

Texts for Scriptural Reasoning Believers and Unbelievers

The Scriptural Reasoning Society

Deuteronomy 4:15-20

15 Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, 16 beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, 18 the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth. **19 And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.** 20 But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.

טו וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם מְאֹד לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם כִּי לֹא רִאִיתֶם כָּל-תְּמוּנָה בַיּוֹם דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֲלֵיכֶם בְּחַרְבַּ מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ: טז פֶּן-תִּשְׁחַתּוּן וְעִשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת כָּל-סִמָּל תְּבִנִית זָכָר אוֹ נְקֵבָה: יז תְּבִנִית כָּל-בְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ תְּבִנִית כָּל-צִפּוֹר כָּנָף אֲשֶׁר תִּעוֹף בַּשָּׁמַיִם: יח תְּבִנִית כָּל-רֶמֶשׂ בְּאֲדָמָה תְּבִנִית כָּל-דָּגָה אֲשֶׁר-בַּמַּיִם מִתַּחַת לָאָרֶץ: יט וּפְנֵי-תִשָּׂא עֵינֶיךָ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְרִאִיתָ אֶת-הַשָּׁמַשׁ וְאֶת-הַיָּרֵחַ וְאֶת-הַכּוֹכָבִים כֹּל צָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנִדְחַת וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לָהֶם וְעַבַדְתָּם אֲשֶׁר חָלַק יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֹתָם לְכָל הָעַמִּים תַּחַת כָּל-הַשָּׁמַיִם: כ וְאַתֶּם לֹקְחֵי יְהוָה וַיּוֹצֵא אֶתְכֶם מִכּוּר הַבְּרָזִל מִמִּצְרַיִם לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ לְעַם נַחֲלָה בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

Rashi. *Things that the Lord ... has allotted:* to give light to them. Another interpretation: as deities; He did not prevent them from going astray after them but allowed them to err [lit. slip, from the root *hlq*; cf. Ps 36:3] through vain things to drive them out from the world.

Rashbam. *Things that the Lord ... has allotted:* to give light. But according to the fundamental plain meaning [it means] 'which [God] has left for all the peoples to worship,' for He is not concerned about them.

Ibn Ezra. *Things that ... has allotted:* It is a tried and tested matter, that each and every people has a known star and constellation, and similarly there is a constellation for each and every city. But God gave Israel a great advantage, that it should be God who counsels them, and there is no star for them, and behold, Israel is God's own portion.

Ramban. *Things that the Lord your God has allotted to all the peoples:* For each of them has a star and constellation, and above them are the supernal angels, such as that mentioned in Daniel (10:13) 'the prince of the kingdom of Persia,' and 'the prince of the kingdom of Greece,' (ibid., 20) and for this reason they make gods of them and worship them.

Sforno. *Things that the Lord your God has allotted to all the peoples:* He arranged them in a fitting order for the needs of each and every part of the earth according to their differences and the differences of the people in them, and this perceptible order teaches the opposite of the opinions of those who err, for indeed it teaches of necessity that there is some being [who] orders [things] for an end intended by him, who brought them into being in their order so that the end of their existence and order might be attained; for all this cannot, without doubt, be by chance.

Isaiah 19:19-25

19 In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border. 20 It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to the LORD because of oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and deliver them. 21 And the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and

יט בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה בְּתוֹךְ אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמַצֵּבָה אֲצֶל-גְּבוּלָהּ לַיהוָה: כ וְהָיָה לְאוֹת וּלְעֵד לַיהוָה צְבָאוֹת בָּאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כִּי-יִצְעֲקוּ אֶל-יְהוָה מִפְּנֵי לְחָצִים וַיִּשְׁלַח לָהֶם מוֹשִׁיעַ וְרֹב וְהִצִּילָם: כא וְנִוְדַע יְהוָה לְמִצְרַיִם וַיִּדְעוּ מִצְרַיִם אֶת-יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא

the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform them. 22 And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the LORD, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them. 23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. 24 **In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth,** 25 **whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance."**

וְעָבְדוּ זֶבַח וּמִנְחָה וְנִדְרוֹ-גִדְרֵי לַיהוָה
וְשִׁלְמוּ: כִּב וְנִגְגָף יְהוָה אֶת-מִצְרַיִם נִגְגָף
וּרְפֹא וְשָׁבוּ עַד-יְהוָה וְנִעְתַר לָהֶם וּרְפָאֵם:
כַּג בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא תִהְיֶה מְסָלָה מִמִּצְרַיִם אֲשׁוּרָה
וּבֹא-אֲשׁוּר בְּמִצְרַיִם וּמִצְרַיִם בְּאֲשׁוּר וְעָבְדוּ
מִצְרַיִם אֶת-אֲשׁוּר: כַּד בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה
יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁלִישִׁיהָ לְמִצְרַיִם וּלְאֲשׁוּר בְּרֻכָה
בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ: כֹּה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַכּוּ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
יֹאמַר בְּרוּךְ עַמִּי מִצְרַיִם וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי אֲשׁוּר
וּנְחֻלְתִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Amos 9:1-8

1 I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said: "Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people; and those who are left of them I will kill with the sword; not one of them shall flee away; not one of them shall escape. 2 "If they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them; if they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down. 3 If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I will search them out and take them; and if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. 4 And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them; and I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good." 5 The Lord GOD of hosts, he who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell in it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile, and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt; 6 who builds his upper chambers in the heavens and founds his vault upon the earth; who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—the LORD is his name. 7 "Are you not like the Cushites to me, O people of Israel?" declares the LORD. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir? 8 Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the surface of the ground, except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," declares the LORD.

Micah 4:1-5

1 It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, 2 and many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3 He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations far away; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore; 4 but they shall sit every

אֶרְאִיתִי אֶת־אֲדֹנָי נֹצֵב עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיֹּאמֶר
הֵן הַכַּפְתֹּר וַיִּרְעֲשׂוּ הַסְּפִימִים וּבָצַעַם בְּרֹאשׁ
כָּלָם וְאַחֲרֵיתָם בַּחֶרֶב אֶהְרֹג לֹא־יָנוּס לָהֶם נֹס
וְלֹא־יִמָּלֵט לָהֶם פָּלִיט: ב אִם־יַחְתְּרוּ בְשָׂאוֹל
מִשָּׁם יָדֵי תִקְחֶם וְאִם־יַעֲלוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם מִשָּׁם
אֲוִרִידֵם: ג וְאִם־יִחְבְּאוּ בְרֹאשׁ הַכַּרְמֶל מִשָּׁם
אֲחַפֵּשׂ וּלְקַחְתִּים וְאִם־יִסְתְּרוּ מִגִּד עֵינִי
בְּקִרְקַע הַיָּם מִשָּׁם אֲצַוֶּה אֶת־הַנָּחַשׁ וַיִּנְשָׁכֶם:
ד וְאִם־יִלְכּוּ בַשָּׂבִל לִפְנֵי אֵיבֵיהֶם מִשָּׁם אֲצַוֶּה
אֶת־הַחֶרֶב וְהִרְגֶתֶם וְשַׁמְתִּי עֵינֵי עַל־יָהֶם
לְרַעַה וְלֹא לְטוֹבָה: ה וְאֲדַנִּי יְהוָה הַצְּבָאוֹת
הַנוֹגֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ וְתִמּוֹג וְאָבְלוּ כָל־יְוֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
וְעָלְתָה כִּיָּאֵר כָּלָה וְשִׁקְעָה כִּיָּאֵר מְצָרִים:
ו הַבּוֹנֶה בַשָּׁמַיִם מַעְלוֹתָיו [מַעְלוֹתָיו] וְאֲגַדְתּוֹ
עַל־אֶרֶץ יִסְדֶה הַקָּרָא לְמִי־הֵם וַיִּשְׁפְּכֶם
עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ יְהוָה שְׁמוֹ: ז הֲלוֹא כִבְנֵי
כְשִׁיִּים אַתֶּם לִי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נְאֻם־יְהוָה הֲלוֹא
אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵעֵלִיתִי מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
וּפְלִשְׁתִּיִים מִכַּפְתֹּר וְאַרְם מִקִּיר: ח הֲנֵה עֵינֵי
| אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה בַּמַּמְלָכָה הַחַטָּאָה וְהַשְׂמֵדָתִי
אַתָּה מַעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה אָפַס כִּי לֹא הִשְׁמִיד
אֲשַׁמִּיד אֶת־בַּיִת יַעֲקֹב נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

א וְהִיָּה | בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים יְהִיָה הַר בַּיִת־יְהוָה
נְכוֹן בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂאָה הוּא מִגְּבָעוֹת
וְנִהְרֻ עָלָיו עַמִּים: ב וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים
וְאָמְרוּ לָכוּ | וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל־הַר־יְהוָה וְאֶל־בַּיִת
אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וַיּוֹרְנוּ מְדַרְכָּיו וְנִלְכָה בְּאַרְחֹתָיו
כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וְדְבַר־יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם:
ג וְשִׁפְט בֵּין עַמִּים רַבִּים וְהוֹכִיחַ לְגוֹיִם
עֲצָמִים עַד־רְחוֹק וְכַתְּבוּ חֲרָבְתֵיהֶם לְאַתִּים
וְחִנִּיתֵיהֶם לְמִזְמוֹרוֹת לֹא־יִשְׂאוּ גוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי
חֶרֶב וְלֹא־יִלְמְדוּן עוֹד מִלְחָמָה: ד וַיִּשְׁבוּ

man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. 5 For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

Malachi 1:6-14

6 A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?' 7 By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that the LORD's table may be despised. 8 When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts. 9 And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts. 10 Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand. 11 For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name is great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. 12 But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised. 13 But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD. 14 Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock, and vows it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished. For I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name is revered among the nations.

אִישׁ תַּחַת גַּפְנוֹ וְתַחַת תְּאֲנָתוֹ וְאִין מִחְרִיד
כִּי־פִי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת דִּבֶּר׃ הַכִּי כָל־הָעַמִּים
יִלְכוּ אִישׁ בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהָיו וְאֲנַחְנוּ נִלְךְ
בְּשֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

וּבֶן יִכְבֵּד אָב וְעַבְד אֲדֹנָיו וְאִם־אָב אֲנִי אֵיךְ
כְּבוֹדִי וְאִם־אֲדֹנִים אֲנִי אֵיךְ מוֹרְאֵי אָמַר |
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לָכֶם הִכְהַנִּים בּוֹזֵי שְׁמִי
וְאָמַרְתֶּם בְּמִה בְּזִינוּ אֶת־שְׁמִי׃ ז מַגִּישִׁים
עַל־מִזְבְּחִי לֶחֶם מְגָאֵל וְאָמַרְתֶּם בְּמִה גְאֻלְנוּךְ
בְּאֲמַרְכֶם שְׁלַחַן יְהוָה נִבְזָה הוּא׃
ח וְכִי־תִגְשׁוּן עוֹר לְזִבְחַ אֵין רָע וְכִי תִגְיִשׁוּ
פֶסֶח וְחֹלֶה אֵין רָע הִקְרִיבֶהוּ נָא לְפָתְחֶךָ
הִירְצֶךָ אוֹ הִישָׂא פָנֶיךָ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת׃
ט וְעַתָּה חֲלוּ־נָא פְנֵי־אֵל וַיִּחַנְנוּ מִיַּדְכֶם
הֵיתָה זֹאת הִישָׂא מַכְס פָּנִים אָמַר יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת׃ י מִי גַם־בְּכֶם וַיִּסְגֹּר דְלֹתֵים
וְלֹא־תֹאִירוּ מִזְבְּחֵי חַנּוּם אֵין־לִי חֶפֶץ בְּכֶם
אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמִנְחָה לֹא־אֲרַצֶּה מִיַּדְכֶם׃
יא כִּי מִמְזֻרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ וְעַד־מְבוֹאוֹ גְדוֹל שְׁמִי
בְּגוֹיִם וּבְכָל־מְקוֹם מְקַטֵּר מַגִּישׁ לְשְׁמִי
וּמִנְחָה טְהוֹרָה כִּי־גְדוֹל שְׁמִי בְּגוֹיִם אָמַר
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת׃ יב וְאַתֶּם מְחַלְלִים אוֹתוֹ
בְּאֲמַרְכֶם שְׁלַחַן אֲדֹנָי מְגָאֵל הוּא וְנִיבּוֹ נִבְזָה
אָכְלוּ׃ יג וְאָמַרְתֶּם הִנֵּה מִתְלַאֵה וְהִפְחַתֶּם
אוֹתוֹ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְהִבַּאתֶם גְּזוֹל
וְאֶת־הַפֶּסֶח וְאֶת־הַחֹלֶה וְהִבַּאתֶם
אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה הָאֲרָצָה אוֹתָהּ מִיַּדְכֶם אָמַר
יְהוָה׃ יד וְאֲרוּר נוֹכַל וַיֵּשׁ בְּעֶדְרוֹ זָכָר וְנָדָר
וְזִבְחַ מִשְׁחַת לְאֲדֹנָי כִּי מְלַךְ גְּדוֹל אֲנִי אָמַר
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְשְׁמִי נוֹרָא בְּגוֹיִם׃

Commentary of al-Tabari: *The Heifer* 62^{3 4}

62 Indeed, those who believe⁵, and those who follow the Jewish faith⁶, and the Christians⁷ and the Sabians, whomsoever believes in God and the Last Day and works righteousness⁸, their reward⁹ is with their Lord, and there shall be no fear¹⁰ upon them, nor shall they grieve¹¹.

The commentary on the saying of the Exalted One, ﴿Indeed, those who believe, and those who follow the Jewish faith [alladhina badu]﴾. Said Abu Ja'far: As for those who believe, they are those who believe in the Prophet of God in regard to what he has brought them in truth from God, and their faith is in this. Their affirmation of his truth is in accordance with what we have already aforementioned in exposition in this, our book. And as for 'those who follow the Jewish faith', they are the Jews. The meaning of 'follow the Jewish faith' is to follow in observance; for it is said of it *bada*, *al-qawm yabuduna*, *hawardan* and *hadab*. And it is said: Indeed, I heard the Jews are named Jews by reason of their saying, ﴿Indeed are we guided [budna] to you﴾. Narrated to us al-Qasim who said: Recounted al-Husayn, who said, narrated to us Hajjaj, of Ibn Jurayj, who said: Indeed, the Jews are named by reason that they said, ﴿Indeed are we guided [budna] to you﴾.

The commentary on the saying of the Exalted One, ﴿The Christians [nasara]﴾. Said Abu Ja'far: Now *nasara* is the plural, the singular of them is *nasrani*...

تفسير الطبري: سورة البقرة ٦٢

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى
وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ٦٢

الْقَوْلُ فِي تَأْوِيلِ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا﴾ قَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ: أَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَهُمْ الْمُصَدِّقُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فِيمَا أَتَاهُمْ بِهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ مِنْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَإِيمَانَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ: تَصَدِّيقَهُمْ بِهِ عَلَى مَا قَدْ بَيَّنَّاهُ فِيمَا مَضَى مِنْ كِتَابِنَا هَذَا. وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا، فَهُمْ الْيَهُودَ، وَمَعْنَى هَادُوا: تَابُوا، يُقَالُ مِنْهُ: هَادَ الْقَوْمَ يَهُودُونَ هَوْدًا وَهَادَةً. وَقِيلَ: إِنَّمَا سُمِّيَتْ الْيَهُودُ يَهُودَ مِنْ أَجْلِ قَوْلِهِمْ: ﴿إِنَّا هَدُنَا إِلَيْكَ﴾. حَدَّثَنَا الْقَاسِمُ، قَالَ: ثنا الْحُسَيْنُ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي حَجَّاجٌ، عَنْ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، قَالَ: إِنَّمَا سُمِّيَتْ الْيَهُودُ مِنْ أَجْلِ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا: ﴿إِنَّا هَدُنَا إِلَيْكَ﴾.

الْقَوْلُ فِي تَأْوِيلِ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَالنَّصَارَى﴾. قَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ: وَالنَّصَارَى جَمْعٌ، وَاحِدُهُمْ نَصْرَانٌ...

³ Translation by Muhammad Yusuf Al-Hussaini

⁴ *Quran* 2

⁵ *alladhina amanu* lit. 'those who believe'

⁶ *alladhina badu* lit. 'those who practise Judaism' root: *b-d-* 'guidance, deliverance'

⁷ *nasara* acc. sing. *nasrani* 'Nazarene, Christian'

⁸ *salihan* acc. sing. *salih* 'good work' root: *s-l-h* 'reform, repair, righteousness, justice'

⁹ *ajrubum* nom. sing. + 3 pl. gen. pron. 'reward, recompense' root: *a-j-r* 'reward, deserts, hire'

¹⁰ *la khamfa* grammatical form of *nafi' al-jins* (generic negation) *khamf* 'fear' root: *kh-w-f* 'fear, grief'

¹¹ *yabzanuna* 3 pl. imperf. *hazina* 'to be sad, grieve'

Narrated to us al-Hasan bin Yahya, who said: ‘Abd al-Razzaq informed us, saying: Narrated to us Ma‘mar, of Qatada in relation to His saying ﴿Those who say, “We are Christians [nasara]”﴾¹² He said: They are named after a village said to be called Nazareth, where Jesus son of Mary resided...

Narrated to us Yunus bin ‘Abd al-‘Ala, who said: Ibn Wahb informed us, saying: Ibn Zaid said in respect of His saying, ﴿The Sabians﴾ that: The Sabians are a religion among other religions, which used to exist in Mosul province; they say “There is no god but God” but they have no works and no book and no prophet, other than their saying “There is no god but God”. And he said: And they do not believe in the Prophet of God; and for this reason the pagans used to say to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions: These are Sabians; theirs in an imitation of them.

حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ فِي قَوْلِهِ: ﴿الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَى﴾ قَالَ: تَسَمَّوْا بَقَرْيَةٍ يُقَالُ لَهَا نَاصِرَةٌ، كَانَ عَيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَنْزِلُهَا...

وَحَدَّثَنِي يُوسُفُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْأَعْلَى، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ ابْنُ زَيْدٍ فِي قَوْلِهِ: ﴿الصَّابِئُونَ﴾ قَالَ: الصَّابِئُونَ: دِينٌ مِنَ الْأَدْيَانِ، كَانُوا بِحَزِيرَةَ الْمُوصِلِ يَقُولُونَ: «لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ» وَلَيْسَ لَهُمْ عَمَلٌ وَلَا كِتَابٌ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا قَوْلُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. قَالَ: وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ، فَمِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَانَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ يَقُولُونَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابِهِ: هَؤُلَاءِ الصَّابِئُونَ. يُشْبِهُونَهُمْ بِهِمْ...

Commentary of al-Qurtubi: The Spider 46^{3 13}

46 And do not dispute¹⁴ with the People of the Book except by that which is finest¹⁵, except those from among them who do injustice¹⁶; and say, “We believe in that which was sent down¹⁷ to us, and that which was sent down to you, and our god¹⁸ and your god are one, and to Him are we submitters¹⁹”.

The scholars disagree upon the saying of the Exalted One ﴿And do not dispute with the

تفسير القرطبي: سورة العنكبوت

٤٦

وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَقُولُوا آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ٤٦

اِخْتَلَفَ الْعُلَمَاءُ فِي قَوْلِ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ

¹² Quran 5:82

¹³ Quran 29

¹⁴ *la tujadilu* 2 pl. neg. imperat. *jadala* ‘argue, dispute’ root III: *j-d-l* ‘twist, argue, contend’

¹⁵ *absanu* superlat. adj. *hasan* ‘good, fine, beautiful’

¹⁶ *dhalamu* 3 pl. perf. *dhalama* ‘to do injustice, oppression’ root: *dh-l-m* ‘wrongdoing, oppression, injustice’

¹⁷ *anzala* 3 sing. perf. pass. *anzala* ‘to send down’ root IV: *n-z-l* ‘descend, go down’

¹⁸ *ilahuna* nom. sing. + 1 pl. gen. pron. ‘god’ root: *-l-h* ‘god, deity’

¹⁹ *muslimuna* nom. pl. act. part. *aslama* ‘to submit’ root IV: *s-l-m* ‘submission, peace, surrender, harmony’

People of the Book ﴿﴾. And said Mujahid: It is a juridical ruling, for it is permitted to dispute with the People of the Book by that which is finest, in the meaning of invitation to them to God (Almighty and Glorious is He) and His admonition and His proofs and His signs, requesting their response toward faith, rather than toward the path of vulgarity and coarseness...And it is said: The meaning is do not dispute with those who have believed in Muhammad (peace be upon him) from among the People of the Book, such as 'Abd Allah bin Salam and those who believed with him...

And the commentary on His saying: ﴿Except those from among them who do injustice﴾ is that he means by it, he among them who remains in his unbelief, such those who disbelieved and were treacherous from among the Quraydha and the Nadir, and others like them. And the verse is also a juridical ruling; for it is said: This verse is abrogated by the verse of fighting, in the saying of the Exalted One: ﴿Fight those who do not believe in God²⁰﴾. Qatada said ﴿Except those from among them who do injustice﴾ that is to say, they have created a son for God, and they say ﴿The hand of God is tied²¹﴾ ﴿And indeed God is impoverished²²﴾, and these are the polytheists who engage in war, and do not pay the *jizya*, so be victorious over them. Nahhas and others said: Those who say it is abrogated have argued with evidence that the verse is Makkan, and there was not in that time the obligation of fighting, nor the demanding of *jizya*, nor things other than that...

And al-Bukhari narrated of Abu Hurayra, who said: The People of the Book read the Torah in Hebrew and explain it in Arabic to the People of Islam; so the Prophet of God said: (Do not believe the People of the Book, and do not believe them, but say, "We believe in that which was sent down to us and that which was sent down to you"). And narrated Abd Allah bin Mas'ud that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Do not ask the People of the Book about anything, for indeed they will not guide you, but have strayed either by belying the truth, or by believing falsehood).

الْكِتَابِ ﴿﴾ فَقَالَ مُجَاهِدٌ: هِيَ مُحْكَمَةٌ فَيُجُوزُ مُجَادَلَةُ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ عَلَى مَعْنَى الدُّعَاءِ لَهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَالتَّنْبِيهِ عَلَى حُجَجِهِ وَآيَاتِهِ، رَجَاءً إِجَابَتِهِمْ إِلَى الْإِيمَانِ لَا عَلَى طَرِيقِ الْإِغْلَاطِ وَالْمُخَاشَنَةِ... وَقِيلَ: الْمَعْنَى لَا تُجَادِلُوا مَنْ آمَنَ بِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كَعَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سَلَامٍ وَمَنْ آمَنَ مَعَهُ...

وَقَوْلُهُ عَلَى هَذَا التَّأْوِيلِ: ﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا﴾ يُرِيدُ بِهِ مَنْ بَقِيَ عَلَى كُفْرِهِ مِنْهُمْ كَمَنْ كَفَرَ وَغَدَرَ مِنْ قُرَيْظَةَ وَالتَّضْيِيرِ وَغَيْرِهِمْ وَالآيَةُ عَلَى هَذَا أَيْضًا مُحْكَمَةٌ وَقِيلَ: هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ مَنْسُوخَةٌ بِآيَةِ الْقِتَالِ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿فَاتْلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ﴾ قَالَهُ قَتَادَةُ ﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا﴾ أَي جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ وَلَدًا وَقَالُوا: ﴿يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُوبَةٌ﴾ ﴿وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ فَاقِرٌ﴾ فَهَؤُلَاءِ الْمُشْرِكُونَ الَّذِينَ نَصَبُوا الْحَرْبَ وَلَمْ يُؤَدُّوا الْجِزْيَةَ فَانْتَصَرُوا مِنْهُمْ قَالَ النَّحَّاسُ وَغَيْرُهُ: مَنْ قَالَ هِيَ مَنْسُوخَةٌ اِحْتِجَّ بِأَنَّ الْآيَةَ مَكِّيَّةٌ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ فِي ذَلِكَ الْوَقْتِ قِتَالٌ مَفْرُوضٌ وَلَا طَلَبُ جِزْيَةٍ وَلَا غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ...

رَوَى الْبُخَارِيُّ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: كَانَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ يَفْرَعُونَ التَّوْرَةَ بِالْعِبْرَانِيَّةِ وَيُفَسِّرُونَهَا بِالْعَرَبِيَّةِ لِأَهْلِ الْإِسْلَامِ؛ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: (لَا تُصَدِّقُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا تُكذِّبُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمْ) وَرَوَى عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: (لَا تَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ عَنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَهْدُواكُمْ وَقَدْ ضَلُّوا إِمَّا أَنْ تُكذِّبُوا بِحَقٍّ وَإِمَّا أَنْ تُصَدِّقُوا بِبَاطِلٍ)

²⁰ Quran 9:29

²¹ Quran 5:64

²² Quran 3:181

Commentary of Ibn Kathir: *The Heifer* 135-136^{3 4}

135 And they say, “Become Jews²³ or Christians²⁴ that you be guided”²⁵; say, “Rather, the religion²⁶ of Abraham, the upright²⁷; he was not one of the polytheists”.

136 Say, “We believe in God, and what was sent down²⁸ to us, and what was sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Tribes²⁹, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and what was given to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make distinction³⁰ between any one of them; and to Him are we submitters³¹”.

Said Muhammad bin Ishaq: Narrated to us Muhammad bin Abi Muhammad, narrated to us Sa’id bin Jubayr of ‘Ikrima of Ibn ‘Abbas, who said: Said ‘Abd Allah bin Suriya al-‘Awr to the Prophet of God (peace be upon him), “There is no guidance except that which we are upon, so follow us, O Muhammad, that you be guided”. And the Christians said likewise; so God (Almighty and Glorious is He) sent down the verse ﴿And they say, “Become Jews or Christians that you be guided”>; say, “Rather the religion of Abraham, the upright [*hanifan*]﴾ that is to say, we do not want that which you invite us to of Judaism and Christianity, but rather we follow ﴿The religion of Abraham, the upright﴾, that is to say, upon the straight path. And said Muhammad bin Ka’b al-Qurduhubi and ‘Isa Ibn

²³ *hudan* acc. pl. *yahudi* ‘Jew’

²⁴ *nasara* acc. pl. *nasrani* ‘Nazarene, Christian’

²⁵ *tabtadu* 2 pl. juss. *ibtada* ‘to be guided’ root VIII: *b-d-* ‘guidance, grace’ – *shart* (conditional) grammatical form

²⁶ *millata* acc. sing. *milla* ‘community, religion’ root: *m-l-l* ‘community, sect, confession, guild’

²⁷ *hanifan* acc. sing. *hanif* ‘upright, righteous, monotheist believer’

²⁸ *anzala* 3 sing. perf. pass. *anzala* ‘to send down’ root IV: *n-z-l* ‘descend, go down’

²⁹ *asbat* gen. pl. *sabt* ‘tribe, clan’

³⁰ *nufarriq* 1 pl. imperf. *farraqa* ‘to divide, make difference, separate’ root II: *f-r-q* ‘division, gap, separation, difference’

³¹ *muslimuna* nom. pl. act. part. *aslama* ‘to submit’ root IV: *s-l-m* ‘submission, peace, surrender, harmony’

تفسير ابن كثير: سورة البقرة

١٣٥-١٣٦

وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ

بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ

الْمُشْرِكِينَ ١٣٥

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ

إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ

وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى وَمَا

أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ

مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ١٣٦

قَالَ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ: حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَبِي مُحَمَّدٍ حَدَّثَنِي سَعِيدُ بْنُ جُبَيْرٍ أَوْ عِكْرِمَةَ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ صُورِيًّا الْأَعْوَرُ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَا الْهُدَى إِلَّا مَا نَحْنُ عَلَيْهِ فَاتَّبِعْنَا يَا مُحَمَّدُ تَهْتَدِ». وَقَالَتْ النَّصَارَى مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ﴿وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا وَقَوْلُهُ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا﴾ أَيُّ لَأُتْرِيدَ مَا دَعَوْتُمُونَا إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الْيَهُودِيَّةِ وَالنَّصْرَانِيَّةِ بَلْ تَتَّبِعِ ﴿مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا﴾ أَيُّ مُسْتَقِيمًا قَالَهُ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ كَعْبٍ الْقُرْظِيُّ وَعِيسَى بْنُ جَارِيَةَ وَقَالَ خُصَيْفُ

Jariya, and said Khusayr of Mujahid with sincerity, and narrated Ali bin Abi Talha of Ibn ‘Abbas on pilgrimage, and likewise it was narrated of al-Hasan and al-Dahhak and ‘Atiyya and Suddiy, and said Abu al-‘Aliyya: The upright [*hanif*] is the one who meets the House in prayer and looks to his pilgrimage to it, if he has means so to be able. And said Mujahid and al-Rabi’ bin Anas: Upright [*hanifan*] is to say ‘following in observance’; and said Abu Qilaba: The upright [*hanif*] is the one who believes in the prophets – all of them, from the first of them to the last of them. And said Qatada: *Hanifiyya* is the witness, ‘There is no god but God’ entering into that the guarding in honour, of mothers and daughters and maternal aunts and paternal aunts; and what God has forbidden; and the circumcision...

And said Abu al-‘Aliyya and Rabi’ and Qatada: The Tribes [*asbat*] are the sons of Jacob; twelve men each man of whom begat a community of people, and they are called The Tribes. And al-Khalil bin Ahmad and others said: The Tribes among the Children of Israel are like the tribes among the Children of Ishmael...

Said al-Zajaj: And it will make this clear to you in what Muhammad bin Ja’far narrated to us, saying, narrated to us Abu Nujayd al-Daqaq, narrated to us al-Aswad bin ‘Amir, narrated to us Isra’il of Simak of ‘Ikrima of Ibn ‘Abbas, who said: All the prophets are from the Children of Israel except ten: Noah, Hud, Salih, Shuaib, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Ishmael and Muhammad (peace be upon them)...

And said Ibn Abi Hatim: Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Mus’ab al-Suriy informed us, that Mu’amil informed us, that ‘Ubayd Allah bin Abi Hamid informed us of Abu al-Malih, of Ma’qil bin Yasar, who said: The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) said (Believe in the Torah and the Psalms and the Gospel, but the Quran will guide you).

عَنْ مُجَاهِدٍ مُخْلِصًا وَرَوَى عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَلْحَةَ عَنْ
إِبْنِ عَبَّاسٍ حَاجًّا وَكَذَا رُوِيَ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ وَالضَّحَّاكِ
وَعَطِيَّةِ وَالسُّدِّيِّ وَقَالَ أَبُو الْعَالِيَةِ: الْحَنِيفُ الَّذِي
يَسْتَقْبِلُ الْبَيْتَ بِصَلَاتِهِ وَيَرَى أَنَّ حَجَّهَ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ
اسْتِطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَقَالَ مُجَاهِدٌ وَالرَّبِيعُ بْنُ أَنَسٍ:
حَنِيفًا أَيْ مُتَّبِعًا وَقَالَ أَبُو قِلَابَةَ: الْحَنِيفُ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ
بِالرُّسُلِ كُلِّهِمْ مِنْ أَوْلَاهُمْ إِلَى آخِرِهِمْ وَقَالَ قَتَادَةُ:
الْحَنِيفِيَّةُ شَهَادَةٌ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَدْخُلُ فِيهَا تَحْرِيمُ
الْأُمَّهَاتِ وَالْبَنَاتِ وَالْحَالَاتِ وَالْعَمَّاتِ وَمَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ
عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَالْحَيْثَانَ...

وَقَالَ أَبُو الْعَالِيَةِ وَالرَّبِيعُ وَقَتَادَةُ: الْأَسْبَاطُ بَنُو يَعْقُوبَ
إِنَّا عَشْرَ رَجُلًا وَلَدَ كُلُّ رَجُلٍ مِنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ
فَسُمُّوا الْأَسْبَاطُ وَقَالَ الْخَلِيلُ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ وَعَبْدُ
الْأَسْبَاطِ فِي بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ كَالْقَبَائِلِ فِي بَنِي
إِسْمَاعِيلَ...

قَالَ الرَّجَّاجُ: وَبَيَّنَّ لَكَ هَذَا مَا حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ
جَعْفَرِ الْأَنْبَارِيِّ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُجَيْدٍ الدَّقَّاقُ حَدَّثَنَا الْأَسْوَدُ
بْنُ عَامِرٍ حَدَّثَنَا إِسْرَائِيلُ عَنْ سِمَاكٍ عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ عَنْ
إِبْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: كُلُّ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَّا عَشْرَةَ
نُوحَ وَهُودَ وَصَالِحَ وَشُعَيْبَ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَمُحَمَّدَ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ
وَالسَّلَامُ...

وَقَالَ ابْنُ أَبِي حَاتِمٍ: أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ
مُصْعَبِ الصُّورِيِّ أَخْبَرَنَا مُؤَمَّلٌ أَخْبَرَنَا عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ
أَبِي حُمَيْدٍ عَنْ أَبِي الْمَلِيحِ عَنْ مَعْقِلِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ قَالَ:
قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (آمِنُوا بِالْتَّوْرَةِ
وَالزَّبُورِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَلْيَسَعَكُمْ الْقُرْآنُ).

Commentary of the Two
Jalals: *The House of Imran*
67-68³³²

67 Abraham was not a Jew³³ and not a Christian³⁴; but he was upright³⁵, submitting³⁶, and was not of the polytheists³⁷.

68 Indeed, those who are nearest³⁸ among people to Abraham are those who followed him and this prophet, and those who believe; and God is guardian³⁹ of the believers.

﴿Abraham was not a Jew and not a Christian, but he was upright [*hanifan*] tending away from all the religions to the sure religion, ﴿Submitting [*musliman*]﴾ monotheist ﴿And was not of the polytheists [*musbrikina*]﴾. ﴿Indeed, those who are nearest among people﴾ the most true of them ﴿To Abraham are those who followed him﴾ in his time ﴿And this prophet﴾ Muhammad by reason of his agreement with the greatest number of his ordinances ﴿And those who believe﴾ from his community, they are those of whom it is appropriate to say, “We are upon his religion not you” ﴿And God is guardian of the believers﴾ their Helper and Protector.

³² *Quran* 3

³³ *yabudiyan* acc. sing. *yabudi* ‘Jew’

³⁴ *nasraniyan* acc. sing. *nasrani* ‘Nazarene, Christian’

³⁵ *hanifan* acc. sing. *hanif* ‘upright, righteous, monotheist believer’

³⁶ *musliman* acc. sing. act. part. *aslama* ‘to submit’ root IV: *s-l-m* ‘submission, peace, surrender, harmony’

³⁷ *musbrikina* gen. pl. act. part. *asbraka* ‘to join in partnership, to associate as equal [with God]’ root: *sh-r-k* ‘association, partnership, company’

³⁸ *awla* superlat. adj. *amwal* ‘first’ root: *’-w-l* ‘first, foremost’

³⁹ *waly* nom. sing. ‘friend, guardian, protector, tribal patron’ root: *w-l-y* ‘guardianship, friendship, patronage, commonwealth’

تفسير الجلالين: سورة آل عمران

٦٧-٦٨

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ
كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ

الْمُشْرِكِينَ ٦٧

إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ
وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ

الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٦٨

﴿مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا﴾ مَائِلًا عَنِ الْأَدْيَانِ كُلِّهَا إِلَى الدِّينِ الْقِيَمِ ﴿مُسْلِمًا﴾ مُوَحَّدًا ﴿وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾. ﴿إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ﴾ أَحَقَّهُمْ ﴿بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ﴾ فِي زَمَانِهِ ﴿وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ﴾ مُحَمَّدٌ لِمُؤَافَقَتِهِ لَهُ فِي أَكْثَرِ شَرَعِهِ ﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا﴾ مِنْ أُمَّتِهِ فَهُمْ الَّذِينَ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ يَقُولُوا نَحْنُ عَلَى دِينِهِ لَا أَنْتُمْ ﴿وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ نَاصِرِهِمْ وَحَافِظِهِمْ

سورة المائدة ٤٨

The Table 48^{3 40}

48 We have sent down to you the Book in truth, verifying⁴¹ that which is between his hands⁴² from the Book, and a safeguard⁴³ upon it; so judge between them by what God has sent down, and do not follow their fancies away from what has come to you of the truth; to each of you have We made a law⁴⁴ and a way⁴⁵; and had God willed He would have made you one people⁴⁶; but to test you in what He has given you; so compete⁴⁷ in good things⁴⁸; to God is the return of you all, and He will inform⁴⁹ you of that in which you were wont to differ⁵⁰.

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ
فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ
أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا
مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي
مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ
مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ
تَخْتَلِفُونَ ٤٨

⁴⁰ *Quran* 5

⁴¹ *musaddiqan* statitive *saddaqa* 'to verify, realise'
root II: *s-d-q* 'truth, genuine, just, friend'

⁴² ie. right in front of him

⁴³ *mubayminan* statitive *baymana* 'to protect,
safeguard' root: *b-y-m-n* 'safeguard, control'

⁴⁴ *shir'atan* acc. sing. *shir'a* 'law, rule' root: *sb-r-*
'rule, law, road'

⁴⁵ *minbajan* acc. sing. *minhaj* 'path, programme,
way' root: *n-b-j* 'discipline, method, formulation'

⁴⁶ *ummatan* acc. sing. *umma* 'community, people,
nation, religion' root: *'m-m* 'nation, mother'

⁴⁷ *istabaqu* 2 pl. imperat. *istabaqa* 'compete, strive
in a race, contend' root X: *s-b-q* 'advance,
precedence'

⁴⁸ *khayrati* acc. pl. *khayra* 'good thing, virtue'
root: *kb-y-r* 'good, pleasant, happiness'

⁴⁹ *yunabi'ukum* 3 sing. imperf. + 2 pl. acc. pron.
anba 'to give news, inform' root: *n-b-* 'report,
announce'

⁵⁰ *takhtalifuna* 2 pl. imperf. *ikhtalafa* 'to differ,
dispute' root VIII: *kb-l-f* 'difference, behind,
descendant'

Quran 109: The Unbelievers

الكافرون

1 Say : O ye that reject Faith!

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ ١

2 I worship not that which ye worship,

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ٢

3 Nor will ye worship that which I worship.

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ٣

4 And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship,

وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ ٤

5 Nor will ye worship that which I worship.

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ٥

6 To you be your Way, and to me mine.

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ٦

From the Commentary of Ibn Kathir

It has been confirmed in Sahih Muslim from Jabir that the Messenger of Allah recited this Surah (Al-Kafirun) and

[قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ]

(Say: "He is Allah One.") (112:1) in the two Rak`ahs of Tawaf. It is also recorded in Sahih Muslim in a Hadith of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah recited these two Surahs in the two Rak`ahs (optional prayer) of the Morning prayer. Imam Ahmad recorded from Ibn `Umar that the Messenger of Allah recited in the two Rak`ahs before the Morning prayer and the two Rak`ahs after the Sunset prayer on approximately ten or twenty different occasions,

[قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ]

(Say: "O Al-Kafirun!") and

[قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ]

(Say: " He is Allah One.") (112:1) Ahmad also recorded that Ibn `Umar said, "I watched the Prophet twenty-four or twenty-five times reciting in the two Rak`ahs before the Morning prayer and the two Rak`ahs after the Sunset prayer,

[قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ]

(Say: "O Al-Kafirun!") and

[قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ]

(Say: "He is Allah One.") (112:1)" Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Umar said, "I watched the Prophet for a month and he would recite in the two Rak'ahs before the Morning prayer,

[قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ]

(Say: "O Al-Kafirun.") and

[قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ]

(Say: "He is Allah One.") (112:1)" This was also recorded by At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and An-Nasa'i. At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan." It has already been mentioned previously in a Hadith that it (Surat Al-Kafirun) is equivalent to a fourth of the Qur'an and Az-Zalzalah is equivalent to a fourth of the Qur'an.

[بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

[قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ- لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ- وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ- وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ- وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ- لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ-]

(1. Say: "O disbelievers!") (2. "I worship not that which you worship.") (3. "Nor will you worship whom I worship.") (4. "And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping.") (5. "Nor will you worship that which I worship.") (6. "To you be your religion, and to me my religion.")

This Surah is the Surah of disavowal from the deeds of the idolators. It commands a complete disavowal of that. Allah's statement,

[قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ]

(Say: "O disbelievers!") includes every disbeliever on the face of the earth, however, this statement is particularly directed towards the disbelievers of the Quraysh. It has been said that in their ignorance they invited the Messenger of Allah to worship their idols for a year and they would (in turn) worship his God for a year. Therefore, Allah revealed this Surah and in it

. Allah said,

[لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ]

(I worship not that which you worship.) meaning, statues and rival gods.

[وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ]

(Nor will you worship whom I worship.) and He is Allah Alone, Who has no partner. So the word Ma (what) here means Man (who). Then Allah says,

[وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَّا أَعْبُدُ]

(And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping. Nor will you worship whom I worship.) meaning, 'I do not worship according to your worship, which means that I do not go along with it or follow it. I only worship Allah in the manner in which He loves and is pleased with.' Thus, Allah says,

[وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَّا أَعْبُدُ]

(Nor will you worship whom I worship.) meaning, 'you do not follow the commands of Allah and His Legislation in His worship. Rather, you have invented something out of the promptings of your own souls.' This is as Allah says,

[إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ الْهُدَىٰ]

(They follow but a guess and that which they themselves desire, whereas there has surely come to them the guidance from their Lord!) (53:23) Therefore, the disavowal is from all of what they are involved. For certainly the worshipper must have a god whom he worships and set acts of worship that he follows to get to him. So the Messenger and his followers worship Allah according to what He has legislated. This is why the statement of Islam is "There is no God worthy of being worshipped except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." This means that there is no (true) object of worship except Allah and there is no path to Him (i.e., way of worshipping Him) other than that which the Messenger came with. The idolators worship other than Allah, with acts of worship that Allah has not allowed. This is why the Messenger said to them,

[لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ]

(To you be your religion, and to me my religion.) This is similar to Allah's statement,

[وَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ لِي عَمَلِي وَلَكُمْ عَمَلُكُمْ أَنْتُمْ بَرِيءُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَأَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ]

(And if they belie you, say: "For me are my deeds and for you are your deeds! You are innocent of what I do, and I am innocent of what you do!") (10:41) and He said,

[لَنَا أَعْمَلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَلُكُمْ]

(To us our deeds, and to you your deeds.) (28:55) Al-Bukhari said, "It has been said,

[لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ]

(To you be your religion.) means disbelief.

[وَلِيَ دِينِ]

(and to me my religion.) means, Islam. This is the end of the Tafsir of Surat Qul ya Ayyuhal-Kafirun.

Matthew 15.21-28¹

¹ Καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἐκεῖθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὰ μέρη Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος ²² καὶ ἰδοὺ γυνὴ Χαναναία ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρίων ἐκείνων ἐξεληθοῦσα ἔκραζεν λέγουσα Ἐλέησόν με κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ· ἡ θυγάτηρ μου κακῶς δαιμονίζεται ²³ ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῇ λόγον καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἠρώτουν αὐτὸν λέγοντες Ἀπόλυσον αὐτήν ὅτι κράζει ὀπισθεν ἡμῶν ²⁴ ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν Οὐκ ἀπεστάλην εἰ μὴ εἰς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ἰσραὴλ ²⁵ ἡ δὲ ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγουσα Κύριε βοήθει μοι ²⁶ ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν Οὐκ ἔστιν καλὸν λαβεῖν τὸν ἄρτον τῶν τέκνων καὶ βαλεῖν τοῖς κυναρίοις ²⁷ ἡ δὲ εἶπεν Ναὶ κύριε καὶ [γὰρ] τὰ κυνάρια ἐσθίει ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν ²⁸ τότε ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῇ Ὡ γύναι μεγάλη σου ἡ πίστις· γενηθήτω σοι ὡς θέλεις καὶ ἰάθη ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτῆς ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης

21 Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.'² ²⁴ He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' ²⁶ He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.'³ ²⁷ She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

Matthew 28.16-20⁴

¹⁶ Οἱ δὲ ἑνδεκα μαθηταὶ ἐπορεύθησαν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν εἰς τὸ ὄρος οὗ ἐτάξατο αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ¹⁷ καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν προσεκύνησαν οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν ¹⁸ καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς λέγων Ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς ¹⁹ πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ²⁰ διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν· καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ⁵ ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some

¹ Annotated notes by David Jackson; texts selected by Anders Bergquist; English translation from the New Revised Standard Version.

² A dismissive attitude seems typical of the disciples: compare Matt 19.13 (children), Mark 6.36 (a crowd, late in the day), and Luke 9.54 (a hostile Samaritan village).

³ The language seems insulting, but the word for 'dogs' can imply household pets rather than street scavengers. This is the way the woman understands it, and her witty reply shows that she has not taken offence at the saying. It is possible to interpret Jesus' words as a playful teasing out of her faith and persistence. In spite of his stated mission, and in contrast to the disciples, Jesus is willing to aid a person of another faith and culture.

⁴ Annotated notes by David Jackson; texts selected by Anders Bergquist; English translation from the New Revised Standard Version.

⁵ This is a post-resurrection story. Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the mission has changed: it is no longer only to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel', but is now universal.

doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.'⁶ 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,⁷ 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.⁸ And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.⁹ ¹⁰

Acts 17.16-34¹¹

¹⁶ Ἐν δὲ ταῖς Ἀθήναις ἐκδεχομένου αὐτοῦ τοῦ Παύλου παρωξύνετο τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ θεωροῦντος κατείδωλον οὖσαν τὴν πόλιν ¹⁷ διελέγετο μὲν οὖν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ τοῖς σεβομένοις καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ κατὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν πρὸς τοὺς παρατυγχάνοντας ¹⁸ τινὲς δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἐπικουρείων καὶ Στοϊκῶν φιλοσόφων συνέβαλλον αὐτῷ καὶ τινες ἔλεγον Τί ἂν θέλοι ὁ σπερμολόγος οὗτος λέγειν οἱ δὲ Ἑένων δαιμονίων δοκεῖ καταγγελεὺς εἶναι ὅτι τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν εὐηγγελίζετο ¹⁹ ἐπιλαβόμενοί δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον Πάγον ἤγαγον λέγοντες Δυναμέθα γινῶναι τίς ἢ καινὴ αὕτη [ἢ] ὑπὸ σοῦ λαλουμένη διδαχὴ ²⁰ ξενίζοντα γὰρ τινα εἰσφέρεις εἰς τὰς ἀκοὰς ἡμῶν· βουλόμεθα οὖν γινῶναι τίνα θέλει ταῦτα εἶναι ²¹ Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ πάντες καὶ οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες ξένοι εἰς οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἠυκαίρουν ἢ λέγειν τι ἢ ἀκούειν τι καινότερον ²² Σταθεῖς δὲ Παῦλος ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἄρειου Πάγου ἔφη Ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι κατὰ πάντα ὡς δεισιδαιμονεστέρους ὑμᾶς θεωρῶ ²³ διερχόμενος γὰρ καὶ ἀναθεωρῶν τὰ σεβάσματα ὑμῶν εὗρον καὶ βωμὸν ἐν ᾧ ἐπεγέγραπτο Ἄγνώστῳ θεῷ ὃ οὖν ἀγνοοῦντες εὐσεβεῖτε τοῦτο ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν ²⁴ ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ οὗτος οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὑπάρχων κύριος οὐκ ἐν χειροποιήτοις ναοῖς κατοικεῖ ²⁵ οὐδὲ ὑπὸ χειρῶν ἀνθρωπίνων θεραπεύεται προσδεόμενός τινος αὐτὸς διδοὺς πᾶσιν ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν καὶ τὰ πάντα· ²⁶ ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνὸς πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντὸς προσώπου τῆς γῆς ὀρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν ²⁷ ζητεῖν τὸν θεὸν εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν καὶ εὔροιεν καὶ γε οὐ μακρὰν ἀπὸ ἑνὸς ἐκάστου ἡμῶν ὑπάρχοντα ²⁸ Ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν ὡς καὶ τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασιν Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν ²⁹ γένος οὖν ὑπάρχοντες τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ὀφείλομεν νομίζειν χρυσῷ ἢ ἀργύρῳ ἢ λίθῳ χαράγματι τέχνης καὶ ἐνθυμήσεως ἀνθρώπου τὸ θεῖον εἶναι ὅμοιον ³⁰ τοὺς μὲν οὖν χρόνους τῆς ἀγνοίας ὑπεριδὼν ὁ θεὸς τὰ νῦν ἀπαγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πάντας πανταχοῦ μετανοεῖν ³¹ καθότι ἔστησεν ἡμέραν ἐν ἣ ἕλκει κρίνειν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισεν πίστιν παρασχῶν πᾶσιν ἀναστήσας αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ³² Ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν οἱ μὲν ἐχλεύαζον οἱ δὲ εἶπαν Ἀκουσόμεθά σου περὶ τούτου καὶ πάλιν ³³ οὕτως ὁ Παῦλος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν

⁶ The mission of conversion is universal because of the authority claimed.

⁷ It is universal in geographical scope.

⁸ It is universal in terms of the teaching to be given and obeyed.

⁹ It is universal in relation to time.

¹⁰ Some of the more sceptical Christian scholars hold that this passage does not contain the words of Jesus, but that it is a reading back into Matthew's Gospel of the beliefs and practices of the early Church. This conclusion rests upon critical arguments about the likelihood of Jesus' expressing himself in the way recorded. There is no manuscript evidence in favour of omitting the verses and so it can be argued that they formed part of Matthew's Gospel from the beginning. They have formed part of the Scriptures from the earliest times for which evidence exists.

¹¹ Annotated notes by David Jackson; texts selected by Anders Bergquist; English translation from the New Revised Standard Version. In this passage we see how Paul handled the mission of conversion when speaking to educated Greeks. In other parts of the Acts he adopts a very different approach towards Jews and those attending synagogues.

³⁴ τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες κολληθέντες αὐτῷ ἐπίστευσαν ἐν οἷς καὶ Διονύσιος [ὁ] Ἄρεοπαγίτης καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις καὶ ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς

16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons¹² and also in the market-place¹³ every day with those who happened to be there. 18 Also some Epicurean¹⁴ and Stoic¹⁵ philosophers debated with him. Some said, 'What does this babbler¹⁶ want to say?' Others said, 'He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign deities.' (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.)¹⁷ 19 So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus¹⁸ and asked him, 'May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means.' 21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new. 22 Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. 23 For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god."¹⁹ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all

¹² 'devout persons' / 'godfearers' = Gentiles who accepted the ethical monotheism of Judaism and who attended the synagogue but did not fully convert.

¹³ 'market-place' = civic centre.

¹⁴ Epicurus (341-270 BC) founded an ethical system in which pleasure was the chief objective in life – the pleasure above all others being a life of tranquillity, free from pain, disturbing passions, and superstitious fears. Epicureans held that an ideal life would be to lead a simple existence in a garden with a few close friends. They conceived of the gods as material, composed of the finest atoms, living in eternal calm and having nothing at all to do with the life of mortals.

¹⁵ Zeno (340-265 BC) was claimed as founder by the Stoics. They took their name from the 'stoa' (colonnade) in Athens where he taught. For the Stoics, the highest principle in life was 'reason', and so the rational faculty in human beings should always be supreme over the emotional faculty. Great value was placed on individual self-sufficiency, guided by rationality. If life could no longer be supported with dignity, then it was proper to commit suicide. Their emphasis on reason, individuality and dignity led to a good deal of individual pride. God was material (as with the Epicureans) and was held to be the rational faculty of the universe – he was the world-soul, and so the Stoic world-view was pantheistic.

¹⁶ 'babblers' – by derivation the word means 'seed-picker'; it was used of a gutter-sparrow, then came to mean a worthless person who picked up scraps in the market-place, then (as here) a person who picks up scraps of learning here and there but cannot give a coherent account of them.

¹⁷ 'foreign deities... resurrection' – 'resurrection' = 'anastasis'. It seems that some people who only half-listened thought that Anastasis was a foreign goddess.

¹⁸ The Council of the Areopagus had authority in religious matters, and seems to have had the power to appoint public lecturers and to exercise some control over them in the interests of public order.

¹⁹ Legend has it that during a plague in the 6th century BC the Athenians sent for Epimenides, a Cretan religious philosopher and poet. He advised them to make sacrifices at various points to 'the (unnamed) appropriate god', and in commemoration of the event altars to 'unnamed gods' were still found centuries later. Epimenides was the author of the quotation which Paul uses in verse 28 below.

things. 26 From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, 27 so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him – though indeed he is not far from each one of us. 28 For “In him we live and move and have our being”,²⁰ as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.”²¹ 29 Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. 30 While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.’ 32 When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed,²² but others said, ‘We will hear you again about this.’ 33 At that point Paul left them. 34 But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

1 Peter 2.11-17 ²³

¹¹ Ἀγαπητοὶ παρακαλῶ ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν σαρκικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν αἵτινες στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς· ¹² τὴν ἀναστροφὴν ὑμῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἔχοντες καλὴν ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καταλαλοῦσιν ὑμῶν ὡς κακοποιῶν ἐκ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων ἐποπτεύοντες δοξάσωσιν τὸν θεὸν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς ¹³ Ὑποτάγητε πάσῃ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κτίσει διὰ τὸν κύριον εἴτε βασιλεῖ ὡς ὑπερέχοντι ¹⁴ εἴτε ἡγεμόσιν ὡς δι’ αὐτοῦ πεμπομένοις εἰς ἐκδίκησιν κακοποιῶν ἔπαινον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν· ¹⁵ ὅτι οὕτως ἐστὶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀγαθοποιῶντας φιμοῦν τὴν τῶν ἀφρόνων ἀνθρώπων ἀγνωσίαν ¹⁶ ὡς ἐλεύθεροι καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐπικάλυμμα ἔχοντες τῆς κακίας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἀλλ’ ὡς θεοῦ δοῦλοι ¹⁷ πάντα τιμῆσατε τὴν ἀδελφότητα ἀγαπάτε τὸν θεὸν φοβεῖσθε τὸν βασιλέα τιμᾶτε

11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the lusts of the flesh that war against the soul. 12 Conduct yourselves honourably among

²⁰ Paul apparently quotes from a poem by Epimenides the Cretan (see the previous note).

²¹ This is a quotation from the poet Aratus, and there is a parallel phrase found in the poet Cleanthes. Aratus and Cleanthes were both Stoics. There is evidence that Jewish proselytising missionaries studied pagan culture in Jerusalem in order to preach more effectively abroad, and Paul may have had such literary references in his mind since the days of his youthful studies under Gamaliel (Acts 22.3).

²² Myths told that the city’s patron goddess, Athena, had inaugurated the Court of the Areopagus in the presence of the god Apollo, and the Athenian dramatist Aeschylus represents Apollo as saying on that very occasion, “Once a man has died and the dust has sucked up his blood, there is no resurrection”. Philosophical Greeks were sometimes perfectly happy to believe in the immortality of the soul, but rejected as crude and barbaric the idea of resuscitation of dead bodies.

²³ Annotated notes by David Jackson; texts selected by Anders Bergquist; English translation from the New Revised Standard Version.

the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers,²⁴ they may see your honourable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.

13 For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, 14 or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. 16 As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. Honour everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honour the emperor.

²⁴ Malign rumours were spread about Christians from very early times – e.g. accusations of cannibalism (because of a garbled misunderstanding of the Eucharist) and of incest (because the believers called one another 'brother' and 'sister', and so husbands and wives would also be brothers and sisters).