

CHRISTMAS INTERLUDE

The Messages Of The Biblical Gabriel Versus Islam's "Gabriel"

Part I: The Biblical Gabriel's Support For Israel Versus Islam's "Gabriel"

(Daniel 8:11-25 et al.)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) Ever since the 9/11 attacks on America, the Islamic faith has been a key issue in world affairs: as a recent example, Matthew Kiminski's editorial, "An Ally Frets About American Retreat" (The Wall Street Journal, November 23-24, 2013, p. A11) noted "(t)he Saudis view the Shiite theocracy in Tehran as the biggest threat to the Sunni Arab world . . . If Iran goes nuclear, Saudi Arabia may not be far behind. It has options."

This threat has led President Obama last week to form a pact with Iran "to curb" its "nuclear program," but congressional leaders along with Israel and several Arab nations worry that he yielded "too much to the Islamist regime while asking too little." (Ibid., Jay Solomon, "Iran Pact Faces Stiff Opposition," November 25, 2013, p. A1)

(2) However, Islam not only affects world affairs, it affects society: the world's Muslim population will increase by 35% the next 20 years as the Muslim population is estimated to grow at twice the rate of the non-Muslim world. (perforum.org, "The Future of the Global Muslim Population," January 27, 2011)

(3) Accordingly, it is important for us Christians to know how to give an answer to Muslims for the reason of our Christian beliefs as we heed 1 Peter 3:15. This Christmas Season, an effective place to start is the contrast between the words of Islam's alleged Angel Gabriel versus the Biblical angel Gabriel's words:

(a) Islam's Qur'an that Muslims hold is divinely inspired, "was [allegedly] delivered piecemeal through [the Angel] Gabriel to Muhammad during his twenty-three-year prophetic career." (Robert Spencer, The Truth About Muhammad, 2006, p. 20; brackets ours) (b) Then, "Islam teaches that the Torah [the five Old Testament books of Moses] was Allah's first revelation and the [New Testament records of the] gospel was second. But both became corrupted, so Allah gave the Qur'an to Muhammad to put people back on the right path." (Richard Wendling and Daniel Shayesteh, "Reaching Muslims, Part 1," Answers, July-Sept. 2011, p. 38; brackets ours) (c) However, the Qur'an (9:5, 29, 41) asserts: "Slay the idolaters (non-Muslims) wherever you find them, and take them captive, and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush. Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah." (letusreason.org, "Quotes from the Qur'an and Hadith")

Need: So, we ask, "If Islam claims our Christian Bible was corrupted and its Qur'an is divinely inspired, and the Qur'an's Gabriel taught brutal war against non-Muslims who do not believe in Allah, how do we answer Islam?!"

- I. First, we note that Islam's claim that the Christian Bible is corrupt is incorrect via empirical evidence:**
- A. The Third Council of Carthage in A. D. 397 forbade the reading of any uninspired books of the Bible, so by then, the 66-book Bible canon was already set. (Rene Pache, The Insp. And Auth. Of Scrip., 1971, p. 178-179)
 - B. On Islam's charge that the Bible was corrupted so that the Qur'an was later needed to restore the divine truth, (1) scholar Gleason L. Archer wrote: "A careful study of the variants [different readings] of the various earliest manuscripts [of the Bible] reveals that none of them affects a single doctrine of Scripture" (Gleason L. Archer, A Survey of the O. T., 1964, p. 25, cited in J. McDowell, A Ready Defense, 1991, p. 46; brackets ours) and (2) Sir Frederic G. Kenyon wrote: "(T)he general result of all these discoveries [Dead Sea Scrolls, etc.] . . . [is] our conviction that we have in our hands, in substantial integrity, the veritable Word of God." (Sir Frederic G. Kenyon, The Story of the Bible, 1967, p. 113, cited in McDowell, op. cit., p. 47; brackets ours)
 - C. The alleged angel Gabriel of Islam began to give his messages to Muhammad in A. D. 611 ("The Man From Mecca, SIM NOW, July-Aug. 1989, p. 2) 214 years after the Bible's canon has been shown not only to have been universally set, but from the finding of ancient manuscripts, **not** to have been doctrinally corrupted.
 - D. Thus, it is the teachings of the Qur'an that differ with the Bible's teachings that are the corruption of the truth!
- II. Second, the Bible's Angel Gabriel, in his FIRST MESSAGE in Scripture at Daniel 8:11-25 greatly SUPPORTED the NON-MUSLIM nation ISRAEL, calling her the HOLY PEOPLE of GOD (as follows):**
- A. The angel Gabriel who was asked by another angel to clarify to an inquisitive prophet Daniel the meaning of a vision of prophetic symbols he had just seen in 551 B. C. (Dan. 8:15-16; B. K. C., O. T., p. 1349, 1355) told Daniel of the then future Medo-Persia Empire (Dan. 8:19-20) followed by the Grecian Empire (Dan. 8:21-22).
 - B. Gabriel explained an especially troubling era of the future Greek Empire when a ruler, a "little horn" of Daniel 8:9 would rise, greatly persecute Israel and pollute her temple sacrifices for 2,300 "evenings and mornings" (Dan. 8:11-14, 23-25). We know from later fulfilled prophecy that this ruler was Antiochus Epiphanes who,

in 168 B. C., in being forced by Rome to evacuate Egypt opposite gaining power over it, returned to Israel to vent his wrath on her and make her into a buffer state against Egypt, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1358. He attacked and burned Jerusalem, forbade the Jews from heeding the Mosaic Law and set up altars for unclean sacrifices, threatening Jews with death if they did not yield to his new religious order so as to eradicate the Jewish faith he saw as an obstacle to his agenda, *Ibid.* Antiochus desecrated the temple for **2,300** "evening and morning" *sacrifices*, or for **1,150 days**, from December 16, 167 B. C. until Judas Maccabeus restored the **full** temple sacrificial system in 163 B. C. *in literal fulfillment of Daniel 8:13-14*, *Ibid.*, p. 1358-1359.

- C. Since history has thus shown the "little horn" predicted in Daniel 8 to be Antiochus Epiphanes and the nation he so badly would mistreat was Israel, Daniel 8:24-25 reveals that the angel Gabriel refers to the Jewish nation in words that contradict the words of Islam's Gabriel in the Qur'an regarding the non-Muslim nation of Israel:
1. Instead of calling the non-Muslim Israel "idolaters" who "believe not in Allah" as does the Qur'an (9:5, 29, 41), the Bible's Gabriel calls Israel "the holy [*qedoshim*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1275] people" in Daniel 8:24.
 2. The Bible's angel Gabriel then calls Israel's God literally "the ruler of rulers [*sar-sarim*, *Ibid.*, Kittel; B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 978]" (Daniel 8:25), and this is significant for our study since Israel did not worship Islam's deity "Allah," but the Lord God, or "Jahweh Elohim" in the Hebrew language:
 - a. The Bible's God is called "Yahweh" about 9,000 times, but "Allah" is not once called by that term in the Muslim Qur'an. (Dave Hunt, The Berean Call, February 2000, p. 3) God is "also referred to as Elohim more than 2,500 times in the Bible, but . . . that word never appears for Allah in the Koran," *Ibid.*
 - b. Also, world historian Will Durant, in The Story of Civilization, v. IV, p. 160-161 claims "Allah" was initially worshipped by Muhammad's Quraish tribe in Arabia as one of many gods, and the Kaaba with its sacred Black Stone on its southeast corner at Mecca was kissed in idol worship before Muhammad removed all other gods but "Allah" and made him alone deity. (*Ibid.*, Durant as cited in Dave Hunt, *Ibid.*)
 - c. Thus, history shows that Islam's monotheistic deity "Allah" was a creation by Muhammad out of the foundation of ancient Arab polytheism, that Islam is not a pure religion from a perfectly holy God!
- D. Finally, Judas Maccabeus' cleansing of the temple from the pollution by Antiochus Epiphanes was celebrated by Jews in Jesus' time as the "Feast of Dedication," and He attended it in John 10:22 (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to John 10:22). [This feast has since been unbiblically modified and is now called Hanukkah, and it usually occurs around Christmas.] Thus, the Bible's angel Gabriel, like Jesus, would support Israel's Feast of Dedication in Jesus' day that honored Israel's Biblical God *opposite* the pagan idol worship that was forced on Israel by Antiochus Epiphanes *and opposite the idol "Allah" that was then worshipped by pagans in Arabia!*

Lesson: *In answer to Islam's claim that the Christian Bible was corrupted and had to be corrected by Islam's Qur'an, the words of Islam's "Gabriel", and that that Qur'an condemns non-Muslim Israel as ungodly and idolatrous, (1) manuscript evidence reveals the Christian Bible is fully doctrinally credible, and (2) Daniel 8:11-25 shows the angel Gabriel strongly supported the non-Muslim nation of Israel and her beliefs in the TRUE God, Jahweh Elohim, as opposed to pagan idols like "Allah" that then existed as a polytheistic deity in Arabia. (3) The Bible's angel Gabriel would also thus support Israel's Feast of Dedication in Jesus' era that honored the cleansing of the temple by the "holy people" of Israel versus Islam's claim that Israel as a non-Muslim nation is unholy!*

Application: *May we (1) trust in Christ as Savior to have eternal life, John 3:16. (2) May we then answer Muslims who ask us a reason for our hope in Christ toward leading them to faith in Christ, cf. 1 Peter 3:15.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In attempting to witness to Muslims, a key area to address is its claim that its deity "Allah" is a god of love.

The Qur'an describes Islam's deity "Allah" "as a god of love (Qur'an 11:90; 85:14). But this is problematic . . . Love requires a personal nature that searches for another personal object on which to express love . . . (S)ince Allah is impersonal, he is without multiple persons in his own being on which to show love before creating the world and teaching love to his creatures. If Allah did not have the attribute of love before creation, how could he create beings with this attribute? A nonloving God cannot create loving creatures." (*Ibid.*, Wendling and Shayesteh, p. 39)

The Bible's God dramatically counters this problem: the Bible's God is Three Persons in One Godhead, and those distinct Persons had the capacity from eternity past to express their love to one another, so they did, John 17:23.

May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. Then, may we answer Muslims who challenge our faith, giving them the reasons for our faith (1 Peter 3:15) and the Gospel that they might be saved.