obviously not mention him.\footnote{Muhammad Taqi Usmani, N.48, p.112.}

**C. Gospel of Barnabas**

This rational conclusion becomes virtually a fact when we read the first page of the gospel of Barnabas which was found in the sixteenth century in the private library of Pope Sixtus V (Pope from 1585-1590):\footnote{Ulfat Azizus Samad, *A Comparative Study of Christianity & Islam* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & distributors, 2004) p.8.}

“Dearly beloved the great and wonderful God hath during these past days visited us by his prophet Jesus Christ in great mercy of teaching and miracles, by reason whereof many, being deceived of Satan, under pretence of piety, are preaching most impious doctrine, calling Jesus son of God, repudiating the circumcision ordained of God for ever, and permitting every unclean meat: among whom also Paul hath been deceived, whereof I speak not without grief, for which cause I am writing that truth which I have seen and heard, in the intercourse that I have had with Jesus, in order that ye may be saved and not be deceived of Satan and perish in the judgement of God. Therefore beware of every one that preacheth unto you new doctrine contrary to that which I write, that ye
may be saved eternally. The great God be with you and guard you from Satan and from every evil. Amen."^52

This is the gospel of Barnabas in relation to which great efforts were made to obliterate it. In the 5th Century BC (100 years before the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.)) Pope Jelasius I^53 issued an edict to the effect that the reader of this gospel is a criminal, and today it is claimed that it has been written by a Muslim. Hence, there can be no doubt whatsoever that present day Christianity represents the theories of Paul, and is not connected whatsoever with the teaching of Jesus Christ (PBUH) or his disciples.^54

D. Conclusions

However, the foregoing discussion has conclusively established the following:

1. In the beginning for several years, Barnabas and the other disciples believed that Paul has truly brought faith in Christianity.

2. On this basis, Barnabas stayed with Paul for a long period of time to preach the teaching of Jesus Christ (PBUH) among the Jews and Gentiles.

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^53 Pope Saint Jelasius I was the third pope of African origin in Catholic history. Gelasius had been closely employed by his predecessor, Felix III, especially in drafting papal documents. Gelasius’ election, March 1, 492, was a gesture for continuity: Gelasius inherited Felix’s struggles with Eastern Roman Emperor Anastasius I and the patriarch of Constantinople and exacerbated them by insisting on the removal of the name of the late Acacius, patriarch of Constantinople, from the diptychs, in spite of every ecumenical gesture by the current, otherwise quite orthodox patriarch Euphemius (q.v. for details of the Acacian schism). The split with the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople was inevitable, from the western point of view, because they had embraced a view of a single, Divine (‘Monophysite’) nature of Christ, which the papal party viewed as heresy. Gelasius’ book *De duabus in Christo naturis* (‘On the dual nature of Christ’) delineated the western view. Thus Gelasius, for all the conservative Latinity of his writing style stood on the cusp of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. After a brief but dynamic reign, his death occurred on November 19, 496; his feast day corresponds to the date of his interment on November 21.

^54 Muhammad Taqi Usmani, N.48, pp.112-113.
3. Thereafter, Barnabas separated himself from Paul on the grounds of theological differences.

4. The Council of Jerusalem did not permanently abrogate circumcision and adherence to the detailed law of Torah for the Gentiles, but the disciples permitted the Gentiles to accept Christianity without adhering to that law as a first step towards living a complete Christian life.

5. However, Paul began to preach that all the laws of the Torah were abrogated. The laws were a curse from which they were redeemed, and that if they underwent circumcision, Christ would be of no advantage to them. Hence, Peter and Barnabas opposed Paul at Antioch.

6. As a result of the opposition of the disciples, a tremendous outcry against Paul arose to the effect that he had opposed the disciples. In response, Paul wrote a letter to the Galatians.

7. In that letter, instead of concurring with the disciples, he opposed them. He directed his endeavours to prove that he received knowledge directly through revelation and therefore was not in need of being taught by the disciples.

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55 Council of Jerusalem (or Apostolic Conference) is a name applied subsequently to a meeting described in Acts of the Apostles chapter 15 and probably referred to in Paul’s letter to the Galatians chapter 2. The events described there are generally dated to around the year 50, at the latest some time before the death of James the Just in 62, and before the First Roman-Jewish War and destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD. Paul himself described several meetings with the apostles in Jerusalem, though it is difficult to reconcile any of them fully with the account in Acts (see Paul of Tarsus—Council of Jerusalem). Paul claims he “went up again to Jerusalem” (i.e., not the first time) with Barnabas and Titus “in response to a revelation”, in order to “lay before them the gospel (he) proclaimed among the Gentiles” (Galatians 2:2); them being according to Paul “those who were supposed to be acknowledged leaders” (Galatians 2:6): James, Cephas and John. He describes this as a “private meeting” (not a public council) and notes that Titus, who was Greek, wasn’t pressured to be circumcised (Galatians 2:3). However, he refers to “false believers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus (PBUH), so that they might enslave us” (Galatians 2:4). Paul claims the “pillars” of the Church had no differences with him. On the contrary, they gave him the “right hand of fellowship”, he bound for the mission to “the uncircumcised” and they to “the circumcised”, requesting only that he remember the “poor” of Jerusalem. Whether this was the same meeting as that described in Acts is not universally agreed.
8. The letter was written after the convening of the council of Jerusalem. It followed that the support which Paul received from the disciples at the council now ended. The disciples now opposed him, and therefore Paul did not make reference to support from the disciples in his letter.

9. All the letters of Paul were written after this event. Because according to G.T. Manley, the letter written to the Galatians is chronologically Paul’s first letter. Hence, the Doctrines of Trinity, Redemption, Incarnation and Abrogation of Law of Torah represent the personal theories of Paul, and were not supported by the disciples.\(^{56}\)

2.3 The Spread of Christianity and Paul

After the ascension of Jesus Christ (PBUH), Christianity began to spread slowly all over the world. From the beginning, the Romans and the Greeks who were idolaters furiously rejected this new religion. Christians were seized and killed. They were thrown in front of wild animals in circuses. But, the true religion continued to be known and appreciated. What a pity that the real Bible (Injil) disappeared in the course of time.\(^{57}\) The nonsensical pretensions of Paul, who was a hypocrite: “The crucifixion of Jesus Christ (PBUH) is, divine reason, justice and salvation. God allowed his own son be killed in order to forgive the sins of human beings,” has become the foundation of today’s Christianity.\(^{58}\) Although Jesus Christ (PBUH) never said that anybody was born a sinner, today’s Christianity is explained as follows:

\(^{56}\) Muhammad Taqi Usmani, N.48, pp.110-112.

\(^{57}\) Waqf Ikhlas, N.13, p275.

\(^{58}\) Put the name of the book and the numbers of Gospels that mentioned about “The crucifixion of Jesus is, divine reason, justice and salvation. God allowed his own son be killed in order to forgive the sins of human beings.”
1- Man comes to this world as a sinner. Adam, the first human, did not obey the order of God; therefore, he was expelled from Paradise.

2- The descendants of Adam, up to now, are deemed to have the same sin.

3- Jesus Christ (PBUH) as the son of God was sent to this world to save humanity from that sin.

4- God allowed His own son to be crucified because He wanted to forgive the sins of human beings.

5- This world is a place of suffering. Pleasure and enjoyment are prohibited in this world. Man was created to suffer and to worship.

6- Man cannot have direct relations (worship) with God. They cannot directly ask anything from Him. Only the priests can implore God for them. And only the priests can forgive their sins.

7- The leader of the Christians is the Pope. The Pope is infallible; whatever he does is justice.

8- The spirit and the body are different. Only the priests can purify the spirits of people. But their bodies remain impure; it will always remain sinful.\footnote{Waqf Ikhlas, N.13, pp.275-276.}
3. Critical Examination of the Gospels

3.1 New Testament Scholarship

One thing is surely indisputable from all of this: the gospels are not, as some Christians claim, the divine words of God. For if they are, God is extremely confused. As, by his very nature, God is unlikely to be confused, it seems safe to conclude that we are dealing with the words of fallible men. So, can the gospels be relied on to tell us anything about an historical Jesus? What light can scholarship shed on Matthew, Mark, Luke and John?

Well, first of all, the gospels were not originally even known by these names. They were not attributed to any particular author, each gospel being regarded as 'the gospel' of a particular Christian sect. Only later did they acquire the names of their supposed authors. The gospels are actually anonymous works, in which everything, without exception, is written in capital letters, with no headings, chapter or verse divisions, and practically no punctuation or spaces between words. They were not even written in the Aramaic of the Jews but in Greek.

The gospels have also been added to and altered over time. The Pagan critic Celsus complains that Christians 'altered the original text of the gospels three or four times, or even more, with the intention of thus being able to destroy the arguments of their critics'. Modern scholars have found that he was right. A careful study of over 3,000 early manuscripts has shown how scribes made many changes. The Christian philosopher Origin, writing in the third century, acknowledges that manuscripts have been edited and interpolated to suit the needs of the changing theological climate:

"It is an obvious fact today that there is much diversity among the manuscripts, due either to the carelessness of the scribes, or the perverse
audacity of some people in correcting the text, or again to the fact that there are those who add or delete as they please, setting themselves up as correctors."

To convey the enormity of the problem, one scholar describes selecting a place in the gospels completely at random (in this case he chose Mark 10-11) and checking to see how many differences were recorded between various early manuscripts for these passages. He discovered ‘no fewer than 48 places where the manuscripts differ, sometimes there are only two possibilities, often there are three or more, and in one case there are six.

Scholars also know that whole sections of the gospels were added later. For example, originally Mark did not contain any words beyond Chapter 16 verse 8 – the fear of the women at their discovery of the empty tomb. The so-called ‘long ending’ in which the risen Jesus Christ (PBUH) appears to his disciples, is not found in any early manuscripts and yet now appears in nearly all New Testaments.

Despite all of this editing and amending, the gospels remain contradictory and inconsistent, as we have seen. For centuries, the Catholic Church prevented anyone other than priests reading the New Testament for themselves, so few had the chance to discover just how confused the gospels are. That all changed with the Protestant Reformation after Luther demanded that ordinary people be allowed to read the Bible for themselves.⁶⁰

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⁶⁰ The Protestant Reformation was a reform movement in The Holy Roman Empire that began in 1517, though its roots lie further back in time. The Reformation involved cultural, economic, political and religious aspects. It began with Martin Luther and ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The movement began as an attempt to reform the Catholic Church. Many western Catholics were troubled by what they saw as false doctrines and malpractices within the Church, particularly involving the teaching and sale of indulgences. Another major contention was the practice of buying and selling church positions (simony) and what was seen at the time as considerable corruption within the Church's hierarchy. This corruption was seen by many at the time as systemic, even reaching the position of the Pope. On 31 October 1517, in Saxony (in what is now Germany), Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church, which served as a notice board for university-related announcements. These were points for debate that criticized the Church and the Pope. The most
Eager to distance themselves from Rome, German Protestant scholars began to search the gospels for the real Jesus Christ (PBUH). Even up to the present day, the majority of such scholars have themselves been Christians, since a theological career at a German university is closed to those who have not been baptized. Yet despite this, rather than giving Christianity a firm historical foundation, as they hoped, Protestant scholars’ three centuries of intense scholarship have undermined the literal figure of Jesus completely.

From detailed research they concluded that the Gospel of John was written so late that it could not have been an eyewitness account. In Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus Christ (PBUH) teaches in pithy parables, but John contains lengthy, apparently verbatim speeches in fluent Greek which were clearly not the words of a Jewish carpenter’s son. John also describes quite different incidents from the other gospels.

The work of the Berlin philologist Karl Lachmann and other eminent scholars also revealed that, despite their differences, Matthew, Mark and Luke shared a great deal in common.\(^\text{61}\) These similarities are due to the fact that Matthew and Luke are

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\(^\text{61}\) Karl Lachmann: Karl Konrad Friedrich Wilhelm Lachmann (March 4, 1793 - March 13, 1851) was a German philologist and critic. He was born in Brunswick, in what is now Lower Saxony. He studied at Leipzig and Göttingen, devoting himself mainly to philological studies. In 1815 he joined the Prussian army as a volunteer chasseur and accompanied his detachment to Paris, but did not see active service. In 1816 he became an assistant master in the Friedrichswerder gymnasium at Berlin, and a Privatdozent at the university. In January 1818 he became professor extraordinarius of classical philology in the University of Königsberg, and at the same time began to lecture on Old German grammar and the Middle High German poets. He devoted himself during the following seven years to an extraordinarily detailed study of those subjects, and in 1824 obtained leave of absence in order to
actually re-workings of Mark, which is the simplest and earliest gospel. If John is written too late and Matthew and Luke are based on Mark, this leaves us only the Gospel of Mark as a possible eyewitness account of the life of Jesus Christ (PBUH).

Scholars believe that Mark was written sometime between 70 A.D and the early second century. If we accept the earliest possible date, it is just feasible that Mark was an eyewitness. Yet ironically, Mark does not claim to have known Jesus Christ (PBUH). Many in the early Church objected to his gospel being treated as canonical for this very reason. Mark is claimed to have been at best some sort of secretary or interpreter for Peter. Even this is impossible, however, since Mark’s gospel exhibits what one modern scholar calls ‘a lamentable ignorance of Palestinian geography’.

In the seventh chapter, for instance, Jesus Christ (PBUH) is reported as going through Sidon on his way from Tyre to the Sea of Galilee. Not only is Sidon in the opposite direction, but there was in fact no road from Sidon to the Sea of Galilee in the first century A.D, only one from Tyre. Similarly the fifth chapter refers to the Sea of Galilee’s eastern shore as the country of the Gerasenes, yet Gerasa, today Jerash, is more than thirty miles to the south-east, too far away for a story whose setting requires a nearby city with a steep slope down to the sea.\(^2\) Aside from geography, Mark represented Jesus Christ (PBUH) as saying

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\(^2\) Jerash, the Gerasa of Antiquity, is the capital and largest city of Jerash Governorate, which is situated in the north of Jordan, (محافظة حريش) 48 km (30 miles) north of the capital Amman.
“And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery”

Mark 10:12

A precept which would have been meaningless in the Jewish world, where women had no rights of divorce. (Matthew 5:31-32)

In the late nineteenth century, William Wrede, Professor of New Testament Studies at Breslau University, argued that even the Gospel of Mark, the earliest and most primitive gospel was more concerned with theological dogma than historical accuracy. In 1919 another German scholar, Karl Ludwig Schmidt, published a careful study of the way in which Mark’s gospel had been created. He was able to show that the author of Mark had created his gospel by linking together existing smaller stories. The Jesus Christ (PBUH) story had been constructed from pre-existing fragments. The way that Matthew and Luke had added to Mark the nativity story and genealogies it could no longer be assumed by scholars that these narratives were in any way factual accounts. This effectively brought to an end any hope of finding an historical Jesus of St. Paul within the gospels.

towards Syria. Jerash Governorate’s geographical features vary from cold mountains to fertile valleys from (1250 to 300 meters above sea level), suitable for growing a wide variety of crops.


64 William Wrede: Georg Friedrich Eduard William Wrede (10 May 1859 – 23 November 1906) was a German Lutheran theologian. Wrede was born at Bücken in Hannover. He became an associate professor at Breslau in 1893, and full professor in 1896. He died in office in 1906. He became famous for his investigation of the Messianic Secret theme in the Gospel of Mark. He suggested that this was a literary and apologetic device by which early Christians could explain away the absence of any clear claim to be the Messiah. According to Wrede, the solution devised by the author of the Mark Gospel was to imply that Jesus kept his messiahship secret to his inner group of supporters. He also wrote a crucial study of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, which argued for its inauthenticity. His work, and that of Albert Schweitzer himself marked the end of the First Quest or Old Quest into the historical Jesus. Schweitzer’s 1906 book was called “The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede”.
German theologians began increasingly to date the origination of Mark, Matthew and Luke to well into the second century A.D. Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976), Professor of New Testament Studies at Marburg University, spent his life studying the gospels and was one of the greatest authorities on the New Testament. He pioneered the influential method of analyzing the gospels called ‘form-criticism’. Eventually he concluded:

“I do indeed think that we can now know almost nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus, since the early Christian sources show no interest in either and are, moreover fragmentary and often legendary.”

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Rudolf Karl Bultmann (August 20, 1884 – July 30, 1976) was a German theologian of Lutheran background, who was for three decades professor of New Testament studies at the University of Marburg. He defined an almost complete split between history and faith, writing that only the bare fact of Christ crucified was necessary for Christian faith. Bultmann was born in Wiefelstede, Oldenburg, the son of a Lutheran minister. He got an Abitur from the Altes Gymnasium in Oldenburg. He studied theology at Tübingen. After three terms, Bultmann went to the University of Berlin for two terms, and finally at Marburg for two more terms. He received his degree in 1910 from Marburg with a dissertation on the Epistles of St Paul. After submitting a Habilitation two years later, he became a lecturer on the New Testament at Marburg. After brief lectureships at Breslau and Giessen, he returned to Marburg in 1921 as a full professor. He stayed there until his retirement in 1951. His History of the Synoptic Tradition (1921) is still highly regarded as an essential tool for gospel research, even by scholars who reject his analyses of the conventional rhetorical tropes or narrative units of which the Gospels are assembled, and the historically-oriented principles called “form criticism,” of which Bultmann has been the most influential exponent: "The aim of form-criticism is to determine the original form of a piece of narrative, a dominical saying or a parable. In the process we learn to distinguish secondary additions and forms, and these in turn lead to important results for the history of the tradition." In 1941, he applied form criticism to the Gospel of John, in which he distinguished the presence of a lost Signs Gospel on which John, alone of the evangelists, depended. This monograph, highly controversial at the time, is a milestone in research into the historical Jesus. The same year his lecture New Testament and Mythology: The Problem of Demythologizing the New Testament Message called on interpreters to replace traditional theology with the philosophy of Bultmann’s colleague, Martin Heidegger, an endeavor to make accessible to a literate modern audience the reality of Jesus’ teachings. Bultmann remained convinced the narratives of the life of Jesus were offering theology in story form. Lessons were taught in the familiar language of myth. They were not to be excluded, but given explanation so they could be understood for today. Bultmann thought faith should become a present day reality. To Bultmann, the people of the world appeared to be always in disappointment and turmoil. Faith must be a determined vital act of will, not a culling and extolling of "ancient proofs." He carried form-criticism so far as to call the historical value of the gospels into serious question. Some scholars criticized Bultmann and other critics for excessive skepticism regarding the historical reliability of the gospel narratives. The full impact of Bultmann was not felt until the English publication of Kerygma and Mythos (1948). He was a member of the Confessing Church and critical towards National Socialism. He spoke out against the mistreatment of Jews, against nationalistic excesses and against the dismissal of non-Aryan Christian ministers.

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3.2 Some Opinions of Christian on the Four Traditional Gospels

H. G. Wood

Thus says H. G. Wood, that:

"The material in the Synoptic Gospels is not affected for the most by the events of A.D. 79. It has taken shape in the experience of the first generation of Christians, before the fall of Jerusalem. The order in which the stories about Jesus are narrated in the Gospels is obviously in large measure artificial, and it varies from one Gospel to another."\(^{67}\)

Prof. Francis Crawford Burkitt

Prof. Francis Crawford Burkitt\(^{68}\) remarks, that,

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\(^{68}\) Francis Crawford Burkitt (September 3, 1864-1935) was a British theologian and scholar. He was Norris Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge, from 1905 until shortly before his death. He was educated at Harrow School and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he read mathematics.

**Works:**

- *The Book of Rules of Tyconius* (1894)
- *The four Gospels in Syriac, transcribed from the Sinaitic palimpsest* (1894) with Robert L. Bensly and J. Rendel Harris, introduction by Agnes Smith Lewis (1894)
- *The Old Latin and the Itala* (1896)
- *Fragments of the Books of Kings according to the Translation of Aquila* (1897)
- *Two Lectures on the Gospels* (1901)
- *Saint Ephraim's Quotations From The Gospel* (1901)
- *Criticism of the New Testament: St. Margaret's Lectures* (1902) with Frederick Kenyon, A. C. Headlam and others
- *Early Eastern Christianity: Saint Margaret's Lectures on the Syriac Speaking Church* (1904)
- *Evangelion da-mepharreshe: The Curetonian Version of the Four Gospels, with the readings of the Sinait Palimpsest. I. Text; II: Introduction and Notes* (1904)
- *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (1907)
- *Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (1914) Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1913
- *The Religion of the Manichees* (1925) Donnellan Lectures 1924
- *Palestine in General History* (1929) Schweich Lectures 1926, with Theodore H. Robinson, J. W. Hunkin
- *Christian Worship* (1930)
- *Jesus Christ: An Historical Outline* (1932)
- *Church and Gnosis: a Study of Christian Thought and Speculation in the Second Century* (1932)
- *Franciscan Essays II* (1932) with H. E. Goad and A. G. Little
"The four biographies of Jesus Christ are not all independent of each other, and neither of them was intended by its writer to form one of quartette. But they are all put side by side, unharmonised, one of them being actually imperfect at the end, and one being only the first volume of a large work. All this body of unmethodical literature was casual in its nature. No wonder, because the early Christians expected the end of the world very soon. The four canonical Gospels were only four out of many, and some other besides the four have survived. Each writer just wrote down some odd sayings of the Master that he recollected. Among the miracles described there is only one which is described in all the four Gospels and others were described and believed in, in other Gospels, which are not mentioned in any of the four canonical Gospels. Some of the Epistles contain expositions of doctrine, but this has been interpreted differently by different churches. There must have been hundreds of such Epistles, and not all the Epistles, now received as Canonical were always so received or intended to be so received. The Apocryphals was not the only in the field. There were others. They were prophecies of ‘things which must shortly come to pass’, they could not have been meant for long preservation, “for the time is at hand”.

W.K. Lauther Clarks

The Revd. W.K. Lauther Clarks writes that:

“Nowhere in the Synoptic Gospels does Jesus claim divinity for himself, he is always depicted as bearing the same relation to God as other men, being a man in the fullest sense, with soul, intellect and will. If he calls men to him it is to point them to the Father; this must have contributed greatly to the Church’s capacity to proclaim the divinity

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- *Early Christianity Outside the Roman Empire* (2002)
- *Christian Beginnings*

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without imperalling monotheismus. The God, to whom he points is not static, but God in action, taking the initiative and seeking to save men. See especially parables of Luke Chapter fifteen.”


“That Jesus never called himself “The Son of God” and never was addressed by that title.”

3.3 Some Opinions of Christian Scholars about the Gospel of Barnabas

John Toland

John Toland, a notable historian of the early church, had access to this manuscript (Gospel of Barnabas), and he refers to it in his Miscellaneous Works, which was published posthumously in 1747. He says of the Gospel: “This is in scripture style to a hair,” and continues:

“The story of Jesus is very differently told in many things from the received Gospels, but much more fully...and particularly this

70 Ibid., p.178.

71 Ibid., p.178.

72 John Toland (November 30, 1670 - March 11, 1722) was an Irish philosopher. Very little is known about his true origins other than the fact that he was born in Ardghe (Ballyliffin) on the Inishowen Peninsula, a predominantly Catholic and Irish speaking region of County Donegal, in north west Ulster. It is likely that he was originally christened “Seán Eoghan Ui Thuathallán”, thus givng rise to the sobriquet “Janus Junius Toland”. After having converted to Protestantism around the age of 16, he obtained a scholarship to study theology at the University of Glasgow. He would also later attend university at Edinburgh and at Leiden in Holland. His first book Christianity Not Mysterious (1696) was burnt by the public hangman in Dublin. He escaped prosecution by fleeing to England, where he spent most of the rest of his life. John Toland was the first person called a freethinker (by Bishop Berkeley) and went on to write over a hundred books in various domains but mostly dedicated to criticizing ecclesiastical institutions. A great deal of his intellectual activity was dedicated to writing political tracts in support of the Whig cause. Still, in Christianity not Mysterious, the book for which he is best known, Toland laid down a challenge not just to the authority of the established church, but to all inherited and unquestioned authority. It was thus as radical politically and philosophically, as it was theologically. This, and his political views, have given him an afterlife that could never have been dreamed of by Burke. It has even been argued that he was the “first Marxist” because of his views on the relationship between matter and motion.
Gospel... being near as long again as many of ours. Someone would make a prejudice in favour of it; because, as all things are best known just after they happen, so everything diminishes the further it proceeds from its original.”

Father Roguet

In all probability, Father Roguet in his Initiation to the Gospel, 1973, (pg 187) has not been convinced by the above argument. The explanation he gives us is curious, to say the least:

“Here, as in many similar cases, the problem only appears insuperable if one takes Biblical statements literally, and forgets their religious significance. It is not a matter of breaking down the factual reality into a symbolism which is inconsistent, but rather of looking for the theological intentions of those revealing these mysteries to us by providing us with facts we can apprehend with our senses and signs appropriate to our incarnate spirit.”

Father Kannengiesser

Father Kannengiesser warns that ‘one should not take literally’ facts reported about Jesus by the Gospels, because they are ‘writings suited to an occasion’ or ‘to combat’, whose authors ‘are writing down the traditions of their own community about Jesus’. Concerning the Resurrection of Jesus, which is the subject of his book, he stresses that none of the authors of the Gospels can claim to have been an eyewitness. He intimates that, as far as the rest of Jesus’ public life is concerned, the same must be true because, according to the Gospels, none of the Apostles – apart

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from Judas Iscariot – left Jesus from the moment he first followed Him until His last earthly manifestations.\textsuperscript{75}

\textbf{Albert Schweitzer}

Albert Schweitzer in \textit{The Kingdom of God and Primitive Christian Belief} writes:\textsuperscript{76}

"It may be inferred from the Acts that the disciples and the believers from Galilee met in the house of the mother of John Mark, who later accompanied Barnabas and Paul on the First Missionary Journey (Act 12:25)...The meeting place of the believers was the "upper room" which means the room situated immediately under the flat roof (Act 1:12-14). It must have been a large one to hold the entire company. It was in this room that the believers were "all together in one place" on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). How did it come to be identified with the one in which Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with the disciples?

When Jesus sent two disciples from Bethany to the city with instructions to prepare the Passover meal for him, he told them that they were to follow a man who would meet them with a pitcher of water. He would lead them to a house with a large upper room furnished with rugs, where they were to prepare the meal. We owe this valuable piece of information to the Gospel of Mark (Mark 14:13-15), which rests on a tradition going back to John Mark. Matthew only relates that Jesus sent the two disciples with directions to inform someone in the city, "The master saith – 'my time is at hand; I keep the Passover at thy house with

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., pp. 47-48.

\textsuperscript{76} \textbf{Albert Schweitzer}, M.D., OM, (January 14, 1875 – September 4, 1965) was an Alsatian theologian, musician, philosopher, and physician. He was born in Kaisersberg in Alsace-Lorraine, a bilingual Romano-Germanic region which Germany returned to France after World War I. Schweitzer challenged both the secular view of historical Jesus current at his time and the traditional Christian view, depicting a Jesus who expected the imminent end of the world. He received the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize in 1953 for his philosophy of "reverence for life", expressed in many ways, but most famously in founding and sustaining the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in Lambaréné, now in Gabon, west central Africa (then French Equatorial Africa).
my disciples.” (Matthew 26:8) Theodore Zahn was one of the first to put forward the view that the house of the last meal of Jesus with his disciples was identical with that of John Mark’s mother, in which the disciples met together with the believers from Galilee.78

**Arthur Cushman McGiffert**

Arthur Cushman McGiffert had commented in his *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*,79 he says:

“That Barnabas....whose right to work among the Gentiles had been recognized in Jerusalem....should have drawn back and separated himself from them is very strange. Barnabas was not in full sympathy with Paul’s doctrine of the Christian’s complete liberty from all laws of whatever kind....the separation of Paul and Barnabas is stated by the

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77 Theodore Zahn (1838-1933) German Lutheran theologian, patristic scholar (study of early church fathers) and New Testament exegete, was born in Mors, Rhenish Prussia. He taught at the universities of Goettingen (1865-1877), Kiel (1877-1878), Erlangen (1878-1888 and 1892-1909) and Leipzig (1888-1892). He was the author of many important monographs and commentaries. Nevertheless, his influence was underrated because he defended the conservatives in New Testament studies, opposing the radical critics of the Bible. Among his leading works was his three-volume *Introduction to the New Testament* (1897-1899; English translation 1909).

78 Muhammad 'Ataur Rahim, N.73, pp.56-57.

79 Arthur Cushman McGiffert (March 4, 1861 - 1933), American theologian, was born in Sauquoit, New York, the son of a Presbyterian clergyman of Scots-Irish descent. He graduated at Western Reserve College in 1882 and at Union Theological Seminary in 1885, studied in Germany (especially under Harnack) in 1885-1887, and in Italy and France in 1888, and in that year received the degree of doctor of philosophy at Marburg. He was instructor (1888-1890) and professor (1890 1893) of church history at Lane Theological Seminary, and in 1893 became Washburn professor of church history in Union theological seminary, succeeding Dr Philip Schaff. He became the 8th president of Union Seminary in 1917. His published work, except occasional critical studies in philosophy, dealt with church history and the history of dogma. His best known publication is a *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age* (1897). This book, which sustains critical historical eminence to this day, by its independent criticism and departures from traditionalism, aroused the opposition of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church; though the charges brought against McGiffert were dismissed by the Presbytery of New York, to which they had been referred, a trial for heresy seemed inevitable, and McGiffert, in 1900, retired from the Presbyterian ministry and retained his credentialed status by eager recognition from a Congregational Church. Likewise he retained his distinguished position at Union Theological Seminary. *A History of Christian Thought* constituted a two volume work (1932, 1933) which established an American standard in theological studies and is still cited regularly by scholars. Among his other publications are: *A Dialogue between a Christian and a Jew* (1888); a translation (with introduction and notes) of Eusebius’s *Church History* (1890); and *The Apostle’s Creed* (1902), in which he attempted to prove that the old Roman creed was formulated as a protest against the dualism of Marcion and his denial of the reality of Jesus’ life on earth.
author of the Acts to be the result of a disagreement concerning Mark, but
the real reason lay deeper than that....The man who stood closest to Paul
and was most intimately associated with him during the early years of his
Christian career was Barnabas, who was a member of the Church in
Jerusalem in its primitive days....His friendship meant much to Paul and
doubtless contributed in no small degree to his credit and influence with
the Christians. Barnabas stood sponsor for Paul in the early days when the
memory of his persecuting career was fresh in the mind of the Church.”

Dr. Khalil Saadat

Dr. Khalil Saadat, a Christian Egyptian Scholar writes in “Introduction” of the
Arabic Gospel of St. Barnabas, that since the Gospel of Barnabas mentions the very
name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S) in its prophecies, its authenticity is
doubtful. It is now clear that the rejection of the Gospel of Barnabas proceeds from
the grudge for the Holy Prophet, and the rest of their argument is merely pretentious
and perfunctory.81

Samuel Green

Samuel Green writes about the Gospel of Barnabas in his article that named as
“The Gospel of Barnabas” which he says in the conclusion of his article as following:

“The Gospel of Barnabas is not an authentic Gospel of Jesus. The
author does not understand the language, history or geography of the 1st
century A.D., and there is no ancient evidence for the book. The internal
evidence of the book suggests it was written in the 14th century and there
are Muslim scholars who agree with this dating. The book is a rewrite of
the Biblical Gospel most likely by a Muslim who wanted to show that

80 Muhammad 'Ataur Rahim, N. 73, p.71.
Jesus taught Islam and predicted the coming of Muhammad. This type of rewriting has been done elsewhere by Muslims in the Gospel According to Islam. This type of behaviour is disgraceful, and it is disgraceful for Muslims to continue to publish, promote and distribute this false Scripture."^^

3.4 Opinions of Some Muslim about the Gospel of Barnabas (G.B.)

S. A. Fadel and the G.B.

Abstract: The “Gospel of Barnabas” was written by Barnabas, the apostle of Christ (PBOH), but some mistakes had happened during its copying, after all the Holy Qur’an is the only book preserved by God.

“Comparing the Gospel of Barnabas and the New Testament’s Gospels shows that Barnabas mentions all the events contained in the four gospels. However, there are events mentioned in the Gospel of Barnabas which are not mentioned in the four gospels of the testament. Barnabas contains a lot more events than any of the four Gospels separately. The writer of the Gospel of Barnabas knows that Mary Salomy is the sister of Virgin Mary, that Taboor is the mountain that Jesus Christ (PBUH) mounted when the holly spirit declared his prophecy. The writer was thus very close to Jesus Christ (PBUH). On the contrary the writer of the Gospel does not know when prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.) was sent, but only states when he would be sent. See (ch.72:13) for reference. It is quite known to all who lived after the spreading of Islam that it was more than 600 years between Jesus Christ (PBUH) and the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.). The Gospel of Barnabas also states that the Prophet will revenge from those who say that Jesus Christ (PBUH) is more than a man

83 Hadith (narrative) of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.)

“Narrated Salman: The interval between Jesus and Muhammad was six hundred years.”

Sahih Bukhari (Book 58, Hadith 284)
(ch. 72:17); but what really happened was that the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.) never fought the Christians. It states “the moon shall minister sleep to him in his boyhood, and when he shall be grown up he shall take her in his hands.” (ch.72:18). Regarding his boyhood, no one said such a thing about the moon, but perhaps the division of the moon in his time is the explanation of “take her in his hands.” So the writer of the Gospel of Barnabas is very ignorant of the Islamic history, which does not permit that he is a Muslim, and assures that he lived prior to the advent of Muhammad (S.A.S.).

Muhammad ‘Ataur Rahim and the G.B.

A Pakistani Muslim, Muhammad ‘Ataur Rahim, who took great pains to introduce this ‘gospel’ into Pakistan, had this to say:

“The gospel of Barnabas is the only known surviving gospel written by a disciple of Jesus, that is by a man who spent most of his time in the actual company of Jesus during the three years in which he was delivering his message. Therefore he had direct experience and knowledge of Jesus’ teaching, unlike all the authors of the four accepted Gospels.”

Ali Akbar and the G.B.

Ali Akbar, made the comments in his book, “Israel and the Prophecies of the Holy Qur’an” as he said:

“Christians do not regard the gospel of St. Barnabas as an integral part of the New Testament and it is not often preached in their churches. This Gospel was condemned by the Christian council three hundred years before the prophet Muhammad. The reason for this is, no doubt, that the

84 http://barnabas.net/Barnabas%20Readers/verify1.htm
85 Muhammad ‘Ataur Rahim, N. 73, p.41.
advent of the prophet Muhammad is predicted therein in very clear words."^86

**Abdu L-Ahad Dawud and the G.B.**

Abdu L-Ahad Dawud in his popular book, *Muhammad in the Bible*:

"This Gospel has been rejected by Churches because its language is more in accordance with the revealed Scriptures and because it is very expressive and explicit about the nature of Jesus Christ's mission, and above all because it records the exact words of Jesus concerning Muhammad."^87

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4. The Moral Teachings of Christianity and Islam

Both Christianity and Islam exhort men to virtuous deeds and pious life. They condemn selfishness, falsehood, dishonesty, greed, hypocrisy, injustice, cruelty, malice, vindictiveness, treachery, pride, vanity, arrogance, callousness, intemperance, incontinence, hurtful speech and violence. Both enjoin upon their followers faith and trust in God, repentance truth, purity, courage, justice, charity, sympathy compassion, mercy, self-control and uprightness. The chief virtues enjoined by Christianity and Islam alike may be grouped under two headings. Firstly those that prevent a man from injuring the life, property, freedom and honour of others, such as chastity, honesty, tolerance, peace and politeness. Secondly, those that prompt a man to do good to others, such as mercy, forgiveness, truthfulness, courage, patience, sympathy, kindness and love.

However, the following are the brief summary of the moral teachings of Christianity and Islam in the words of the Scriptures of the two religions.

4.1 CHASTITY

Christianity

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart"

Matthew 5: 27-28

Islam

"Come not nigh to indecent deeds, whether open or secret"

Holy Qur'an 6:151

"Nor come nigh to adultery (totally abstain from its preliminaries and everything likely to lead thereto), for it is a shameless deed and an evil, opening the

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road to other evils”

Holy Qur’an 17: 3

Narrated Ibn ‘Abbas: I did not see anything so resembling minor sins as what Abu Huraira said from the Prophet, who said, “Allah has written for the son of Adam his inevitable share of adultery whether he is aware of it or not: The adultery of the eye is the looking (at something which is sinful to look at), and the adultery of the tongue is to utter (what it is unlawful to utter), and the inner self wishes and longs for (adultery) and the private parts turn that into reality or refrain from submitting to the temptation.”

Sahih Bukhari Book 77, Hadith 609

4.2 POLITENESS

Christianity

“But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement, and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire”

Matthew 5: 22

Islam

“O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): Nor let some women laugh at others: it may be that the (letter) are better that the (former): nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames: ill-

90 Ibid., p.372.

seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed: and those who do not desist are (indeed) doing wrong. O Ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not at each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs"

_Holy Qur'an 49: 11-12_ 92

"And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men. Nor walk in insolence through the earth: for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass"

_Holy Qur'an 31: 18-19_ 93

### 4.3 FORGIVENESS

**Christianity**

Peter said unto him,  

"Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times. Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but

**Islam**

"Be Quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth, prepared for the righteous,-those who

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92 _The Holy Qur'an_, N.89, pp.1591-1592.

93 Ibid., pp.1215-1261.

Until seventy times seven”  
Matthew 18: 21-22

spend (freely), whether in prosperity or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men; for Allah loves those who do good”  

Holy Qur’an 3: 133-134

“Quite a number of the People of the Book wish that they could turn you (people) back to infidelity after ye have believed, from selfish envy, after the truth hath become manifest unto them: but forgive and overlook, till Allah brings about His command; for Allah hath power overall things”

Holy Qur’an 2: 109

“So pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah’s) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of moment)”

Holy Qur’an 3: 159

4.4 DOING GOOD TO OTHERS

Christianity

“And Jesus answering said, a certain man went down from Jerusalem

Islam

“Seest thou one who denies the Judgment (to come)? Then such is the


96 Ibid., pp.44-45.

97 Ibid., p.190.

98 The Holy Bible: King James Version, N.2, pp.1073-1074.
to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came, looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy in him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. Luke 10: 30-37

one who repulses the orphan, and encourages not the feeding of the indigent. So woe to the worship who are neglectful of their prayers, those who (want but) to be seen, but refuse (to supply) (Even) neighbourly needs”

Holy Qur’an 107: 1-7

“The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it growth seven ears and each ear hath a hundred grains. Allah giveth manifold increase to whom He pleaseth: and Allah careth for all and He knoweth all things. Those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah, and follow not up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury, - for them their reward is with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. Kind words and the covering of faults are better than charity followed by injury. Allah is Free of all wants, and He is most Forbearing. O ye who believe! cancel not your charity by reminders of generosity or by injury, - like those who spend their wealth to be seen of men, but believe neither in Allah nor in the


100 Ibid., pp.119-120.
4.5 COURAGE AND PATIENCE

Christianity

"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause the, to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come......Fear them not therefore; for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather rear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"

Islam

"O ye who believe! seek help with patient Perseverance and prayer: for God is with those who patiently persevere. And say not of those who are slain in the way of Allah: "They are dead.” Nay, they are living, though ye perceive (it) not. Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods, lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give Glad tidings to those who patently persevere,-who say, when afflicted with calamity: “To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return”: they are those on whom (Descend) blessings from their Lord, and mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance"

Matthew 10:21-28

Holy Qur’an 2: 153-157

101 The Holy Bible: King James Version, N.2, pp.1001-1002.

4.6 LOVE AND SYMPATHY

**Christianity**

“And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”

_Mark 12: 31_ 103

“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”

_John 13: 34-35_ 104

**Islam**

“No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself”

_Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim_

NARRATED AN-NU’MAN BIN BASHIR: Allah’s Apostle said, “You see the believers as regards their being merciful among themselves and showing love among themselves and being kind, resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well then the whole body shares the sleeplessness (insomnia) and fever with it.”

_Sahih Bukhari, Book 73, Hadith 40_

4.7 NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL

However, some of the moral precepts of Christianity appear to be at once too vague to be of practical use, and too idealistic for literal acceptance. Take, for instance, the following once:

“But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain”

_Matthew 5: 39-41_ 105

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103 _The Holy Bible: King James Version_, N.2, p.1047.

104 Ibid., p.1117.
This was perhaps a necessary corrective to the hardheartedness and the spirit of vindictiveness produced by the literal observance of the teaching of ‘an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth’. But can this teaching of “turn the other cheek also” be regarded an universally valid” Can it be practiced as a wholesome moral injunction in all cases and on all occasions? Submission to bullies and tyrants will only increase evil and human misery. It will embolden them to exploit and oppress others and increase disorder and injustice. On the other hand, non-resistance to evil when the target of evil is not oneself but cases must be repelled. If the evildoer can be reformed and prevented from causing injury and harm by kindness and mercy, the this would certainly be the best way to deal with him. But if non-resistance and kindness make him bolder in doing harm to others, then chastisement in proportion to the crime must be meted out to him. The teaching of the Holy Qur’an in this respect also is of universal nature. It says:

“Nor can Goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: then will be between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate!”

Holy Qur’an 41: 34

“The recompense of an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah)”

Holy Qur’an 42: 40

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107 Ibid., p.1488.
4.8 WINE, SEX AND GAMBLING

While, on the one hand, Christianity favours monasticism, on the other it nowhere seems to have prohibited the three gateways to most crimes and sins—wine, gambling and improper display of physical attractions. While, in fact, forms a necessary element of the Eucharist or the Mass, and the first miracle of Jesus Christ (PBUH), as reported in John’s Gospel, was the converting of water into wine. It is in the Holy Qur’an, which gives comprehensive and complete moral guidance, that these evils have been expressly prohibited. Regarding wine and gambling, the Holy Qur’an says:

“O ye who believe! intoxicants and gambling, sacrificing to stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination, - of Satan’s handiwork. Eschew such (abomination), that ye may prosper. Satan’s plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah, and from prayer: will ye not then abstain?”

Holy Qur’an 5: 90-91

108 The Gospel according to John:

“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom. And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.”

John 2:1-11

109 The Holy Qur’an, N.89, pp.315-316.
Jesus Christ (PBUH) prohibited his followers from looking with eyes of lust at the wives of others, but Islam goes further.\textsuperscript{110} It prevents men and women from unnecessarily staring at each other, whether with lust or without lust, and wants them to be decently dressed. It condemns the shameless display of physical charms:\textsuperscript{111}

"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make far greater purity for them: and Allah is well acquainted with all that they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments, except what (ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty."

\textit{Holy Qur'an 24: 30-31}\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{110} The Gospel according to Matthew:

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

\textit{Matthew 5:27-29}

\textsuperscript{111} Ulfat Azizus Samad, N.51, pp.103-115.

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{The Holy Qur'an}, N.89, pp.1012-1013.
5. Traditional Gospels and the Christian Rites and Festival ect.

The miraculous personality of Jesus Christ (PBUH) mentioned in the Four Traditional Gospels has moved the Christian to celebrate many events of the beloved Prophet (Jesus Christ (PBUH)) as festivals. The following are the main rites and festivals of Christianity which have their roots in the Four Traditional Gospels.

5.1 Christmas

Christmas is an annual holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ (PBUH). It refers both to the day celebrating the birth, as well as to the season which that day inaugurates, which concludes with the Feast of the Epiphany.\textsuperscript{113} The date of the celebration is traditional, and is not considered to be his actual date of birth. Christmas festivities often combine the commemoration of Jesus' birth with various cultural customs, many of which have been influenced by earlier winter festivals. Although nominally a Christian holiday, it is also observed as a cultural holiday by many non-Christians.


\textsuperscript{113} Epiphany (Greek for “to manifest” or “to show”), is a Christian feast day which celebrates the revelation of God in human form in the person of Jesus Christ. Epiphany falls on January 6. Many of the Eastern Churches use the traditional Julian Calendar, while other Christian churches follow the modern Gregorian Calendar. January 6 on the Julian Calendar falls on the Gregorian Calendar's January 19. Western Christians commemorate the visitation of the Biblical Magi to the child Jesus on this day, i.e., his manifestation to the Gentiles. Eastern Christians commemorate the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, his manifestation to the world as the Son of God. It is also called Theophany, especially by Eastern Christians.

\textsuperscript{114} Gospels of Matthew and Luke:

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."

\textit{Matthew 1:18}
In most places around the world, Christmas Day is celebrated on December 25. Christmas Eve is the preceding day, December 24. In the United Kingdom and many countries of the Commonwealth, Boxing Day is the following day, December 26. In Catholic countries, Saint Stephen’s Day or the Feast of St. Stephen is December 26. The Armenian Apostolic Church observes Christmas on January 6. Eastern Orthodox Churches that still use the Julian Calendar celebrate Christmas on the Julian version of 25 December, which is January 7 on the more widely used Gregorian calendar, because the two calendars are now 13 days apart.

The prominence of Christmas Day increased gradually after Charlemagne was crowned on Christmas Day in 800. Around the 12th century, the remnants of the former Saturnalian traditions of the Romans were transferred to the Twelve Days of Christmas (25 December – 5 January). Christmas during the Middle Ages was a public festival, incorporating ivy, holly, and other evergreens, as well as gift-giving.

Modern traditions have come to include the display of Nativity scenes, Holly and Christmas trees, the exchange of gifts and cards, and the arrival of Father

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“And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.”

*Matthew 2:12*

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.”

*Luke 1:26*

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.”

*Luke 2:40*

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115 Charlemagne (Charles the Great) (747 – 28 January 814) was King of the Franks from 768 to his death. He expanded the Frankish kingdoms into a Frankish Empire that incorporated much of Western and Central Europe. During his reign, he conquered Italy and was crowned *Imperator Augustus* by Pope Leo III on 25 December 800 as a rival of the Byzantine Emperor in Constantinople. His rule is also associated with the Carolingian Renaissance, a revival of art, religion, and culture through the medium of the Catholic Church. Through his foreign conquests and internal reforms, Charlemagne helped define both Western Europe and the Middle Ages. He is numbered as Charles I in the regnal lists of France, Germany, and the Holy Roman Empire.
Christmas or Santa Claus on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning. Popular Christmas themes include the promotion of goodwill and peace.\textsuperscript{116}

5.2 Baptism

This is the first ritual of Christianity. This is a form of bathing which is administered to those who enter the Christian faith. Without it, nobody could be said to be a Christian. Behind this ritual lies the doctrine of redemption. The Christian belief is that a man by means of baptism dies for the sake of Jesus Christ (PBUH), and then becomes alive again. By means of “death”, he receives the punishment of the original sin.\textsuperscript{117} He then in his new life acquires a free will. Those who wish to enter the Christian faith must pass through a preliminary stage in which they acquire the basic teachings of the faith. In that period, they are not called “Christians”, but are known as Catechumens.\textsuperscript{118} And they do not have permission to partake in the Passover. Then some time before Easter, or the Pentecost, they are given the baptism.\textsuperscript{119} The ritual of baptism involves either the immersion of babies into a font filled with water (Orthodoxy) or the sprinkling of babies with water (Roman Catholics).

\textsuperscript{116} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas

\textsuperscript{117} In accord with Christian concepts, men are born stained by the original sin of Adam and Eve. Baptism is designed to “wash away” that sin, and to open up before the individual the prospect of salvation.

\textsuperscript{118} In ecclesiology, a catechumen (from Latin catechumenus, Greek, instructed) is one receiving instruction from a catechist in the principles of the Christian religion with a view to baptism. The title and practice is most often used by Orthodox Christians and by Roman Catholics.

\textsuperscript{119} Pentecost (“the fiftieth day”) is one of the prominent feasts in the Christian liturgical year, celebrated the 49th day (7 weeks) after Easter Sunday (the tenth day after Ascension Thursday). Historically and symbolically related to the Jewish harvest festival of Shavuot, it commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus as described in the Book of Acts, Chapter 2. Pentecost is also called Whitsun, Whitsunday, or Whit Sunday, especially in the United Kingdom.
Catholicism). In Protestantism, as a rule, the faithful are baptized when they come of age.\footnote{120 Catherine Judelson, \textit{A Dictionary for Believers and Nonbelievers} (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1989) p.58.}

A passage of the Gospel of John (John 3:22-30) explicitly states that Jesus Christ (PBUH) did baptize. According to the \textit{The Cambridge Companion to Jesus}, this passage confirms the central place of baptism in Jesus' message.\footnote{121 Gospel of Luke:}

\begin{quote}

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease."

\textit{John 3:22-30}
\end{quote}

\footnote{122 Gospel of Luke:}

\begin{quote}

"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria."

\textit{John 4:1-4}
\end{quote}

\footnote{123 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism}
The Church has a special room to administer the Baptism. Special people are designated for the act. According to the well known theologian Cyril, the person undergoing Baptism is made to lie in the baptistery with his back facing the West. Then such person extends his hand to the West and says:

"O Satan, I withdraw myself from you and each of your acts".

Then he faces the East, and verbally proclaims the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. Then his clothes are removed, and he is anointed head to foot with oil. Thereafter, he is put into the pool of baptism, the person administering the baptism then asks him three questions whether he believes in the father, son and Holy Spirit in the prescribed manner? The proposed convert answers to each question; “Yes, I believe.” then he is taken out from the pool, and again his forehead, ears, nose and chest is anointed with the oil. He is then made to wear white clothes which is indicative of his purification from previous sins by means of Baptism. The Group of persons undergoing baptism then together enter the Church and for the first time partake in the Passover.

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Muhammad Taqi Usmani, N.48, pp.46-47.

**Ritual washing in Islam**

Islam requires a sort of washing called Ghusul (Arabic word means washing), similar to Judaic practices mentioned above, which should include the washing of the whole body in special order or immersion of the whole body (submersion), in a river for instance. This Ghusul is required for an adult when adopting Islam, after each sexual intercourse or a wet dream or a menstrual flow. Also is required to be done for dead bodies. The notion that prayers must be invoked to ask God for forgiveness from impure thoughts and actions is incorrect; it is only desirable. Such Ghusul is very different from practices in other religions. A person performs it alone privately, whenever it is indicated or desired. Apart from this, washing before daily prayers is essential and is called Wudu. Muslims believe no one should approach God in prayer, before first asking God to forgive them their sins. Formal prayers are offered five times per day. While washing, one prays to God asking for forgiveness of the sins committed throughout the day, whether intentional or unintentional. This is a Muslim’s way of reminding him/herself that the goal of this life is to please God, and to pray to attain His forgiveness and grace. Christian baptism is challenged in the Holy Qur’an (Al-Baqarah: 138) in the verse: “Our religion is the Baptism of Allah; And who can baptize better than Allah? And it is He Whom we worship.” It means that belief in the monotheism of God in Islam is merely sufficient for entering in the fold of faith and does not require a ritual form of baptism.
5.3 Passover

This is the most important rite after adoption of Christianity and it is celebrated in commemoration of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (PBUH). One day before the alleged arrest of Jesus Christ (PBUH), follows:

“Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body.’ And he took cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’

Matthew 26:26-28

Luke adds Jesus (PBUH) thereafter said:

“Do this in remembrance of me”

Luke 22:19

The rite of Passover is held in fulfillment of this order. The well known Christian Scholar Justin Martyr explains the procedure of Passover, namely that there is a gathering every Sunday at Church. At the beginning thereof some prayers and hymns are sung. Then the participants embrace each other and convey their good wishes. Bread and wine is then brought. The head of the gathering takes the bread and wine and makes prayers of blessing to the father, son and Holy Spirit. All participants answer “Ameen.” The deacons of the Church thereupon distribute the bread and

125 The Holy Bible: King James Version, N.2, p.1025.

126 Ibid., p.1091.

127 The word Amen (Standard Amen Tiberian 'Amen ; Arabic: أَمِينً, 'Amin ; “So be it; truly”) is a declaration of affirmation found in the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. Its use in Judaism dates back to its earliest texts. It has been generally adopted in Christian worship as a concluding word for prayers and hymns. In Islam, it is the standard ending to Dua (supplication). Common English translations of the word amen include: “Verily”, “Truly”, “So be it”, and “Let it be”. It can also be used colloquially to
wine amongst the participants. The bread immediately by means of this act becomes the body of Christ, and the wine his blood; all participants by eating and drinking refresh their doctrine of redemption.

After Justin, there have been and continues to be much change in the procedure and use of words in regard to this rite. But, the basic aspect of the rite is that the bread and wine, when given by the head of gathering to the participants, immediately according to Christian belief, change their nature and become the body and blood of Jesus, despite their outward appearance. Cyril writes:

“When the head completes his prayers, then the Holy Spirit descends upon the bread and wine and changes them to body and blood.”

It is a matter of controversy and debate for years as to how bread and wine upon a moment became changed to body and blood. To the extent that the Protestant sect which emerged in the sixteenth century rejected this doctrine. According to it, this rite is merely in memory of the sacrifice if Jesus Christ (PBUH). It did not however, accept the transformation from bread to body, and wine to blood. Apart from the Passover, this rite has other names, namely Eucharist, Sacred Meal, Holy Communion.

express strong agreement, as in, for instance, amen to that. Muslims use the word “‘Amin” (Arabic: Ḥammān) not only after reciting the first surah (Al Fatiha) of the Holy Qur’an, but also when concluding a prayer or dua, with the same meaning as in Christianity. The Islamic use of the word is the same as the Jewish use of the word. Sunni Muslims use amen in prayers -after (Surat Al Fatiha) - but the Shia Muslims says that it is haram to say it in the prayers, while it can be used in duas.

128 The Eucharist, also called Holy Communion or Lord’s Supper and other names, is a Christian sacrament commemorating, by consecrating bread and wine, the Last Supper, the final meal that Jesus Christ (PBUH) shared with his disciples before his arrest, and eventual crucifixion, when he gave them bread saying, “This is my body”, and wine saying, “This is my blood.” There are different interpretations of the significance of the Eucharist, but “there is more of a consensus among Christians about the meaning of the Eucharist than would appear from the confessional debates over the sacramental presence, the effects of the Eucharist, and the proper auspices under which it may be celebrated.” The phrase “the Eucharist” may refer not only to the rite but also to the bread and wine
However, the Protestant sect however, did not accept these rites. Calvin writes:

"From amongst these rituals, only two were prescribed by our saviour: baptism and the Passover; because we regard the seven made under the aegis of the Pope as fabricated."\(^\text{129}\)

### 5.4 Good Friday

The Friday before Easter, the day on which Christians annually observe the commemoration of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (PBUH). From the early days of Christianity, Good Friday was observed as a day of sorrow, penance, and fasting, a characteristic that finds expression in the German word *Karfreitag* ("Sorrowful Friday").\(^\text{130}\)

used in the rite, and, in this sense, communicants may speak of "receiving the Eucharist", as well as "celebrating the Eucharist".

\(^\text{129}\) Muhammad Taqi Usmani, N.48, pp.47-49.

\(^\text{130}\) **Biblical Accounts of Good Friday:** According to the New Testament, Jesus is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane by the Temple Guards through the guidance of his disciple, Judas Iscariot. Judas received money for betraying Jesus and told the guards that whomever he kisses is the one they are to arrest. Jesus is brought to the house of Annas, who is the father-in-law of the current high priest, Caiaphas. There he is interrogated with little result, and sent bound to Caiaphas the high priest, where the Sanhedrin had assembled (John 18:1-24). Conflicting testimony against Jesus is brought forth by many witnesses, to which Jesus answers nothing. Finally the high priest adjures Jesus to respond under solemn oath, saying "I adjure you, by the Living God, to tell us, are you the Anointed One, the Son of God?" Jesus testifies in the affirmative, "You have said it, and in time you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Almighty, coming on the clouds of Heaven." The high priest condemns Jesus for blasphemy, and the Sanhedrin Trial of Jesus concurs with a sentence of death (Matthew 26:57-66). Peter also denies Jesus three times during the interrogations. Jesus already knew that Peter would deny him three times. See the article Sanhedrin Trial of Jesus regarding the two trials, one at night, the other in the morning and how their timing may affect the day of Good Friday. In the morning, the whole assembly brings Jesus to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, under charges of subverting the nation, opposing taxes to Caesar, and making himself a king (Luke 23:1-2). Pilate authorizes the Jewish leaders to judge Jesus according to their own Law and execute sentencing, however the Jewish leaders reply that they are not allowed by the Romans to carry out a sentence of death (John 18:31). Pilate questions Jesus, and tells the assembly that there is no basis for sentencing. Upon learning that Jesus is from Galilee, Pilate refers the case to the ruler of Galilee, King Herod, who was in Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. Herod questions Jesus but receives no answer; Herod sends Jesus back to Pilate. Pilate tells the assembly that neither he nor Herod have found guilt in Jesus; Pilate resolves to have Jesus whipped and released (Luke 23:3-16). It was a custom during the feast of Passover for the Romans to release one prisoner as requested by the Jews. Pilate asks the crowd who they would like to be released. Under the guidance of the chief priests, the crowd asks for Barabbas, who had been imprisoned for committing murder during an insurrection. Pilate asks what they would have him do with Jesus, and they demand, "Crucify him" (Mark 15:6-14). Pilate's wife had seen Jesus
According to the Jewish calendar, Jesus Christ (PBUH) died on 15 Nisan, the first day of Passover, which according to the Gregorian (Western) calendar would be April 7. Christians, however, do not commemorate this fixed date. Instead, they follow the apparently flexible date of the Jewish Passover—which conforms to the Jewish lunisolar calendar rather than the Gregorian solar calendar—by relating Jesus’ last meal with his disciples on the evening before his Crucifixion to the Passover seder. While this assumption is problematic, the dating of both Good Friday and Easter has proceeded on this basis. Thus, Good Friday falls between March 20, the first possible date for Passover, and April 23, with Easter falling two days later.

The question of whether and when to observe Jesus’ death and Resurrection triggered a major controversy in early Christianity. Until the 4th century, Jesus’ Last Supper, his death, and his Resurrection were observed in one single commemoration on the evening before Easter. Since then, these three events have been observed in a dream earlier that day; she forewarns Pilate to “have nothing to do with this righteous man” (Matthew 27:19). Pilate has Jesus flogged, then brings him out to the crowd to release him. The chief priests inform Pilate of a new charge, demanding Jesus be sentenced to death “because he claimed to be God’s son.” This possibility filled Pilate with fear, and he brought Jesus back inside the palace and demanded to know from where he came (John 19:1-9). Coming before the crowd one last time, Pilate declares Jesus innocent, washing his own hands in water to show he has no part in this condemnation. Nevertheless, Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified in order to forestall a riot (Matthew 27:24-26). The sentence written is “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews” Jesus carries his cross to the site of execution (assisted by Simon of Cyrene), called the place of the Skull, or “Golgotha” in Hebrew and in Latin “Calvary”. There he is crucified along with two criminals (John 19:17-22). Jesus agonizes on the cross for three hours, during which there is darkness over the whole land. With a loud cry, Jesus gives up his spirit. There is an earthquake, tombs break open, and the curtain in the Temple is torn from top to bottom. The centurion on guard at the site of crucifixion declares, “Truly this was God’s Son!” (Matthew 27:45-54). Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin and secret follower of Jesus, who had not consented to his condemnation, goes to Pilate to request the body of Jesus (Luke 23:50-52). Pilate asks confirmation from the centurion whether Jesus is dead (Mark 15:44). A soldier pierced the side of Jesus with a lance causing blood and water to flow out (John 19:34), and the centurion informs Pilate that Jesus is dead (Mark 15:45). Joseph of Arimathea takes the body of Jesus, wraps it in a clean linen shroud, and places it in his own new tomb that had been carved in the rock (Matthew 27:59-60) in a garden near the site of crucifixion. Another secret follower of Jesus and member of the Sanhedrin named Nicodemus (John 3:1) also came bringing 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes, and places them in the linen with the body of Jesus, according to Jewish burial customs (John 19:39-40). They rolled a large rock over the entrance of the tomb (Matthew 27:60). Then they returned home and rested, because at sunset began the Sabbath (Luke 23:54-56). On the third day, Sunday, which is now known as Easter Sunday (or Pascha), Jesus rose from the dead.
separately, with Easter, as the commemoration of Jesus’ Resurrection, considered the pivotal event.

The liturgical celebration of Good Friday has undergone various changes over the centuries. In the Roman Catholic church the mass was not celebrated on Good Friday until the late Middle Ages. When it began to be celebrated only the officiating priest took communion. Laypeople have also communed on Good Friday since 1955. The liturgy of Good Friday consists of the reading of the Gospel Passion narrative, the adoration of the cross, and communion. In the 17th century, following an earthquake in Peru, the Three Hour Service, a prayerful meditation on Jesus’ “Seven Last Words on the Cross,” was introduced to the Catholic liturgy by the Jesuits. It takes place between noon and 3 pm. Similar services occur in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, where no communion is celebrated.

In the Anglican Communion, *The Book of Common Prayer* provides for a specific celebration of the Eucharist on Good Friday. The Three Hour Service has become common in North American churches, and a variety of liturgical services are held on Good Friday in other Protestant churches. With the revival of a liturgical emphasis in Protestantism in the second half of the 20th century, a distinct trend developed to adopt Catholic ritual (no use of the organ in the service, draping of the cross, baring of the altar, etc.).

Unlike Christmas and Easter, which have acquired numerous secular traditions, Good Friday has, because of its intense religious connotation, not led to an overlay of secular customs and practices.\(^\text{131}\)

\(^{131}\) [http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/238700/Good-Friday](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/238700/Good-Friday)

**Calculating the Date of Good Friday:** Good Friday is the Friday before Easter, which is calculated differently in Eastern Christianity and Western Christianity. Easter falls on the first Sunday following the Paschal Full Moon, the full moon on or after 21 March, taken to be the date of the vernal equinox. The Western calculation uses the Gregorian calendar, while the Eastern calculation uses the Julian calendar, whose 21 March now corresponds to the Gregorian calendar’s 3 April. The calculations for
5.5 Easter

Easter (corresponds to Passover in Judaism), the most important Christian festival, which was instituted to commemorate the miraculous resurrection of Jesus Christ (PBUH) after his Crucifixion, which is recounted in the Gospels. Yet, as has since been established, the roots of Easter can be traced back to a far more distant past. Originally this was a festival for animal-breeding and farming tribes of the Jews of old: it had represented an attempt to propitiate the spirits so as to secure their help and support in the period during the spring lambing and later that of the start of the reaping. Hence the custom still retained by Jews of baking matzo for the Passover, i.e. unleavened bread, and retained by the Christians of baking Easter cakes, painting eggs etc. As the cult of Yahweh became more firmly established among the Jews this festival came to be linked in Judaism with the legendary Exodus from Egypt, and the expectation of a Messiah. Basing themselves on the Gospel stories of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection during the days when the Jews were celebrating Passover, Christians originally celebrated their Easter at the same time as Judaic Passover. It was not until the year 325 that the First Oecumenical Council of the Christian Church identifying the date of the full moon also differ. Because Easter in Western Christianity can fall between March 22 and April 25 on the Gregorian calendar, Good Friday can fall between March 19 and April 22, inclusive. In Eastern Christianity, Easter can fall between March 22 and April 25 on Julian Calendar (thus between April 4 and May 8 in terms of the Gregorian calendar, during the period 1900 and 2099), so Good Friday can fall between March 19 and April 22, inclusive (or between April 1 and May 5 in terms of the Gregorian calendar).

Theological significance: The New Testament links the Last Supper and Jesus’ crucifixion with Passover and the Exodus from Egypt. As Jesus prepared himself and his disciples for his death in the upper room during the Last Supper, he gave the Passover meal a new meaning. He identified the loaf of bread and cup of wine as symbolizing his body soon to be sacrificed and his blood soon to be shed. 1 Corinthians 5:7 states, “Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed,” referring to the Passover requirement to have no yeast in the house and to Christ’s identification as the Paschal lamb. An alternative interpretation of the Gospel of John is that Jesus, as the Passover lamb, was crucified at roughly the same time as the lamb was slain, at twilight on Nisan 14. The interpretation, however, is inconsistent with the chronology in the Synoptic Gospels. It assumes that “the day of Preparation of Passover Week” in John 19:14 literally refers to “preparation for the Passover” when instead it could refer to preparation for the Sabbath.
held in Nicaea decreed that Easter should be celebrated on the first Sunday after the
full moon following the spring equinox, and without fail separately from the Judaic
festival: this means that Easter has become a “movable feast”. In order to calculate
the date of the celebrations special paschal tables are compiled. The Christian
Church celebrates Easter with great solemnity, using it to propagate the ideas of
universal remission of sins, universal Christian brotherhood, all of which are designed
to reconcile Christians with the social inequality intrinsic to antagonistic societies
fraught with class conflict.

However, it is celebrated on a Sunday on varying dates between March 22 and
April 25. Easter is a culmination of a entire week. The Sunday before Easter is called
Palm Sunday. It is celebrated to remember the entry of Jesus Christ (PBUH) into

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133 An Ecumenical council (or oecumenical council; also general council) is a conference of the
bishops of the whole Church convened to discuss and settle matters of Church doctrine and practice.
The word derives from the Greek language, which literally means “The inhabited”, and was originally
a figure of speech referring to the territory of the Roman Empire since the earliest councils were all
convoked by Roman Emperors. In later usage it was applied in a more general way to mean all places
that are inhabited by the Church, therefore “world-wide” or “general.” The acceptance of some
historical councils varies widely between different branches of Christianity. The “whole” church,
however, is constructed by Roman Catholics to mean only those in full communion with the Bishop of
Rome. Similarly, Eastern Orthodox Christians take the “whole” church as including all Eastern
Orthodox jurisdictions in full communion with each other. This does not include the Roman
Catholic/Eastern Catholic Churches, nor the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The last council considered
ecumenical by both was Second Council of Nicaea, (787), and hence the importance of the first seven
ecumenical councils. These seven councils, at the most, are also the only councils accepted by various
Protestants, and hence in a limited modern sense are the only true “Ecumenical” councils. The
Quinisext Council, however, is rejected by Roman Catholics but considered part of the 6th council by
the Eastern Orthodox. More local (non-ecumenical) meetings are generally called "synods". The Greek
word “synod” derives from “syn” (in English: together) and “odos” (in English: road, way), therefore a
synod is the coming together of several people sharing a common element, in this case the Christian
bishops.

134 Paschal Tables, tables compiled by the Christian Church for many years in advance to calculate the
dates for the celebration of Easter in keeping with the decree of the Oecumenical Council of Nicaea
(325), according to which it should be celebrated on the first Sunday after full moon, coinciding with or
following the spring equinox, but should on no account coincide with Judaic Passover. The observance
of these circumstances is the crucial factor in the compilation of the Paschal Tables. A number of
Churches compiles Paschal Tables in accordance with the Julian Calendar (the Russian, Bulgarian,
Serbian and Jerusalem Orthodox Churches and certain others), while the Roman Catholic Church bases
its calculations on the Gregorian Calendar. Hence the difference in the dates for the celebration of
Easter in various Christian Churches.

135 Catherine Judelson, N.58, p.170.
Jerusalem. Holy Thursday, which is also known Maundy Thursday is in memory of the Last Supper of Christ with his disciples. Good Friday commemorates his crucifixion on the cross.\textsuperscript{136}

5.6 The Holy Cross

In view of the fact that the sign of the cross (+) is of great importance by virtue of the doctrine of crucifixion. Until the fourth century AD, this sign had no collective significance. It is popularly reported that Emperor Constantine saw (probably in his dream) in 312 AD, during battle, a sign of a cross in the sky. Therefore, in 326 AD his mother, St. Helena found a cross. The people were of the view that this cross was the one on which Jesus Christ (PBUH) (according to the Christian claim) had been crucified. In commemoration of this story, Christians celebrate each year in May a day know as “The Finding of the Cross”. Thereafter, the sign of the cross became the symbol of the Christian faith. Christians accordingly began to use the sign in all their doings.\textsuperscript{137} The well known Christian Theologian Tertullian writes:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{136} http://library.thinkquest.org/28505/christianity/easte.htm
\item \textsuperscript{137} Cross forms were used as symbols, religious or otherwise, long before the Christian Era, but it is not always clear whether they were simply marks of identification or possession or were significant for belief and worship. Two pre-Christian cross forms have had some vogue in Christian usage. The ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic symbol of life—the ankh, a tau cross surmounted by a loop and known as \textit{crux ansata}—was adopted and extensively used on Coptic Christian monuments. The swastika, called \textit{crux gammata}, composed of four Greek capitals of the letter gamma, is marked on many early Christian tombs as a veiled symbol of the cross. Before the time of the emperor Constantine in the 4th century, Christians were extremely reticent about portraying the cross because too open a display of it might expose them to ridicule or danger. After Constantine converted to Christianity, he abolished crucifixion as a death penalty and promoted, as symbols of the Christian faith, both the cross and the chi-rho monogram of the name of Christ. The symbols became immensely popular in Christian art and funerary monuments from c. 350. For several centuries after Constantine, Christian devotion to the cross centred on the victory of Christ over the powers of evil and death, and realistic portrayal of his suffering was avoided. The earliest crucifixes (crosses containing a representation of Christ) depict Christ alive, with eyes open and arms extended, his Godhead manifest, even though he is pierced and dead in his manhood. By the 9th century, however, artists began to stress the realistic aspects of Christ’s suffering and death. Subsequently, Western portrayals of the Crucifixion, whether painted or carved, exhibited an increasing finesse in the suggestion of pain and agony. Romanesque crucifixes often show a royal crown upon Christ’s head, but later Gothic types replaced it with a crown of thorns.
\end{itemize}
“At each journey and progress, at each coming in and going out, at the putting on of shoes, at the bath, at meals, at the kindling of lights, at bedtime, at sitting down, whatsoever occupation engages us, we mark the brow with this sign of the cross.”

Why is the cross holy in Christianity? – When according to Christian belief it was the cause of harm to Jesus Christ (PBUH). We have not found the answer to this question in the writing if any Christian scholar. It appears that the basis of the sanctity of the cross is the doctrine of atonement. That is because the cross is the cause of the forgiveness of sins, it is respected and sanctified.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Muhammad Taqi Usmani, N.48, p.34.
6. Gospel of Barnabas and Muslim Scholars

Some Christian scholars are being referred that the Gospel of Barnabas as Muslim versions or interpolations. But Muslim scholar dare say no and refuse on this alleged. If there were any interpolations made to the original work of Barnabas, the early scholars of Christendom did it. WHY?

Islam came into the fore over 600 years after Christianity. The Gospel of Barnabas was already in circulation in 325 AD. But when the early scholars of Christianity cannot reconcile the work and writings of Paul with that of Barnabas, the “Gentile Monarchs” of the time favoured Paul, so Barnabas Gospel was declared “apocalypse”, was removed from circulation and burned. Not only that, whoever was found to be in position of it were put to the sword without the benefit of any fair trial.

But in the 16th Century some copies of the extant Gospel somehow miraculously surfaced, but already in Italian and Spanish versions. The original Aramaic or Latin were already non-existent. One of the translators of the Spanish version happened to be a Muslim, Mustafa Arenda. Later translators were Mr and Mrs Ragg who did it in 1907 into English, but that translation mysteriously disappeared from circulation in only a short time and no reprints were allowed! By whom? We can only conjecture! But definitely not by the Muslims.

Some Islamic scholars cite the Gospel of Barnabas in support of the Islamic view of Jesus Christ (PBUH); in particular, Rashid Rida of Egypt\(^\text{139}\) and Sayyid Abul

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\(^{139}\) \textbf{Muhammad Rashid Rida} (September 23, 1865, Syria - August 22, 1935, Egypt) is said to have been “one of the most influential scholars and jurists of his generation” and the “most prominent disciple of Muhammad Abduh.” Rida was born near Tripoli and his early education consisted of training in “traditional Islamic subjects”. In 1884-5 he was first exposed to \textit{al-\'Urwa al-wuthqa}, the journal of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh. In 1897 he left Syria for Cairo to collaborate with Abduh and the following year they launched \textit{al-Manar}, a weekly and then monthly journal comprising Quranic commentary, at which Rida worked until his death in 1935. Like his predecessors, Rida focused on the relative weakness of Muslim societies vis-à-vis Western colonialism, blaming Sufi excesses, the blind imitation of the past (\textit{taqlid}), the stagnation of the ulama, and the resulting failure to achieve progress in science and technology. He held that these flaws could be alleviated by a return to what he saw as the true principles of Islam, albeit interpreted (\textit{ijtihad}) to suit
They had given it qualified acceptance (though the latter rejects its naming of Muhammad as an interpolation). While some Muslim scholars also agree that this Gospel of Barnabas has been changed over time, others believe that Barnabas himself wrote the Gospel, whereas the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were written by followers of Paul long after the events they described, and that therefore the Gospel of Barnabas is more authentic than the other Gospels.

To the Muslims, the Gospel of Barnabas is the close linkage between Islam and Christianity. But since modern Christians refused to recognize Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S) as the last messenger of God, and Islam as the “Last Testament” then the Gospel of Barnabas had to be thrown out from the Christian Bible ignominiously. It is too factual to be used as a Christian guide to salvation and eternity. In short, modern Christians refused to be saved by Jesus Christ (PBUH), they prefer to follow St. Paul to elsewhere, a destination other than the way of Jesus Christ (PBUH).^141

politically Rida promoted a restoration or rejuvenation of the Caliphate for Islamic unity, and “democratic consultation on the part of the government which he called shura.” In theology, his reformist ideas, like those of Abduh, were “based on the argument that “shari’a consists of ‘ibadat (worship) and mu’amalat (social relations). Human reason has little scope in the former and Muslims should adhere to the dictates of the Qur’an and hadith. The laws governing mu’amalat should conform to Islamic ethics but on specific points may be continually reassessed according to changing conditions of different generations and societies.”

Sayyid Abul A’la Maududi (Urdu: سید ابو الاعلی مودودی - alternative spellings of last name Mauooddi, and Mawdudi) (September 25, 1903 - September 22, 1979), also known as Mawlana (Maulana) or Sheikh Sayyid Abul A’la Mawdudi, was a Sunni Pakistani journalist, theologian and political philosopher, and a major 20th century Islamist thinker. He was also a political figure in his home country (Pakistan), where he founded the Jamaat-e-Islami Islamic revisionist party.

http://www.islamonline.net/Discussion/English/bbs.asp?aParID=589733&aTID=&aGroupID=99665&action=move&aPathID=62&aSubject=Muslims+Against+Violence
7. St. Barnabas Monastery and Icon Museum in Cyprus

The St. Barnabas monastery and Icon museum is situated close to the Royal Tombs at Salamis, Cyprus. The site consists of a church, now serving as an icon museum, the monastery, now housing an archaeological collection, and a chapel housing the remains of the saint. St Barnabas was one of the founders of the independent Greek Orthodox Church, and is the patron saint of Cyprus. Cyprus, therefore, became the first country in the world with a Christian ruler.

By the 5th century AD, however, the Christian church had been re-established. The church of Antioch, having been founded by Peter, claimed precedence over that of Cyprus. The church on the island argued that as it had been founded by the Apostle Barnabas, it was of equal rank.

In 477 AD, Bishop Anthemios had a dream in which he saw the location of the long lost grave. After his dream, the Bishop ordered the opening of the tomb. There they found a body, which was identified as Barnabas. The Byzantine emperor, Zeno granted autonomy (independence) to the church in Cyprus. To this day, Cypriot bishops have the right to elect their own archbishop who is entitled to wear imperial purple and wield a scepter instead of a pastoral staff.

In addition to granting independence, the emperor funded the building of a magnificent church on the spot where the tomb was located. The building that we see today dates from the 1750s. Once the centre of the Cyprus Orthodox church, the monastery is still in good condition. Outside the church there is a courtyard, surrounded on three sides by buildings that once housed the monks and pilgrims.

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142 Salamis is an ancient city on the east coast of Cyprus, at the mouth of the river Pedieos, 6 km North of Gazimaguṣa.

143 In addition, in imitation of the Byzantine emperor's custom, they are allowed to sign documents in red ink, a right which Archbishop Makarios exercised when signing the document granting Cyprus independence from Britain.
coming to pray at the monastery. Over the years, the number of resident monks reduced, and by the 1950s consisted of just three monks, Charitan (born 1887), Stephanos (born 1894), and Barnabas (born 1897). These three actual brothers dedicated themselves to the church from 1917 onwards. After 1974, the monastery and church stayed open, and religious ceremonies were held there.

About 100 yards from the monastery, there is a small mausoleum built on the spot where the saint’s remains were discovered. Although the three priests left in 1976, the monastery was maintained, as it continued to attract visitors. The church has been restored and has been turned into a more comprehensive icon museum with the addition of new icons. The garden was redone, and the rooms of the monastery have become an archaeological museum.

The monastery of St Barnabas is very important to the Orthodox Church, and is considered a place of pilgrimage. The opening of the border has seen a vast increase of the numbers of visitors to the site, and there are frequent church services held there. June 11th is the saint’s day, and a special mass and festival was held here till 1974. People would come to the monastery to hear readings from the life of the saint. After a gap of 31 years, this event was reinstated in 2005.\footnote{http://www.whatson-northcyprus.com/interest/famagusta/salamis/barnabas.htm}