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General Conclusions

At the end of this study, a fact that stands forth very clearly is that the predominant opinion held in the West on the texts of the Holy Scriptures we possess today is hardly very realistic. We have seen the conditions, times and ways in which the elements constituting the Old Testament, the Gospels and the Qur'an were collected and written down: the circumstances attendant upon the birth of the Scriptures for these three Revelations differed widely in each case, a fact which had extremely important consequences concerning the authenticity of the texts and certain aspects of their contents.

The Old Testament represents a vast number of literary works written over a period of roughly nine hundred years. It forms a highly disparate mosaic whose pieces have, in the course of centuries, been changed by man. Some parts were added to what already existed, so that today it is sometimes very difficult indeed to identify where they came from originally.

Through an account of Jesus's words and deeds, the Gospels were intended to make known to men the teachings he wished to leave them on completion of his earthly mission. Unfortunately, the authors of the Gospels were not eyewitnesses of the data they recorded. They were spokesmen who expressed data that were quite simply the information that had been preserved by the various Judeo–Christian communities on Jesus's public life, passed down by oral traditions or writings which no longer exist today, and which constituted an intermediate stage between the oral tradition and the definitive texts.

This is the light in which the Judeo-Christian Scriptures should be viewed today, and to be objective, one should abandon the classic concepts held by experts in exegesis. The inevitable result of the multiplicity of sources is the existence of contradictions and oppositions: many examples have been given of these. The authors of the Gospels had (when talking of Jesus) the same tendency to magnify certain facts as the poets of French Medieval literature in their narrative poems.

The consequence of this was that events were presented from each individual narrator's point of view and the authenticity of the facts reported in many cases proved to be extremely dubious. In view of this, the few statements contained in the Judeo-Christian Scriptures which may have something to do with modern knowledge should always be examined with the circumspection that the questionable nature of their authenticity demands.

Contradictions, improbabilities and incompatibilities with modern scientific data may be easily explained in terms of what has just been said above. Christians are nevertheless very surprised when they realize this, so great have been the continuous and far-reaching efforts made until now by many official commentators to camouflage the very obvious results of modern studies, under cunning dialectical acrobatics orchestrated by apologetic lyricism.

A case in point are the genealogies of Jesus given in Matthew and Luke, which were contradictory and scientifically unacceptable. Examples have been provided which reveal this attitude very clearly. John's Gospel has been given special attention because there are very important differences between it and the other three Gospels, especially with regard to the fact that his Gospel does not describe the institution of the Eucharist: this is not generally known.

The Qur'anic Revelation has a history which is fundamentally different from the other two. It spanned a period of some twenty years and, as soon as it was transmitted to Muhammad by Archangel Gabriel, Believers learned it by heart. It was also written down during Muhammad's life. The last recensions of the Qur'an were effected under Caliph Uthman starting some twelve years after the Prophet's death and finishing twenty–four years after it.

They had the advantage of being checked by people who already knew the text by heart, for they had learned it at the time of the Revelation itself and had subsequently recited it constantly. Since then, we know that the text has been scrupulously preserved. It does not give rise to any problems of authenticity.

The Qur'an follows on from the two Revelations that preceded it and is not only free from contradictions in its narrations, the sign of the various human manipulations to be found in the Gospels, but provides a quality all of its own for those who examine it objectively and in the light of science i.e. its complete agreement with modern scientific data.

What is more, statements are to be found in it (as has been shown) that are connected with science: and yet it is unthinkable that a man of Muhammad's time could have been the author of them. Modern scientific knowledge therefore allows us to understand certain verses of the Qur'an which, until now, it has been impossible to interpret.

The comparison of several Biblical and Qur'anic narrations of the same subject shows the existence of fundamental differences between statements in the former, which are scientifically unacceptable, and declarations in the latter which are in perfect agreement with modern data: this was the case of the Creation and the Flood, for example.

An extremely important complement to the Bible was found in the text of the Qur'an on the subject of the history of the Exodus, where the two texts were very much in agreement with archaeological findings, in the dating of the time of Moses. Besides, there are major differences between the Qur'an and the Bible on the other subjects: they serve to disprove all that has been maintained, without a scrap of evidence, concerning the allegation that Muhammad is supposed to have copied the Bible to produce the text of

the Qur'an.

When a comparative study is made between the statements connected with science to be found in the collection of *Ahadith*, which are attributed to Muhammad but are often of dubious authenticity (although they reflect the beliefs of the period), and the data of a similar kind in the Qur'an, the disparity becomes so obvious that any notion of a common origin is ruled out.

In view of the level of knowledge in Muhammad's day, it is inconceivable that many of the statements in the Qur'an which are connected with science could have been the work of a man. It is, moreover, perfectly legitimate, not only to regard the Qur'an as the expression of a Revelation, but also to award it a very special place, on account of the guarantee of authenticity it provides and the presence in it of scientific statements which, when studied today, appear as a challenge to explanation in human terms.

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