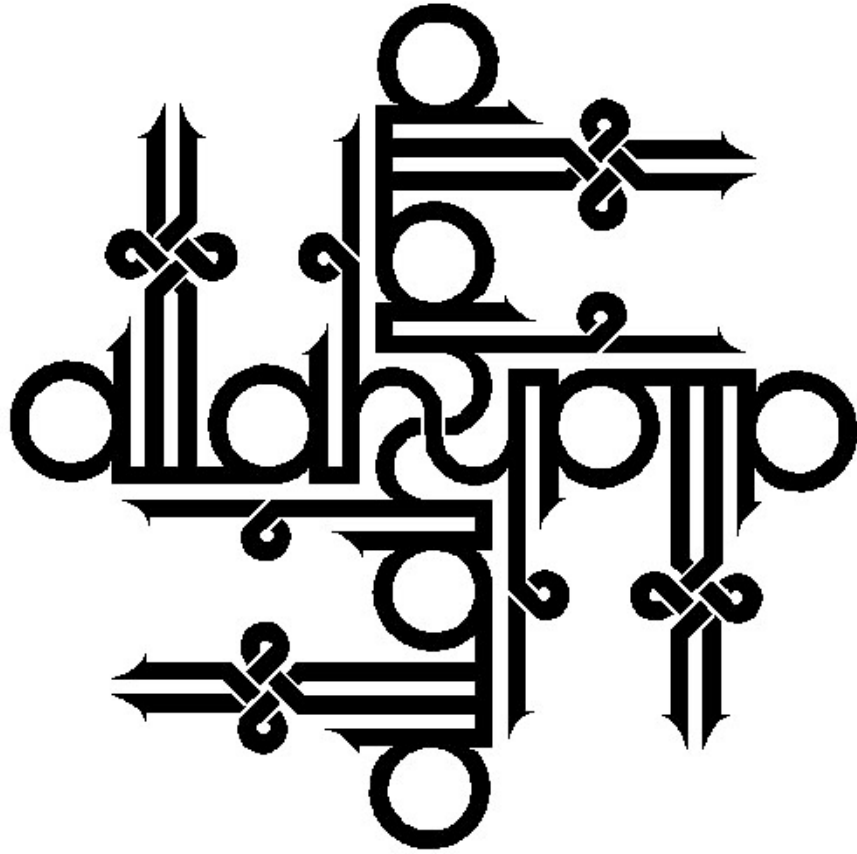


A HINDU RESPONSE TO DA'WA



BY

PANDIT SRIRAMA RAMANUJA ACHARI

A HINDU RESPONSE TO “THE INVITATION TO CONVERT TO ISLAM”

By Pandit Srirama Ramanuja Achari

Hinduism is the most accepting and tolerant of all the world's religions. It has a 2 thousand year record of living in harmony with all religions and never disparaging the beliefs of others. The early Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians all found refuge and the complete freedom to practice their religion in India. In fact the first post exile independent Jewish state was founded in Malabar, South India.

“Islam” is said to be the religion of peace. But “Islam” does not mean peace (although it comes from the same root *slm*) but submission to the will of Allah — and the will of Allah is the subjugation of the whole world to Islam. The Muslims invaded India, massacring the civilian population, looting, pillaging and demolishing thousands of temples and forcing tens of thousands of Hindus into conversion. Mosques were built on the most sacred of Hindu sites — the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, one in Mathura on the birth-place of Krishna and one in the most sacred cities of all — Banares – right next to the Vishvanatha Mandir. The usual practice was to demolish the temple and then incorporate the temple masonry into the building of the Mosque to testify to the victory of Islam. After all this the Hindus still accepted their presence and were gracious to them. (In Saudi Arabia one cannot even bring a Bible or a Gita or rosary into the country let alone build a church or a temple!).

The pre-medieval 6th century Arab pagan tribes were a proud, chauvinistic, aggressive, unruly people living in harsh unpredictable conditions. They fought amongst themselves, raiding, robbing and pillaging each other, enjoying blood feuds lasting for generations, practicing female infanticide and polygamy (because of the number of men killed in battle), and trading in slaves. Islam united them and brought about peace among the tribes. It provided a form of radical justice that was perfectly suited to them. Islam was perfect for the Arabian peninsular of the pre-medieval world.

One can argue that all the laws of the Quran as well as the massacres perpetrated by Muslims are also found in the Bible. But there is a difference. Since the Reformation and Enlightenment in Europe and the ascent of humanism there is not a single priest, minister or rabbi who advocates returning to the Mosaic law.¹ Islam has yet to undergo a “Reformation”. There are a few lone Imams and scholars that are calling for a more moderate interpretation of the Quran and a contextualising of some of the more hostile passages denouncing the “unbelievers — Jewish, Christian and Pagan,” and playing down certain aspects of Muhammad's personal example. But as long as Islam is obsessed with it's own sense of superiority over all other religions and political ideologies, and that the Quran is the last and perfect Word of Allah, valid and current for all times and places then peaceful co-existence in the pluralistic and democratic societies of the West will be difficult. Unfortunately the voice of moderation in the Islamic world is weak and those who do speak out against the radicals live in fear of their personal safety.

Hinduism is the oldest of the major religions having sacred texts dating back 7000. Our religion is a truly universal religion in that it accepts the Truths that are found in all other religions. It inculcates absolute values of goodness, and kindness to all sentient beings. The Hindu Scriptures declare that any form of injury to another living being by word, deed or thought is sinful and all acts of kindness to all beings is considered as merit. *Ahimsa* or non-injury is declared to be the highest form of

¹ In fact the prophet denounced the Jews of Arabia for failing to implement the Mosaic law of stoning for adulterers in the 6th century!

religion. There are 3 core values which define Hinduism — (1) non-aggression to any living being, (2) universal compassion and (3) generosity to all. Hinduism was the predominant religion throughout the whole of South East Asia for thousands of years but Hindus have never conquered any other people or spread their religion through violence. Hindus achieved excellence in mathematics, medicine, art, astronomy, music, drama, dance and all other forms of civilization. The Hindus have had a tradition of philosophical enquiry supported by vigorous logic and debate, welcomed criticism, encouraged free-thought and free expression of ideas. There is no concept in Hinduism of heresy, blasphemy or any history of sectarian persecution or repression. When we pray, we pray for the welfare of all sentient beings wherever they are. We pray that peace may prevail — even for the animals, birds, and trees. Why would we want to accept the invitation to Islam and abandon intellectual and spiritual freedom, universalism and compassion for sectarianism, discrimination and hate? It's like inviting a free person to become a slave! Islam has absolutely nothing to offer us that can in anyway improve our lives. If it be said that Islam guarantees our salvation, we reply that our religion already does that, as well as affirming that all beings will eventually be liberated and attain unification with the Godhead. A concept of eternal separation from God and eternal damnation for most souls is an abomination in itself and affront to the perfection God and humanity!

Islam is a proselytizing faith and all men and women are “invited” (da’wa) to accept Islam. In this pamphlet I examine the articles of Islam from a Hindu perspective. Hindu philosophical methodology has always fostered doubt and encouraged debate. The Quran repeatedly invites us to examine the proofs and to discern truth from falsehood². It is very quick to point out the doctrinal faults of the Jews, Christians and the Pagans in order to affirm its own superiority. So it is with this right of reciprocal criticism that I write this pamphlet. My intention is not to denigrate Islam but examine the “invitation” and to point out it’s fallacies from a Hindu perspective.

Now with the rise of Islamic radicalism and chauvanism, Hindus are once again being targeted and attacked on the internet. This is not a conflict that we initiated or want, but we have a right and the intellectual duty to defend ourselves against false accusations and the promotion of false and delusional ideologies. The Holy Quran supports us in this endeavour:—

8:22 For the worst of beasts in the sight of Allah are the (metaphorically) deaf and the dumb — those who don’t use their intellect.

The Muslims aver that the Quran is the final Revelation of Allah, every word of it is the word of God, eternal and perfect. Hindus believe that the Gita is the eternal and perfect word of God spoken directly to his disciple Arjuna over 3000 years before Islam. Neither claim can be objectively substantiated and both are ultimately based on personal *faith* alone. If the god of the Hindus is same as the god of the Muslims then two opposing and incompatible revelations have been made, according to time, place and circumstance. If they are different gods then the revelation of one must be objectively superior to the other — it is up to the discerning reader to decide.

The articles of Islam that we are invited to accept are in black text and the Hindu response is in blue text. The boxes contain quotes from the Word of God revealed to the Hindus in the Gita.

² 8: 8. That He might justify Truth and prove Falsehood false, distasteful though it may be to those in guilt.

1. Allah³, the One and Only God

A Muslim believes in ONE GOD, Supreme and Eternal, Infinite and Mighty, Merciful and Compassionate, Creator and Provider. He is God of all mankind, not of a special tribe or race.

Rejoinder

We completely agree with the general sentiment of this statement. But we go further and deny any negativity in the nature of God. This means that God, in Hindu theology, is completely free of selfish desire, anger, hatred, resentment, delusion, pride etc. He is not only merciful to ALL sentient beings, but is a veritable Ocean of Limitless Compassion.

I am the One Goal, the Supporter, the Supreme Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge and the Friend [of the universe]. I am the Seat of origination and dissolution, that which is preserved and the imperishable seed of all existence. Gita 9:18.

His love and compassion are so vast that there is no sin that could possibly exhaust his redemptive grace. As long as there is even one single soul to redeem he will not rest until he has redeemed it. Therefore no human limit whatsoever can be placed upon the Divine. God pervades and encompasses the entire universe with his being. We live in God and God lives in us. We call God by many names but the one that describes Him as the Absolute Supreme Being is “Brahman” which simply means “the immensity”.

God creates in man the mind to understand, the soul and conscience to be good and righteous, the feelings and sentiments to be kind and humane. God does not need anything from us, because He is Needless and Independent. God asks us to know Him, to love Him and *to enforce His law* for our benefit and our own good.

Good, righteous, kind and humane — since these are the highest human qualities one would expect to experience them in abundance amongst orthodox Muslims who have surrendered to the will of Allah. All the Jihadists claim to be

Having subdued all their senses, unprejudiced, intent on the welfare of all beings — they too come to Me alone. Gita 12:4

orthodox and indeed have such faith in Islam and Allah that they willing die for Allah's cause. Allah affirms that he himself guides the believers, so then where is the goodness, kindness and humanity demonstrated in Muslim ruled areas? In Darfour Arab Muslims are slaughtering hundreds of men, women and children who are African Muslims! Yet there is no outrage in the Muslim world. Whenever there is a disaster such as the Tsunami or earthquake in Pakistan (in both of which mainly Muslims were affected in the thousands) there was never any outreach by the Muslims nations — especially Saudi Arabia which is the heart of Sunni Islam and the wealthiest country on earth. All the aid comes from the international community consisting of unbelievers. The Muslims of Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh and even Yemen, live in abject poverty and ignorance why is it that all the aid programs to these benighted Muslims are run by non-believers?

If God creates in us the ability to be good and righteous and to be kind and humane then how come he, the infinite creator falls way short of the highest human standard? Human beings have the ability to sacrifice their lives to save others — even to save animals. Yet the Creator has ordained an eternal Hell-fire for gratuitous torture of those who reject him in the form of ‘Allah’!

An eternal fraction of My Being, having become the individual Soul enters the mortal world, acquires the [five] senses, and the mind which is the sixth, and abides in Material Nature. Gita 15:7

³ All debates require a clarification of terminology. I am assuming that “Allah” here is not the personal name of God but an Arabic equivalent of the English noun “God”.

Although Western civilization is regularly denounced by Islamic preachers for being evil and godless — it is in the West that we have the bill of Human Rights, enshrined in law is equality of the sexes, the protection of children, women, homosexuals, refugees, minorities, freedom of religion, fair and free elections via democratic process, multiculturalism, tolerance etc. all of which are against the Laws of Allah! No Muslim nation on earth delivers all the rights and protections that godless people in the west enjoy. In fact the laws of the atheists are far superior to the laws of Allah! If this were not so, why is there such an influx of Muslim migrants to the lands of the Kaffirs rather than to Saudi Arabia, Iran or any other Muslims majority country?

If God is self-fulfilled and does not need anything from us why does he require that we submit to Islam? The Hindu civilization is over 7000 years old, we already have minds to understand — Vedanta philosophy is amongst the most sublime and holistic there is (there is no philosophy in “revealed” religions). Hindus were discussing philosophy, theology, ethics and the meaning of life over 4000 years before the advent of Islam.

Focus your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, offer worship to Me, bow down to Me. Engaging your mind in this manner and regarding Me as the supreme goal, you will come to Me. Gita 9:34.

How is submission to this Arabian deity for our personal benefit? And why should men enforce his law if he is mighty and omnipotent? In what way are his laws superior to those of the democratic nations or those of other civilizations? Why would an omnipotent creator and law-giver entrust the administration of his sacred laws to fallible humans who he knows are going to fall short of his standard of perfect justice?

2. Messengers and Prophets of God

A Muslim believes in all the Messengers and Prophets of God without any discrimination. All messengers were mortals, human beings, endowed with Divine revelations and appointed by God to teach mankind. The Holy Quran mentions the names of 25 messengers and prophets and states that there are others. These include Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. Their message is the same and it is Islam and it came from One and the Same Source; God, and it is to submit to His will and to obey His law; i.e., to become a Muslim.

Rejoinder

All the other ‘messengers’ apart from Muhammad are mythological characters derived from Jewish sources, including Jesus. There is not a shred of independent reliable evidence that any of them existed. We know in impressive detail about the identities, activities, pastimes and accomplishments of Egyptian Pharaohs of 4000 years ago. We even have laundry lists and shopping lists but not a single inscription anywhere in the middle east that mentions the names of these alleged prophets. Solomon was considered a prophet and one of the richest and most powerful kings that ever lived. All the kings of the middle east allegedly paid tribute to him – yet nothing has been found archeologically to establish him as a real historical person. There were very active historians both Jewish and Roman at the time of Jesus — but not one of them mentions his name. We have an actual historical record attested to by a number of historians of the career of the governor Pontius Pilate who was Jesus’ alleged judge but nothing of Jesus himself.

Whenever there is a decline of *righteousness*, O Arjuna, and an increase of *unrighteousness*, then I incarnate Myself. For the protection of the good and for the destruction of the wicked, for the establishment of Dharma, I advent myself from age to age. Gita4:7-8

As for Muhammad — why should we accept him as the worthy messenger of a benevolent and supreme deity? Another Muslims prophet - Jesus even said: “by their fruits you will know them!” Let us take a brief look at the career of the prophet as recorded in the Hadith by his contemporaries.

- He earned his living by robbing the caravans of his own tribe — the Quraish who lived in Mecca and was (with Allah) entitled to a fifth (*khumus*) of the booty⁴.
- He waged wars against the other tribes plundering their possession, enslaving their women and children, and slaughtering those who resisted him or refused to convert to Islam.
- He engaged in extortion by holding prisoners to ransom — and his example is now being followed by his followers in Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Philippines.

When one relinquishes all the desires arising in the mind, O Arjuna, when one is satisfied in oneself with the Soul, then one is said to have obtained steady wisdom. One whose mind is not perturbed by pain, who does not hanker after pleasures, who is free from desire, fear and anger — is called a sage of steady intellect. He who has no attachment anywhere, who, when encountering the agreeable or the disagreeable feels neither attraction nor aversion — his wisdom is firmly established. Gita 2:55-57

The sages who are free from the pairs of opposites, whose minds are well directed and who are devoted to the welfare of all beings, become cleansed of all impurities and attain the bliss of the Divine. 5:25.

- When he was 50 he married the daughter of his best friend Abu Bakr — a nine year old girl – Aisha who was his 3rd wife. How can a man of 50 have romantic and erotic feelings for a six year old girl which was the age at which he married her? In Arabia as well as in India at the time child marriage was a sanctioned practice, but Muhammad is held up as the perfect role model endorsed by Allah, and unfortunately his example is being followed today. In Iran the legal age of marriage for a girl is 9 and a boy is 14.
- When he was 60 he appropriated a Jewish girl of 18, Safiyya bint Huyayy after having killed her father and brother, and after having had her husband Kinana tortured and beheaded. He had sex with her the same night on the battle-field in spite of Allah's law that there should be a waiting period of 3 months. He then later married her as his 11th wife.
- The prophet married Zaynab the wife of his adopted son Zayd ibn Haritha. When Muhammad saw her without her veils he became enamoured of her, Allah abrogated the adoption laws to facilitate their union. Henceforth there is no adoption allowed in Islam.
- He silenced his critics by having them murdered. Some examples are the poetess Asma bint Marwan who composed a few satirical poems about him. The prophet of god then sent a blind man Umayr to kill her.

The one to whom both censure and praise are equal, who is silent [when praised or abused] and content with any condition, who has not attached to home, who has a steady mind, and who is devoted to Me — dear to Me is such a person. Gita 12:19

She was lying in bed suckling her infant at the time. Umayr pulled the child away and stabbed her so hard in the abdomen with his sword that it cut right into the bed. The prophet praised this act saying her death was so trivial that even goats would not lock horns over it!

- Another critic was the old Jewish poet Abu Afak who also composed a few satirical verses on the prophet — he was murdered on the instigation of the prophet by Salim.
- Muhammad sent 5 men to kill Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf who had been lampooning him and inciting the Quraish against him. One of the 5 was his brother Abu Naila who used subterfuge – endorsed by the prophet, to entice him out of his house and the others killed him and decapitated him. They took his head back to Muhammad and threw it into his lap – he said to

⁴ 8:41: And know that out of all the booty that ye may acquire (in war), a fifth share is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger, and to near relatives, orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer,-

them “You have succeed honourably” – even though he knew the assassins were resorting to lies and trickery to accomplish their task.⁵

- After the murder of Abu Afak the prophet gave orders to kill any Jew that the Muslims should meet in the street and this was gleefully carried out. Even Jewish merchants that were favourable to the Muslims were slain and robbed.
- He attacked and evicted the Jewish tribes — the Banu Qaynuqa and Banu Nadir from Medina when they refused to convert to Islam. He confiscated all their property and distributed it among the believers – keeping the standard 1/5 for himself and Allah.
- When the Jewish tribe of the Banu Quraiza was attacked and defeated. The prophet ordered all the 800 male prisoners of war to be beheaded while he watched and then had the women and children sold off at the market. He took a woman named Rihana as his sex-slave and offered to marry her if she converted – she refused and chose to remain his concubine.

According to the Scriptures that were revealed to the Hindus the prospective guru must be tested by; (1) examining their teaching — is it true, wholesome, universally beneficial and beautiful? (2) Examining the life and deeds of the guru — do they live a Dharmic (ethical) life characterized by purity, truth, compassion and non-violence. (3) What effect do this teachings have on their followers?⁶

Not aggressive towards any living being, friendly and compassionate to all, free from the notions of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, and regarding all pain and pleasure with equanimity, and forbearing; contented, constantly contemplating, self-restrained and firm in one’s convictions, dedicating the mind and intellect to Me — such a devotee is dear to Me. Gita 12:13,14

If we examine the historical accounts of the life and times of the prophet — the Hadith itself, then Muhammad and Islam fail on all three accounts!

3. Revelations and the Quran

A Muslim believes in all scriptures and revelations of God, as they were complete and in their original versions⁷ i.e the Torah, the Psalms of David (*Zaboor*) and the Gospels (*Injeel*). Allah, the Creator, has not left man without guidance for the conduct of his life. Revelations were given to guide the people to the right path of Allah and sent down to selected people, the prophets and messengers, to convey it to their fellow men.

The Quran is the last book of guidance from Allah, sent down to Muhammad, through the angel Jibraeel (Gabriel). *Every word of it is the word of Allah*. It was revealed over a period of 23 years in the Arabic language. It contains 114 *Surahs* (chapters) and over 6000 verses.

⁵ From these anecdotes we can see that the Muslim outrage at the cartoons published in Denmark lampooning the prophet was perfectly in harmony with what the prophet himself would have done. The fatwa of death against Salman Rushdie was perfectly in keeping with Islamic values.

⁶ The final words reported from the mouth of the dying Muhammad were a curse on the favored ‘People of the Book’. From Ibn Sa’d page 322: When the last moment of the prophet was near, he used to draw a sheet over his face; but when he felt uneasy, he removed it from his face and said: “*Allah’s damnation be on the Jews and the Christians who made the graves of their prophets objects of worship.*”

⁷ The Quran claims that the scriptures mentioned were delivered in their perfect form and are in complete harmony with the Quran but the Jews and Christians changed and altered the revelation to suit themselves. So whatever differs from the Quran in those texts is a forgery while the Quran remains the final and perfect Word of God.

Rejoinder

The Quran was revealed to Muhammad over a period of 23 years in instalments. Islamic tradition has it that when Muhammad died, in 632, the scattered instalments were all in different people's possession: they were recorded only "on palm leaves and flat stones and in the hearts of men". When the Muslims began arguing about what was genuinely Quranic and what was not, Khalif Uthman decided to standardize the text — about 15 years after the death of Muhammad. He had all the available fragments gathered together and a committee decided on what was authentic. After he had authorised the new text all other versions and incomplete fragments of text were destroyed. We do not know if every single instalment was retrieved. The original text had no vowel markings — only consonants which led to confusion over meanings and so he had all the vowels included.

So in short we have a text which claims to be the infallible word of God but which was compiled and transcribed by fallible humans. The Quran claims that it itself is "complete" yet some fragments were destroyed and some may even have been lost and others may never have been retrieved. Most of the "revelations" delivered to the prophet seem to be constrained by place and time — instructions concerning some specific event during the life of the prophet given in dribs and drabs whenever the prophet needed an injunction or confirmation. (Aiysha is reported to have wryly said:— "I see that Allah hastens to fulfil the desires of his prophet!")

There are long diatribes against the Jews and pagans. Long passages of incoherent ramblings without any context — as if the reader had walked in on a conversation and didn't have the context. Apart from retelling of myths from the Jewish and Christian scriptures with an Islamic spin — and the incorporation of large swags of Jewish religious law there are a few positive gems of good guidance like caring for (Muslim) widows and orphans, (Widows and orphans of unbelievers captured in war can be sold in the market⁸). Forbidding female infanticide, showing kindness to the (Muslim) poor, hospitality to guests, honesty, good governance — including treating all non-Muslims as second class citizens (*dhimmis*) — avoidance of theft, murder etc. in regard to Muslims and their property!! (The non-believers are in a different category and the Muslims are enjoined to fight them, humiliate them and extort them!⁹). Adultery is forbidden but polygamy endorsed.¹⁰

All the "positive" teachings of Islam have been practiced by all the previous civilizations and cultures and are nothing but common sense. They are in no need of the endorsement of the Lord of the Universe! Every one of the universal, perennial teachings of the Quran will arise in the minds of any civilised people and need no divine inculcation. But the negative commands to amputate the hands of thieves, the stoning of adulterers, the political

<p>Fearlessness, purity of mind, wisdom, philanthropy, self-control, worship, study of Vedas, self-discipline, forthrightness, non-injury to any living being, truthfulness, freedom from anger, slandering, hankering, whimsicality & spite. Non-attachment, tranquillity, compassion to all beings, gentleness, modesty, radiance, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, humility, - these treasures, O Arjuna, belong to one who is born to a Divine Estate. Gita 16:1-3</p>

⁸ In this connection it is worthwhile to mention the *Sharia Law* (Islamic Law) on captive women and children:

Law 9.13 Where a child or a woman is taken captive, they become slaves by the fact that of capture, and the woman's previous marriage is immediately annulled.

⁹ Quran 9:29 — Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya (poll tax) with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.

¹⁰ The Prophet married 21 times and had a regular harem of about 12 wives and 2 concubines (sex-slaves).

and social subjugation of unbelievers and endorsement of ransoming captives¹¹ are peculiar to Islam alone! There is nothing beneficial in Islam which does not already exist in Hinduism.

If God wished to give us good and wholesome guidance from his cosmic perspective instead of issuing exhortations to belief and threats of eternal damnation for disbelief and some moral instruction and laws specific to a pre-industrial 6th century Arabian society, couldn't he rather have explained the principles of Quantum Physics, revealed the laws of thermo-dynamics or given us the recipe for the ultimate antibiotic, the cure for cancer or HIV. Couldn't he rather have taught us how to wipe out malaria which accounts for thousands of deaths of children every year, or any other useful scientific knowledge which would lead to universal welfare rather than be obsessed with enforcing simple monotheism and settling tribal feuds.

Even though the Muslims claim the Shariah is based upon the "perfect" Quran and the Hadith, yet it is so ambiguous it needs to be interpreted by somewhat imperfect self-appointed "Scholars". There are four schools of Islamic jurisprudence all arguing about what the divine law actually is. Every Shariah court, mufti, and mullah will give different judgements. So who is correct? Who has the authority to interpret the Holy Law? Apart from a few self-evident moral injunctions there is nothing of any practical or spiritual use for Hindus in the entire 114 surahs. The ancient Greeks and Romans had a far superior legal system in place before Muhammad.

The Quran itself invites us to examine the "clear" proofs¹² that Allah has provided:—

6. 104. "Now have come to you, from your Lord, proofs (to open your eyes): if any will see, it will be for (the good of) his own soul; if any will be blind, it will be to his own (harm): I am not (here) to watch over your doings."

57. 25 We verily sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance, that mankind may observe right measure;

The Quran claims that is a complete and perfect revelation¹³:—

".....We did not leave ANYTHING out of this book." 6:38

"The word of your Lord is COMPLETE, in truth and justice. Nothing shall abrogate His words. He is the Hearer, the Omniscient." 6:115

It also claims to be completely infallible:—

"No falsehood could enter it (Quran), in the past or in the future; a revelation from a Most Wise, Praiseworthy." 41:42

The first problem that arises is the very concept of a final and static revelation in a transforming and evolving world. The world of 2010 would be totally unrecognisable by desert Arabs of Muhammad's eras. Now, if we are to consider that every word of the Quran is the word of God then extraordinary

¹¹ Again most of the reports of kidnapping for ransom in the world are emanating from Iraq and Sudan — perpetrated by Muslims. Endorsement for this practice can be found in the example of the prophet himself.

¹² The Quran declares these "proofs" to be the natural environment in which we live — 10:6 Verily, in the alternation of the night and the day, and in all that Allah hath created, in the heavens and the earth, are signs for those who fear Him. The creation could possibly warrant the positing of a "creator" but can prove nothing about him/her/it. Any "proofs" derived from cause/effect are nebulous at best but definitely not "certain".

¹³ The Qur'an, on repeated occasions reiterates its claim to be a clear book (5:15) easy to understand (44:58, 54:22, 54:32, 54:40) explained in detail (6:114), conveyed clearly, (5:16, 10:15) with no doubt in it (2:1), with clear ordinances, (98:3), of divine nature, (10:37) and full of wisdom (36:2).

claims should be based upon extraordinary evidence! In light of the afore-mentioned claims – if even one single error or falsehood is found, then that should invalidate the entire book.

Let us consider the following:—

1. The Quran mentions and affirms as historical, personages of which no evidence whatsoever exists e.g. Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Solomon and Jonah who lived 3 days and nights in the belly of a fish etc. In the last 2000 years no evidence has been produced in spite of prodigious Biblical research.

2. Allah states as irrefutable fact that the entire people of Israel were captives in Egypt for a long period of time (the Bible says 430 years). When they left, the Bible tells us that there were 603,550 fighting men. So all together there would have been over 2.5 million people who left Egypt with their camels, herds of sheep and cattle and donkeys and carts. The Egyptians were meticulous record keepers. We have records extending back thousands of years, yet the existence of a nation of 2.5 million Israelites within Egypt is never once mentioned. Decades of archaeological excavation of the alleged sites of their sojourn have produced not a single scrap of evidence. What would happen to the fragile economy of an agrarian society if 2.5 million people suddenly left overnight? Surely there would be some archaeological evidence. These 2.5 million people then wandered around the Sinai desert for 40 years, herding their animals, — goats, camels, and sheep, camping and sacrificing — still not a shred of evidence has been unearthed to substantiate this enormous movement of people and animals.¹⁴ . After having been living with Egyptians for 400 years surely Hebrew would contain lots of Egyptian loan words – and vice versa? Yet still, linguistically there is no evidence of prolonged contact with Egyptians. So far no Muslim scholar has come to our aid and attempted to prove unequivocally that the Jews did indeed reside for 430 years in Egypt and were brought out by Moses to the promised land.

3. The Quran declares in a number of passages that Allah sent Jesus as a prophet and gave him the Gospels. (3:2,48; 5:47, etc.)

Now the problem is that the Gospels were never "given" to Jesus. Jesus never claimed to have received a revelation nor did he give any "Text" to any of his disciples. He is only mentioned writing once - at the time the woman was taken in adultery - he bent down and wrote something in the sand - no one knows what it was. The four Gospels were written by unknown authors.

The first of the Gospels — Mark, was written 70 years after Jesus' death and the others followed after that. All of them are full of contradictions. In fact the entire New Testament was decided by the vote of 300 bishops at the council of Nicaea in the year 325. There were 18 other Gospels presented which were all rejected by democratic vote. This is validated by every Christian scholar and is supported by abundant textual evidence. The Muslim apologetic is that the original text given by Jesus was destroyed and a new one cobbled together by Christians!!! Islam is almost entirely derived from Judaism and Christianity and all the key dogmas are exactly the same: Unity of God, prophets and their message or repentance from sin, death and then resurrection and the day of judgment, then heaven and hell. So what exactly did the Jews and Christians change? The Muslims say that the Christians invented the doctrine of the Trinity and the Jews changed the Sabbath from Friday to Saturday and the Christians changed it again to Sunday — going against the will of Allah.

4. The Quran declares that the prophet David was given the book of psalms. The Jews never considered David a prophet but rather a king. The psalms are poems of praise to god (referred to by his personal name Yahweh.) They contain no doctrines or dogmas or guidance and some of them are

¹⁴ Barry Brown, "Israeli Archaeologist (Eliezer Oren) Reports that after 10 years of intensive archeological study there is no evidence to back Exodus Story," News Toronto Bureau, Feb. 27, 1988.

outright horrific in praising the smashing of babies heads on the rocks.¹⁵ If Allah and Yahweh are one and the same person why does the perfect and self-sufficient Allah need to reveal an entire book of self-praise to a prophet-king who was well-known for his sexual-indiscretions and war-mongering and looting? Most modern Biblical scholars using critical textual analysis attribute the psalms to many authors not one.

5. The Quran strenuously attacks the Christian doctrine of the Trinity but is confused about what this doctrine actually is. According to the Quran 5:117 Christians believe that there are 3 gods – Allah, Jesus and Mary!¹⁶ No Christians have ever taught or believed this nonsense. The immutable and perfect word of God also claims that the Jews regarded Ezra as a son-of-god¹⁷ there is not a single record in any of the rabbinical literature of this ever having been the case and in fact the Jews are as uncompromising in their monotheism as the Muslims! The Muslim apologetic is that there was a certain tribe of Jews in Yemen at the time that held this belief — evidence is lacking.

6. It is alleged that because the Quran is the eternal word of Allah it contains scientific truths.¹⁸ Except when it describes Stars falling (81:2) the Sun setting in a murky spring of water (18:86) and the sun and moon both orbit around the earth (36:40) and the earth being flat like a carpet (15:19); Any scientific truths the Quran contains are so paltry as to be insignificant. It would have been useful if the Creator had clarified the scientific facts of astronomy before Galileo discovered them 995 years later and was almost executed for his heresy!

7. The Quran declares itself to be “clear” (*mubeen*) and “easy to understand”. In fact, large tracts of the Quran are entirely unintelligible even by Arabic speakers themselves! If the Quran is indeed simple and clear then there would be no need of interpretation and everything in it must be taken at face value.

It is also contradictory¹⁹ — one example may suffice.

There is no compulsion in the religion; rectitude has become clear from perversion. (2:256)

Then, when the sacred months have passed away, kill the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them, and confine them, and wait for them at every place of ambush. Then, if they repent (and convert to Islam), and establish the Prayer, and pay the Due-Alms, leave them alone; God is Forgiving, Merciful.(9:5)

Then there is the confusion about making friends of non-Muslims:

"Let not the believers take the unbelievers for friends.... whoso does that belongs not to

¹⁵ Psalms 137:7. — Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Raze it, raze it, to its very foundation. 8. O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed; happy is the one, that repays you as you have served us. 9. Happy shall he be, that takes and dashes your little ones against the rocks.

¹⁶ And behold! Allah will say: "O Jesus the son of Mary! Didst thou say unto men, worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of Allah.?" He will say: "Glory to Thee! never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my heart, Thou I know not what is in Thine. For Thou knowest in full all that is hidden.

¹⁷ Quran 9:30 — The Jews call 'Uzair (Ezra) a son of Allah, and the Christians call Christ the son of Allah. That is a saying from their mouth; (in this) they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. Allah's curse be on them: how they are deluded away from the Truth!

¹⁸ For more on the subject of the Quran and scientific truths please refer to <http://www.faithfreedom.org/content/some-myths-about-quranic-science>.

¹⁹ Islam has a doctrine of “abrogation” ((known as *an-Nasikh wa'l Mansukh*, the abrogater and the abrogated) meaning that one verse cancels another verse. The verses which were revealed during the Meccan period are abrogated by those revealed in Medina.

Allah." (The House of Imram: 60)²⁰

60:9 Allah forbids you not to make friends with only those who warred against you on account of religion and have driven you out from your homes and helped to drive you out. Whosoever makes friends of them - (All) such are wrong- doers.

How should a Muslims deal with unbelievers?

48:29 Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are severe (*shadeed* = or ruthless, cruel) against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves.

One may ask how this double-standard harmonizes with the other injunction:—

60:8 Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who did not fight against you on account of your religion and did not drive you out from your homes. Allah loves the just dealers.²¹

So one shouldn't make friends at all with unbelievers or one can make friends only with non-hostile unbelievers. One may be kind and just to them – if one so wishes. Muslim scholars will then say that these verses are specific to time and place — if so, then how can the Quran be considered to be “eternal”. So, far from being “clear” the Quran can be used to justify any ideology one chooses, and there are no rules for interpretation nor any singular interpreting body.

8. Solomon has armies comprised of humans, jinns and birds and takes them into battle. He understands the language of the ants (27:16-18) a gift which marks Allah's favour. He has a conversation with a Muslim hoopoe bird and sends him as his ambassador to the queen of Sheba. (27:20-29)

There are hundreds of blunders and absurdities in the Qur'an. How can an infallible God err so much? If there were only one or a handful of errors, we could still argue that those verses have crept into the book in later stages. But when the Quran is replete with scientific heresies, historic blunders, mathematical mistakes, logical absurdities, grammatical errors and ethical fallacies, we must question the legitimacy of its divine origin.

What is important is that the teachings of the Quran have and are being used to justify atrocities! The history of India written by the Muslims themselves glorifies the hundreds of thousands of Hindu *kaffirs* that were massacred, men, women and children. Thousands of temples plundered and destroyed, tons of gold, silver and other precious things stolen and taken back to Afghanistan and Persia. (All the Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Afghans and Indonesians were once Hindus — perhaps the world would be better of today had they all remained so!)

Religious hypocrisy, hubris, self-conceit, anger, violence and ignorance these, O Arjuna, belong to one who is born to a Demonic estate. Gita 16:4
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4. The Angels

There are purely spiritual and splendid beings created by Allah. They require no food or drink or sleep. They have no physical desires nor material needs. Angels spend their time in the service of Allah. Each is charged with a certain duty.

²⁰ This revelation occurred in relation to the Banu Qaynuqa Jews. When they were defeated and were about to be executed, Abdullah bin Ubayy and some other Muslims who had personal alliances with the Jews came to Muhammad and pleaded their case. The prophet relented and let the Jews live after confiscating all their property. But still being very unhappy about alliances between Muslims and Jews/Christians, Muhammad then received this revelation from Allah.

²¹ Please note that this is not a positive injunction to deal justly with unbelievers but merely permission to do so – if one wishes – if not one may be guided by the previous injunction to be harsh to them. In Islamic law there is the doctrine of “abrogation

Rejoinder

All religions speak of beings like these, are the angels of the Romans, Greeks, Persians, Babylonians, Zoroastrians and Hindus all have their angels.

5. The Day of Judgement

A Muslim believes in the Day of the Judgement. This world as we know it will come to an end, and the dead will rise to stand for their final and fair trial. On that day, all men and women from Adam to the last person will be resurrected from the state of death for judgement. Everything we do, say, make, intend and think are accounted for and kept in accurate records. They are brought up on the Day of Judgement.

People with good records will be generously rewarded and warmly welcomed to Allah's Heaven. People with bad records will be fairly punished and cast into Hell. The real nature of Heaven and Hell are known to Allah only, but they are described by Allah in man's familiar terms in the Quran.

Rejoinder

1. Resurrection of the dead.²²

Physical Bodies are comprised of atoms; is it scientifically possible for dead bodies to reconstitute themselves and revive? Every constituted substance will eventually de-constitute this is the law of nature. Nothing that has died has yet been resurrected, if it has not happened in the past what are the chances of it happening in the future?

Just as the embodied Soul passes through childhood, youth and old age [pertaining to that body], so [at death] it passes into another body. A wise man is not confused thereby. Gita 2:13

What is the difference between the soul and the body? The Quran declares that they are different. If so, then where does the soul go between death and the day of resurrection? If the soul is spiritual then when does it come into being? If it is created by God then is it created with free-will? Apparently there is little free-will in Islamic thought as Allah repeatedly says He guides whomsoever He wills and allows others to stray. (10:25, 1:4. 16:19,93) and He does whatever he wills to do!

As a person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new, so does the embodied Soul cast off its worn-out bodies and enter into others that are new. Gita 2:22

If the soul has free-will or not, when the omniscient Allah creates it, he knows whether it will believe or reject belief, and consequently end up in heaven or hell so then why go through the charade of creation, sending messengers, jihad, spreading Islam, and then finally resurrecting all the dead and judging them and sending them to heaven or hell for all eternity when he knew this from the beginning?

I am the same to all beings; to Me there is none hateful or dear; but those who worship Me with devotion abide in Me and I in them. Gita 9:29

²² Apparently there are some exceptions to this rule. Martyrs are exempt from resurrection (57:19) as are the previous prophets and apostles. During the "Night Journey" on the winged horse (*burraq*) the prophet was conveyed to Jerusalem and from there ascended through the 7 heavens being greeted by all his various predecessors. He then has a long discussion with Moses about reducing the number of times a Muslim is to pray from 50 to 5.

2. Heaven and Hell

We are reliably informed by the Quran, that in order to be admitted to heaven one must have faith in Allah and his messenger and do good works. However, good works alone will not suffice. So no matter how good, righteous, kind and charitable a Hindu may be there is still no heavenly reward. Apparently we are to get our reward here on earth. The only unforgivable offence that excludes one from heaven and incurs eternal damnation is “*shirk*” — associating anything with Allah – that is, even the slightest deviation from absolute and simple monotheism. Since Hindus endorse the worship of the One God-head in manifold ways we are the worst of the unbelievers (*mushrikun*)

Even those who, endowed with faith are devoted to other gods, they worship Me alone, O Arjuna, in an indirect manner. Gita 9:23.

Whichever manifestation (of the Divine) any devotee desires to worship with faith — that faith I make unshakeable and firm. Gita 7:21

So one can massacre defenceless people and prisoners of war, rape, pillage, rob people of their belongings and deprive them of their lands, torture, chop down productive trees out of spite, buy and sell other human beings etc. and still expect forgiveness and eternal pleasure, but for the thought crime of disbelief and deviation from monotheism — eternal damnation!!

Neither here [in this world] nor there [in the next], O Arjuna, is there destruction for one who fails to achieve spiritual perfection. For verily, no one who does good to others, my son, ever comes to grief. Gita 6:40.

The joys of heaven are clearly stated in the Quran in hedonistic terms:—

1. It will consist of gardens and vineyards (78:31)
2. The Muslims will lie on couches arranged in rows (52:17)
3. Every Muslim will be wed to beautiful virgins with large eyes (78:31, 44:51, 52:17-20, 55:56-58, 56:7-40, 55:70-77) although the number is not stated in the Quran, the Hadith says it will be 72 for each believer.
4. Every Muslim will also be served by a number of beautiful boys. (52:24, 56:17, 76:19)
5. There will be plenty of running water and fountains. (13:35 etc.)
6. There will be rivers of wine (47:15) and fountains of non-alcoholic wine (37:40-48)
7. And plenty of fruit. (13:35, 37:40-48 etc.)
8. The believers will be served with chicken flesh. (56:7-40)
9. They will have wealth, gold and silver ornaments, green silk garments and brocades in abundance. (22:23, 43:68-73, 55:70-77, 76:13-21 etc.)

Sahih Muslim Book 39, Number 6798, Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah:

“I heard Allah's Apostle as saying that the inmates of Paradise would eat and drink but would neither spit, nor pass water, nor void excrement, nor suffer catarrh. It was said: Then, what would happen with food? Thereupon he said: They would belch and sweat (and it would be over with their food), and their sweat would be that of musk and they would glorify and praise Allah as easily as you breathe.”

Those who are versed in the Scriptures, being purified from sin by drinking the Soma juice, pray for the way to heaven and worship Me by sacrifices. Reaching the holy realm of heaven, they enjoy there the celestial pleasures of the gods. Having enjoyed the vast realm of heaven, they return to the realm of mortals when their merit is exhausted. Thus, those who follow the ritualistic religion and are motivated by desire, come and go. Gita 9:20,21

Ali reported that the Apostle of Allah said, "There is in Paradise a market wherein there will be no buying or selling, but will consist of men and women. When a man desires a beauty, he will have intercourse with them." (Al Hadis, Vol. 4, p. 172, No. 34)

Some Muslim apologist would say that these verses are merely descriptive and the actual experience of heaven is inconceivable and known only to Allah. If this be so, then why did the omniscient creator not simply state that — or at least be PC and describe it in gender neuter terms? Some sceptics may consider the lack of subtlety be a flaw in an otherwise PERFECT revelation.

On the other hand us unbelievers will be assigned to hell (*Jahanna*) –

1. Hell is a mighty raging fire into which all “evil-doers” are cast – the worst of them being those who reject Allah and his messenger. All unbelievers are there because of this “thought-crime”. Apparently unbelievers are rewarded on earth for their good deeds and punished in hell for eternity for disbelief.

Lust, anger and greed — this is the threefold gateway to Hell, ruinous to the Soul. Therefore one should abandon these three. Gita 16:21
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2. As soon as the miserable creatures skins are burnt off new ones will be provided – for all eternity!.4:56
3. They will be given molten brass to drink. 18:29
4. And according to 7:44 the “companions of the garden” will taunt the “companions of Hell-fire”! The damned will call out to the saved to please send them down water or any morsels, and the saved will gleefully refuse!

Some pertinent questions can be raised.

- What happens to Muslim women? The Quran states that they too will be admitted to heaven (9:72) but what is their reward for living a life of subjugation, deprivation and imprisonment behind a veil? Do they simply become one of the many eternal virgins that will be the “companions” of believing men? Or will they simply be reunited with their husbands, to again become a member of a harem?
- Are the celestial virgins (*Houris*) and the serving boys also resurrected Muslims or are they created from fire like the angels especially for the pious?
- If Allah can fabricate new and eternal virgins with whom the pious can have everlasting sex why did he have to resurrect the dead in the first place?
- If the virgins and boys in heaven are fabricated there will be 3 classes of beings, (a) angels, (b) resurrected men who are enjoying and (b) artificial women and boys with whom they are enjoying — yet will they all be of the same substance?
- Who will be given the task of raising and then killing and cleaning and cooking the chickens that will be served to the believers? (All us unbelievers will be in hell – so we won’t be able to help out here.

One who meditates upon the Omniscient, Primeval One, Ruler and Creator of all, who is more subtle than an atom, whose nature is inconceivable, who is as refulgent as the sun, and who is beyond even the primordial state of undifferentiated matter, at the time of death, with a mind unwavering by the power of Yoga, being possessed of devotion, having focused the mind—reaches that same Divine Supreme Being. Gita 8: 9,10

- Allah has unequivocally promised eternal hell-fire for all unbelievers and those who reject Islam. If He is truly compassionate, merciful and forgiving, as he himself claims how could he consign the majority of human beings to suffer the most inhumane torments for eternity — simply for the sin of disbelief?

- How could truly good and kind people taunt others that are suffering in excruciating pain?
- How could any normal human being refuse water to those who are being tormented by unbearable thirst?
- Homo-sapiens has been around for 100,000 years at a conservative estimate. If we accept the argument that Adam was the first man and a prophet, we can trace his lineage back in the Bible (as did Bishop Ussher in the 19th century) and establish that he was created about 4004 BCE. Has Allah neglected all the homo-sapiens of the previous 96,000 years? Or if we accept the scientific theory of evolution at what stage of human evolutionary development did he start sending messengers? Did the Neanderthal receive any guidance?

Conclusion

We accept in Islam all that is universally good and objectively truthful and would also be happy to engage in inter-faith dialogue with Muslims in order to explore common values and to contribute to a harmonious and peaceful co-existence. But how is it possible to explore any grounds for mutual understanding on a level playing field when one party officially dehumanises the other?

So what does the Quran actually say about us unbelievers (*kaffirun* or *mushrikun*) ?

The Quran on Unbelievers (Hindus)

3:28 "Let not the believers take the unbelievers (Hindus) for friends.... whoso does that belongs not to God."

8:55 For **the worst of animals** in the sight of Allah are those who reject Him: They will not believe.

98:6 Verily, those who disbelieve (in the religion of Islam, the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad) from among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and Al-Mushrikun (Hindus and Buddhists) will abide in the Fire of Hell. **They are the worst of creatures.**

8:38 Say to the Unbelievers (Hindus), if (now) they desist (from Unbelief), their past would be forgiven them; but if they persist, the punishment of those before them is already (a matter of warning for them).

8:39 And fight them (the Hindus) on until there is no more disorder or oppression, and there prevail justice and religion of Allah is established everywhere; but if they cease, verily Allah doth see all that they do.

9:23 "O believers, do not treat your fathers and brothers as your friends, if they prefer unbelief to belief, whosoever of you takes them for friends, **they are evil-doers.**"

5:51 O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as *Auliya'* (friends, protectors, helpers, etc.), they are but *Auliya'* to one another. And if any amongst you takes them as *Auliya'*, then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah guides not those people who are evil. *Zalimun* (polytheists, wrongdoers and unjust).

5: 55 "O believers, do not make friends with the Jews and Christians; whoso of you makes them his friend is one of them."

5: 83. Strongest among men in enmity to the believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans; and nearest among them in love to the believers wilt thou find those who say, "We are Christians": because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant.

9:73. O Prophet! **strive hard against the unbelievers** and the Hypocrites, and **be firm against them**. Their abode is Hell,— an evil refuge indeed.

9:123 O ye who believe! **fight the unbelievers who gird you about, and let them find harshness in you:** and know that Allah is with those who fear Him.

14: 2. Of Allah, to Whom do belong all things in the heavens and on earth! But alas for the Unbelievers for a terrible penalty (their Unfaith will bring them)!

18: 100. And We shall present Hell that day for Unbelievers to see, all spread out,-

60:44 There is a goodly pattern for you in Abraham and those with him, when they told their folk:— Lo! we are guiltless of you and all that you worship beside Allah. We renounce you. And there has arisen between us and you hostility and hate for ever until you believe in Allah only!

The Qur'an says that the unbelievers are "the vilest of animals" (8:55). How should we interpret this verse? In what way can these insulting words be interpreted to mean something different than what they clearly (*mubeen*) mean? If these words appeared in an article in the Sydney Morning Herald this would be termed as "hate speech" and prosecutions could be had of the authors and publishers. How would Muslims react if someone published a paper saying that Muslims are the vilest of animals? There would be uproar and violence.

The Qur'an encourages Muslims to slay the unbelievers wherever they find them (2:191), to not take them as friends and helpers (3:28), fight them and show them harshness (9:123), and smite their heads (47:4). Are these very verses responsible for the fact that Muslims are inherently violent and intolerant of others? Since there is no central teaching authority in Islam and every Muslim is encouraged to study the Quran, each and every believer will accept and apply those verses which appeal to him/her. Who is to say whose interpretation is right or wrong?

Let us accept that there is systematic form of Islamic exegesis (interpretation of sacred texts) that Muslims have failed to popularize and integrate, and that is why some of them have strayed somewhat from the values of civilized nations during these past 1400 years. Doesn't this make Allah a cruel and cynical deity? Why would he confuse people with ambiguous messages? If Allah wanted Muslims to love all humankind, why he did not say so?" Why are there no verses saying, "O Muslims! People of all faiths are your brothers and sisters, love all humankind as members of your own family? Be friendly to all, have compassion and kindness for all living beings." (As Krishna did in the Bhagavad Gita) Why did Allah declare: — "Muhammad is the messenger of Allah; and those who are with him are harsh against unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other?" (48:29) Does this not imply a double standard of morality or justice.

Some "moderate" Imams may opine that the "unbelievers" mentioned in these hate verses are not *generic* unbelievers but specifically the Pagan Arabs. They do not apply to non-Muslims living with Muslims in Australia i.e. Atheists, humanists, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Parsis, Aborigines etc. There is one verse which alludes to a common humanity —

49:13 O mankind! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Allah is All-knowing, Aware.

"Knowing one another" does not imply "loving one another," spies also get to "know one another". We have already seen that there is no universal standard of conduct in Islam (48:29) and under an Islamic Khalifate the unbelievers are *dhimmi*²³ — subjugated 2nd class citizens. There is also the doctrine of 'abrogation' in which one Quranic verse may nullify another. Truth is always found in the practice, and history shows us that non-muslims have never been treated as social equals under Muslim rulers, with the exception of the Jews under the moors of Spain for a brief period because they conspired with the Muslims to overthrow the Catholic Kingdom of Spain. After the defeat of the Muslims by Ferdinand, all the Muslims and the Jews were expelled, the Jews were welcomed into the Ottoman realms and treated well. The Zoroastrians in Persia and the Hindus, Buddhists in India, on the other hand, were never treated as social equals — history bears witness to the horrors of the

²³ A *dhimmi* was the second-class status of unbelievers who chose to live in an Islamic society. They had to wear identification and to pay a specific poll-tax (*jizyah*) usually a quarter of their income. They always had to occupy a place lower than Muslims and had to give up their seats to any Muslim who wanted to sit down. Originally only Jews and Christians were entitled to this status but in India it was benevolently extended to the Hindu majority.

Muslim invasion and occupation — so obviously the majority of the Islamic scholars consider this verse (49:13) abrogated by the calls to persecute the infidels.

Today we witness the hatred of Muslims among themselves and the persecution of the Ahmadiyyas, Ismailiyas, Bahais in Pakistan and Iran, and the mutual slaughter between the Sunnis and Shiahs. More Muslims have died from Islamic terrorism than infidels. More mosques have been blown up by other Muslims than by infidels.

We have the blessings of the gods to be able to live in this unique land of Australia with all its advantages of personal freedom, liberty, equality, equal opportunities and free speech. It is also incumbent upon us to exercise our freedoms and challenge ideas and opinions in order to further our spiritual and intellectual evolution.

People usually choose to convert to religions or sects that support their inherent dispositions and affirm their prejudices and not because of the objective truth they discover in them. We find in Islam not a single truth that does not already exist in our own religion. We thank the Muslims for their invitation and reply with a quote from the Quran:—

109. al-Kafirun: The Unbelievers — Say: O disbelievers! I worship not that which ye worship; Nor worship ye that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which ye worship. Nor will ye worship that which I worship. Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion.

I hope this pamphlet will be a source of intellectual stimulation and debate for both Hindus and Muslims.

Daily Prayer recited by Hindus.

Sarveshaam mangalam bhavatu	<i>May all beings enjoy happy occasions</i>
Sarveshaam svastir bhavatu	<i>May all beings enjoy wellbeing</i>
Sarveshaam shantir bhavatu	<i>May all beings enjoy peace</i>
Sarveshaam poornam bhavatu	<i>May all beings enjoy wholeness</i>
Sarve bhavantu sukhinah	<i>May all beings be happy</i>
Sarve santu niraamayaah	<i>May all beings be free from sickness</i>
Sarva bhadraani pashyantu	<i>May all beings obtain what is beneficial for them</i>
maa kashchid dukha bhaag bhavet	<i>May no living being experience sorrow</i>
om asato maa sad gamaya —	<i>From untruth lead us to truth</i>
taamaso maa jyotir gamaya —	<i>From ignorance lead us to wisdom</i>
mṛtyor maa amritam gamaya —	<i>From death lead us to immortality</i>

om shanti shanti shantihi

Om peace, physical, mental and spiritual be on all.

