CHAPTER — VII
Conclusion

Today, there are three major religions on the earth that believe in the existence of a single God or Creator: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It is written in the international statistics of 2009 that there are about 2,100 million Christians (33%), 1,500 million Muslims (21%) and 14 million Jews (0.22%) in the world. The rest of the people (more than three billion) either belong to religions like Buddhism, Hinduism, Brahmamism or similar religions which do not believe in the concept of One Creator. The rest worship idols, fire and the sun, or do not accept any religion.

The followers of the two great religions in the world, that is Christianity and Islam, have two books that are supposed to be “the words of God.” The holy book of the Christians is the Bible, Kitab-i muqaddas (holy book). This book consists of two main parts: Old Testament, namely the Torah (Tawrat), and the New Testament, the Injils and the pamphlets appended to them. The holy book of the Muslims is the Holy Qur’an al-karim.

The Bible is the Holy Scripture of Christians which was written and collected after the death of Jesus Christ (PBUH) by Jewish apostles turned to Christianity. In the New Testament, there are Four Traditional Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) which are generally accepted by Christians but there is one, the Gospel of Barnabas, which is not accepted by most of Christians, because the Gospel of Barnabas was traced after the Four Traditional Gospels and there are many things not same and opposite to the Four Traditional Gospels. Consequently, the scholars of comparative religion have taken interests - in examining and analyzing these Gospels. And they found many things that similar and dissimilar between the Four Traditional Gospels and the Gospel of Barnabas.
The four Traditional Gospels included in the Bible were not the only Gospels written in the early centuries of Christianity. There were many others, including the one called "The Gospels according to the Hebrews", an Aramaic work which was used by the Nazarenes (as the early disciples of Jesus Christ (PBUH) were called), who denied the divinity of Jesus Christ (PBUH) and regarded him only as a great prophet. Towards the end of the fourth century the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John were included in the Canon and the rest were declared to be heretical or apocryphal by the Church. Before they were canonized and accepted as scriptures, the Gospels did not have that sanctity which they have now and no one felt any compunction in altering them if anything contained in them did not suit his purpose or the purpose of his sect. Even after they were included in the Canon and declared to be the Word of God. Changes continued to be made in them, as is clear from the different early extant manuscripts.

In considering how far the four Traditional Gospels faithfully present the inspired message or Gospel of Jesus Christ (PBUH) we must bear the following facts in mind:

1. No written copy was made of the inspired sayings of Jesus Christ (PBUH) in his life time.

2. The earliest records of the sayings of Jesus Christ (PBUH), which were made shortly after the departure of Jesus Christ (PBUH), when the glorification of Jesus Christ (PBUH) had already begun, have all been irretrievably lost.

3. In the Four Traditional Gospels, which were written between 70 and 115 C.E. on the basis of some of those lost documents, the material contained in them was handled rather freely, the Gospel-writers feeling no
hesitation in changing it for what they considered to be the greater glory of Christ or to bring it in line with the views of their sects.

(4) None of the Evangelist had known Jesus Christ (PBUH) or heard him speaking.

(5) The Gospels were written in Greek, whereas the language spoken by Jesus Christ (PBUH) was Aramaic.

(6) They were composed to propagate the points of view of the different factions and that they were chosen from many others which represented different view-points.

(7) For at least a century after they were written they had no canonical authority and could be and were actually changed the copyists of the different sects to serve their own purpose.

(8) The earliest extent manuscripts of the Gospels-Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Vaticanus, and Codex Akexandrinus – belong to the fourth and fifth century, and no one knows how much the Gospels had been changed during the centuries of which no manuscript is available.

(9) There are considerable differences at many places among the various extant manuscripts of the fourth and fifth century.

(10) The Four Traditional Gospels taken as a hole are full of contradictions.

These facts disclosed by distinguished Western scholars go to show that the Gospel of Jesus, by which we mean the Message which Jesus Christ (PBUH) had received from God, has not reached us in its original form. The Four Traditional Gospels included in the Bible cannot be considered identical with the inspired Gospel of Jesus Christ (PBUH). The manner of their composition and the circumstances
through which they have passed are such that they cannot be relied upon to give us
exact knowledge of what Jesus Christ (PBUH) had said and taught. C.J. Cadoux sums
up the position in these words in his book Life of Jesus:

"In the four Gospels, therefore, the main documents to which we
must go if we are to fill-out at all that bare sketch which we can put
together from other sources, we find material of widely-differing quality
as regards credibility. So far-reaching is the element of uncertainty that it
is tempting to 'down tools' at once, and to declare the task hopeless. The
historical inconsistencies and improbabilities in parts of the Gospels form
some of arguments advanced in favour of the Christ-myth theory. These
are, however, entirely outweighed – as we have shown – by other
considerations. Still, the discrepancies and uncertainties that remain are
serious – and consequently many moderns, who have no doubt whatever
of Jesus' real existence, regard as hopeless any attempt to dissolve out the
historically-true from the legendary or mythical matter which the Gospels
contain, and to reconstruct the story of Jesus' mission out of the more
historical residue."

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 Christ (PBUH)? 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.”

Scholars 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 Martin Luther demanded that ordinary people be allowed to read the Bible for themselves.

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 Christ (PBUH) 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.

However, through many New Testament evidences that God sent Jesus Christ (PBUH) as a prophet to the people of Israel only, with the admission of Jesus Christ (PBUH) and his disciples. But when most of the people of Israel did not believe in the message of Jesus Christ (PBUH), his disciples were later forced to continue their mission to others besides the Jews due to their devotion to the mission. The disciples’ propagation of the message of Jesus Christ (PBUH) outside the Jews did not occur except after the disappearance of Jesus Christ (PBUH), never during his life. Jesus himself never preached to the Gentiles and warned his disciple against preaching to them. That the disciples or their disciples preached to the non-Jewish Gentiles was a personal opinion contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ (PBUH). Finally, let it be remembered that Jesus Christ (PBUH) was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel
ONLY. This is what Jesus himself emphasized several times in the gospels. As far as preaching among the Gentiles (Non-Jews and Non Bani-Israel) is concerned, the Christian Preachers took the spoke of the verse 19 of Chapter 28 of the Gospel of St. Matthew “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”.

But this is not a sound support because this instruction of Jesus Christ (PBUH) belongs to the post crucifixion era of Jesus Christ (PBUH); hence in the academic field no scholars can base his argument on his or some bodies dream. Only those instruction of Jesus Christ (PBUH) or any other prophet may be accepted in the religious affair of high important which belongs to his real life. Hence this versed 19 of chapter 28 of St. Matthew Gospel is not as sound and hence acceptable as other verses of Bible uttered by Jesus Christ (PBUH) in his preach crucifixion life.

Barnabas was an early Christian mentioned in the New Testament. His Hellenistic Jewish parents called him Joseph, but when he sold all his goods and gave the money to the apostles in Jerusalem, they gave him a new name: Barnabas, which means ‘son of consolation’ or ‘man of encouragement.’ According to Acts 4:36, his original name was Joseph; he was surnamed by the apostles (in Aramaic) Barnebhuah, which is explained by the Greek huios parakleseos (“son of exhortation,” not “of consolation,”) and connotes a prophet in the primitive Christian sense of the word. His feast day among the Christians is June 11.

The Gospel of Barnabas not only mentions the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S) by name, but including the shahada (chapter 39). It is strongly anti-Pauline and anti-Trinitarian in tone. In the Gospel, Jesus Christ (PBUH) is described as a prophet and not the son of God, while Paul is called “the deceived”. According to Gospel of Barnabas, Jesus Christ (PBUH) denied being the Messiah, claiming rather that the
Messiah would be Ishmaelite (i.e. Arab, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S) as Messiah), the Gospel also quotes Jesus Christ (PBUH) as saying that the sacrificed son of the Prophet Abraham was Ishmael not Isaac. Furthermore, the Gospel of Barnabas states that Jesus Christ (PBUH) was secured from the crucifixion by being raised alive to heaven by the Angles of God; while Judas Iscariot the traitor — miraculously transformed — was crucified in his place and etc.

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 (December 13, 1521 – August 27, 1590, born Felice Peretti di Montalto, was Pope from 1585 to 1590):

“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.”

This is the gospel of Barnabas in relation to which great efforts were made to obliterate it. In the 5th Century AC (100 years before the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S)) Pope Jelasius I 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.

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 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 Christ (PBUH). 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.
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.

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.

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.

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.

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. 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. Although Jesus Christ (PBUH) never said that anybody was born a sinner, today’s Christianity is explained as follows:

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.

Consequently, the Bible, especially the New Testament, was not put together until the 4th century (CE), and under very suspicious conditions, there were controversies, and many books formerly accepted by prominent church fathers were deleted, books that contradict the present form of Pauline Christianity, “Believers” in the Truth were burned and martyred, in horrendous ways, because they stood up for
the Truth as taught by Jesus Christ (PBUH) and these teachings all contradicted the Pauline concept of Christianity.

How could Paul a late comer have so many books included in the New Testament, when Barnabas was a more prominent, influential and knowledgeable Elder than Paul, how could the book “Shepherd of Hermas”, be excluded when the early Believers, Elders, Apostles all accepted it, as inspired by God? Then there are many other books which were excluded notably “The Gospel of Barnabas”, written by someone who knew Jesus Christ (PBUH), and Gospels written by others who never knew Jesus Christ (PBUH) were included, why? Why?

It is not difficult to trace the authenticity of Gospel of St. Barnabas with regard to its date, place and language. The general Epistles of St. Barnabas help immensely in this regard. In the light of his Epistles, it can be determined that Gospel according to St. Barnabas was written in the first century C.E. Its well known and trustworthy Italian translation is safe in the Imperial Library of Vienna, the Capital of Austria. From among the persons, whose names history preserves, Mr. Cramer, Counsellor to the King of Prussia was the first to get this Italian version in 1709 C.E. while he was in Amsterdam (Holland). This reminds us of how God planned the emancipation of Israel from the clutches of Pharaoh by bringing up Moses in the palaces of the tyrant for His own Glory. Similarly, Martin Luther had emancipated the Bible from the prison of Pope, Fra Marino was chosen by God to emancipate the Gospel of St. Barnabas from the prison of yet another Pope.

How sad it is that every book dealing with life of Jesus Christ (PBUH) in metaphysical language is taken for a Real Gospel. Four such “Man Made Accounts” were officially recognized by the Church as Gospels and were included among the Canonical Scriptures. These four little books are biographies. They do not give us a
full account of all the deeds and sayings of Jesus Christ (PBUH) (John 20: 30); whereas the Gospel of St. Barnabas contains a complete history of Jesus Christ (PBUH), from his birth to his ascension, and the most of the circumstances in the Four Traditional Gospels are to be found therein. Yet, it appears to be most bare faced forgery merely because the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S) is spoken of in and foretold by name, as the Messenger of God, and the great Prophet who was to perfect the dispensation of Jesus Christ (PBUH), and not because of any rational criticism or historical lacuna.

St. Barnabas conveys the “Glad Tidings” of the advent of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S), so as to show by this good news that God Almighty is the only Lord of the world, who is known in the ancient record as God of Abraham and God of Jacob. Remembering the “Law of Progressive Revelation” the progress from Old Testament revelation must be traced in the light of the New Testament.

Similarly, we can discern through the Holy Qur’an the teaching of the New Testament. The Holy Qur’an points out yet another progressive revelation, namely, that the Way of Life and Righteousness is not through ‘Faith’ but also through good works in obedience and love of God. Thus in Islam the good work is LIVING WORK which manifests itself in obedience and that works in LOVE OF GOD.

According to the Love of Progressive Revelation the teachings of the Old Testament can be traced in the New Testament and finally in the Holy Qur’an duly amplified to enlighten the entire humanity for all time to come and the guiding light of the Holy Qur’an is to brighten the entire earth. LIGHT cannot be blamed if darkness of the fog of pride and prejudice is in between. The Divine light benefits each and every person on earth and cannot be held responsible if one hides himself in the darkness of ignorance.
In the light of Gospel according to St. Barnabas, it is for us to see whether we should still cling to the uncertain and absolute tribal belief or become an integral part of the great fraternity of Islam and help making the world free from destructive conflicts.