

March 3, 2015 ©Homer Kizer

[Printable, viewable format to see Greek or Hebrew characters](#)

Common Greetings — *Separated from Righteousness*

1.

The Islamic State has brought public attention to a common problem inherent to *people of the Book*, that of interpretation. For despite a chorus of Islamic scholars claiming that the Islamic State cherry picks passages from the Qur'an that supports its "reading" of Mohammad's visions and willfully ignores passages that argue against violence, all that the Islamic State's critics establish is that the Qur'an, like the Bible, is a self-contradictory text.

The Qur'an is a human book, written by human authors, and contains evidence of its human composition in its contradictions. But then, what is new? Where is there revelation in establishing that the Qur'an is not the divine word of God, but is somewhere between being a fully human composition and being a record of angelic visions that Mohammad received ... the first thing that should jump out at the person circumcised of heart is that even if the Qur'an were a faithful account of visions Mohammad received, the Qur'an would not be the word of God. Cannot be the word of God. Cannot be because it doesn't come from God, but from an angel. For God has no need for an angel to deliver a message for Him: He can deliver His own messages through inserting into the person He chooses to speak for Him "a" [indirect article] or "the" [direct article] spirit of the truth through which He places into the mind of the person those things He wants the person to know or to say. Anyone who claims to have received an angelic vision since the spirit was given to Christ Jesus nearly two millennia ago acknowledges in the person's claim of receiving a vision that the person has not received a message from God but a message from an angel of unknown reliability.

And a person claiming to have received an angelic vision can do sufficient mischief that, if the vision actually originates with God, the vision will be twice given. Plus, there is an additional test:

If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, "Let us go after other gods," which you have not known, "and let us serve them," you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep His commandments and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. (Deut 13:1-5)

What can be known about visions is that if they are of God, the vision will be given two times, either twice to one person or once to two persons. Plus, if the vision comes to pass and would seem to be of God, but if the prophet would have the people of Israel not keep the Commandments, the vision has been given to test Israel; to see if Israel will

walk in the way of the Lord even when evidence exists for not walking according to what Moses declared.

The visions of Mohammad—if they are of God—will necessarily have to have been given twice; plus, Mohammad will also have to have taught his disciples to keep the Commandments, all of them, especially the test Commandment of Sabbath observance, the least of the Commandments. And when visions are given twice, the visions either closely approximate each other as is the case of Pharaoh's visions and Joseph's visions, or the visions will be identical as is the case of the vision Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel saw.

Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf." His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?" (Gen 37:5–10)

The exaltation of Joseph was established through two similar visions.

Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, and behold, there came up out of the Nile seven cows attractive and plump, and they fed in the reed grass. And behold, seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. And the ugly, thin cows ate up the seven attractive, plump cows. And Pharaoh awoke. And he fell asleep and dreamed a second time. And behold, seven ears of grain, plump and good, were growing on one stalk. And behold, after them sprouted seven ears, thin and blighted by the east wind. And the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump, full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream. ...

Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, but after them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume the land, and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. And **the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God**, and God will shortly bring it about. (Gen 41:1–7, 25–32 emphasis added)

The doubling of visions creates problems for *literalist* reading communities, be those communities Islamic or Christian. For when the visions are not identical but similar, an additional element enters into play, spiritual chiology: the visions bearing to one another a similar relationship as the left hand bears to the right hand, with the first vision received figuratively representing the left hand—the culturally “common” hand with which a descendant of Abraham would wipe him or herself—and the second vision figuratively representing the right hand, the hand with which the descendant of Abraham would eat ...

Saudi Arabia used to and may still publicly chop off the left hands of thieves, a punishment that is more severe than simply losing a hand. For without having a left hand, the person must wipe him or herself with the person's right hand, thereby defiling all that the person eats and culturally isolating the person through the person's defilement.

Biblical literalists tend not to understand the chirality of a twice given vision; hence these literalists accept both visions as equally important and equally truthful when this is not the case. The first vision is analogous to natural Israel, the nation circumcised in the flesh. The second giving of the vision is analogous to spiritual Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart.

The first vision is analogous to the Law being written on two tablets of stone; the second, analogous to the Law being written on hearts and placed in minds.

In Joseph's case, the first vision had Joseph and his brothers binding grain sheaves in a field, and Joseph's grain sheaf—not Joseph himself—stood up and stood taller than the sheaves of his brothers, and the sheaves of his brothers gathered around Joseph's sheaf and bowed down to it ... the grain grew by God giving to it the earlier and the latter rains, with these rains representing the giving of spirit. Collective work went into planting the grain, but individual work goes into harvesting the grain to which God has given growth. And Joseph's individual work was represented in his sheaf as was the individual work of his brothers represented by each of their sheaves. Joseph's work would be greater, enough greater that his brothers would gather themselves to him and give honor to him, an image also seen in John's vision when the synagogue of Satan bows to Philadelphia (Rev 3:9), an image that will have Philadelphia being to the other seven Churches of God as Joseph was to his brothers, with Joseph being sold into slavery by his brothers but ending up second (only subject to Pharaoh) in all the land of Egypt. And this first vision is the culturally "common" [unclean] version of the twice-given vision.

In the "clean" version of Joseph's vision, the sun and the moon [physically representing Joseph's father and mother, but spiritually representing what is seen in Revelation 12:1] and eleven stars [physically, Joseph's eleven brothers, but spiritually the eleven first disciples remaining after Calvary] bow to Joseph, thus placing Joseph over heavenly bodies, not earthly bodies. Joseph, now, becomes a *Christ-figure*, the Deliverer of his people. And again, biblical literalists are always without spiritual understanding—and too many of those who believe they can interpret visions (that they have spiritual understanding) are without the *Parakletos*, the spirit of the truth. So the work of interpreting visions has been left to con-men and hucksters, something that King Nebuchadnezzar well understood, the reason he wouldn't tell what his vision was but demanded that his *dream-interpreters* come up with the dream itself.

The Qur'an is a catalogue of dreams, inscribed not by Mohammad who received these visions, but by either witnesses or by scribes to whom Mohammad related his visions—and included in this catalogue of visions are fictional accounts about Jesus, the contact points between Islam and true Christianity, not the "Christianity" of sun-worshipers.

Because most Christians do not know Arabic, a partially-alphabetized Semitic language that is by its lack of inscribed aspiration technically a "dead" or lifeless

language even though there are a billion and a half speakers, the authenticity of the Qur'an text is difficult to challenge. The more easily mounted challenge comes by the criteria Moses established on the plains of Moab; the criteria of the Moab covenant that is made with the children of Israel, then present and not present, a second covenant made in addition to the covenant made at Mount Sinai (Deut 29:1). And this criteria centers around the prophet teaching those who receive his or her visions to keep the Commandments, with again the Sabbath Commandment being the test commandment.

If a person receives a vision and if what is revealed in the vision comes to pass, but if this prophet doesn't teach others to keep the Commandments, the prophet is to be shunned ... Christianity, with the giving of the spirit, has moved past stoning the prophet.

Of course, there will be some who do not believe God and who will not keep the Commandments even when their salvation is at risk. These individuals tend to cluster around false prophets simply because of the falseness of the prophet. Let them be, regardless of whether they identify themselves as Christians, Jews, or Muslims—

What the world hasn't seen are assemblies of the Elect, foreknown and predestined sons of God. What the world mistakenly identifies as "Christians" are endtime lawless assemblies derived from assemblies of early disciples that went beyond sound doctrines. Much of what the world identifies as "Christianity" is a *Mary cult* that has borrowed heavily from ancient Chaldean mysteries, with Sir Thomas More seeming to give this *Mary cult* authority over Christ Jesus due to its preexistence (that is, existing before Christ was humanly born as the son of *Mary*), with Luke's Gospel establishing the theological basis for the *Mary cult*. And the fastest growing "Christian" denomination is a neo-Arian sect already prepared to leverage food reserves into disciples in a period of national or international crisis, this neo-Arian cult having in its control much of the world's food supply.

Every prophet since Moses who did not or does not teach Israel to keep the Commandments was to be stoned before the giving of the spirit and shunned after the spirit was given. No exceptions. And this includes Mohammad who would teach the latter day sons of Ishmael as well as Joseph Smith who would teach latter day sons of Isaac—both prophets are to be shunned; for in both cases, God is apparently testing the sons of Abraham to see what they will or won't believe. And what's seen is the problem of interpretation that permits acceptance of another text, one that has more problems than does Scripture, a much abused text by scribes who translated the writings of Moses into Imperial Hebrew long after the Book of the Covenant was lost, then found again, thereby losing the continuity of transmission necessary for partially inscribed Semitic languages to retain authenticity of utterance.

President Obama, familiar with a differing reading of the Qur'an than that of the literalist reading of Islamic State thugs—this familiarity not coming from extensive knowledge of the Qur'an but from Obama's exposure to Islam when he was in 1st through 4th grades in Jakarta and living with his stepfather—has insisted that the Islamic State's reading is illegitimate; that the Islamic State only uses Islam as political veneer, wallpaper justifying medieval brutality.

Apologists for the Islamic State claim vindication for the caliphate's brutality lay in Islam's first century, that period when Islam quickly spread from the Arabian Peninsula

westward across North Africa and into Europe and eastward into China. These apologists tend to ignore passages in the Qur'an and the Hadith that contradict their literalist reading of other passages. And by appealing to the example of what Mohammad actually did, rather than said, these apologists "prove" the Islamic State's theological purity.

It is easier to "prove" the validity of a particular interpretation of a text than it is to disprove that same interpretation, regardless of what that interpretation is, something that Herbert Armstrong realized as he built his ministry from literalist readings of Moses and of Matthew's and John's Gospels. It is easy to "prove" any literalist reading of a text. It is difficult to move past the literalist reading; for moving beyond a literalist reading requires a word to not mean what the word clearly means. And for a word to not mean either its denotative or connotative meaning, the word has to be recognized as a figure of speech; as a metaphoric or metonymic expression. And we have returned to the problem over which ancient Greek philosophy stumbled ... a chair upon which you can sit is not a "real" chair, but a copy of the real chair that is in heaven. Thus, a painting of a chair is a copy of a copy, and for you to audibly describe what you see in the painting, your words are copies of a copy of a copy of the chair that exists in heaven. And you stumble forward through a forest of copies, none of which are real but all of which are "literal."

In John's Gospel, Jesus said,

I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ...

I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father. (John 16:1-4, 25-28 emphasis added)

All of Scripture is a chirological text: *I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away* is the "common" or unclean shadow and type of, *I have said these things to you in figures of speech*, in words not to be taken literally.

If the visions of Mohammad were truly delivered to him by the angel Gabriel, they will form a chirological text. Where, now, is the Islamic scholar who can read the Qur'an as a chirological text? If none exists, then is the *Qur'an* of God? Either one better exist before dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation, or the sons of Ishmael will perish from the face of this earth. The matter is this serious.

Hitler used Wagner's music and midnight parades to invoke a Teutonic history that was much less glamorous than presented by Nazi thugs. Stalin employed the doctrine of the Third Rome to rally Russian peasants during the *Great Patriotic War*. Texans used the Alamo to defeat Santa Anna. And the Islamic State, today, uses the glorious

century of Islamic expansion to suck in vulnerable youth—all old enough to blow themselves to pieces—to its literalist reading of the Qur'an ... the barbarians at the door carry AK47s and wear body armor, but President Obama doesn't want American civilians to have ammo that would pierce body armor. Why? Because the President intends to wage war against Americans? For the President seems to be a literalist reader of Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals*, a text that is not of God.

No political twist or turn will catch God by surprise. Nothing the President will do will surprise Him. Nothing the Islamic State will do will surprise Him. Nothing Iran or Israel will do will surprise Him. And that should be comforting, especially as chaos seems to be spreading, being more contagious than measles.

*

"Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved."

[\[Home\]](#) [\[Current Greeting\]](#) [\[Archived Greetings\]](#)