

## 'An Overview of DEBATE in Muslim/Christian Apologetics/Polemics'

Introduction: Laying the stage. Why there is such a reticence towards debating in European Christianity

### A) THE HISTORY OF DEBATES

(7th - 21st Centuries of Christian/Muslim Debates)

### B) TYPES OF DEBATES

- 1) University Debates
  - a) The Parliamentary Model
  - b) The Popular Model
- 2) Impromptu Debates (Speaker's Corner)
- 3) Radio Debates
- 4) Internet - On Line Debates (Trinity/ABN channel)

### C) MUSLIM DEBATES

- 1) Historical Overview
- 2) Popularity of debates
- 3) Venues for debates
- 4) The Principle Debaters
  - a) S. Africa: Ahmed Deedat
  - b) Canada: Dr. Jamal Badawi, Dr. Shabir Ally
  - c) India: Dr. Zakir Naik
  - d) UK: Adnan Rashid, Hamza Tzortzis, Abdul Raheem Green, Abdullah al Andalusi  
Paul Williams, Mansur Ahmed, Zakir Hussain
  - e) Caribbean: Ijaz Ahmed
- 5) Methodology of Muslim Debaters
- 6) Tactics of Muslim Debaters
- 7) Favourite Liberal Source materials
- 8) The problems with Muslim debates

### D) CHRISTIAN DEBATES

- 1) Christians critical of Debates
  - a) Martyn, Brown, Boll
  - b) Colin Chapman's criticisms
- 2) Christians supportive of Debates
  - a) Early Christian examples
  - b) 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> c. Examples
  - c) Current examples
- 3) The Principle Debaters
  - a) USA: Dr. James White, Sam Shamoun, David Wood, Nabeel Qureshi,  
Dr. William Craig, Michael Licona, Anis Shorrosh, Abdul Murray
  - b) Canada: Tony Costa
  - c) UK: Jay Smith, Alan Craig, Beth Grove, John McLatchie, Hatun Tash
  - d) France: Alex Blagojevic
  - e) Africa: Jesse Digges, John Gilchrist, Brian Marrian
  - f) India: Sudhakar Mondithoka, Jerry Thomas, Narendra Sahoo, Tamil Joshua,

Praveen, Asghar Ali

g) Australia: Samuel Green, Dr. Bernie Power

4) Examples of Recent Pivotal Debates

5) Problems with Christian debates

## **E) OBJECTIONS TO DEBATES**

## **F) ADVANTAGES WITH DEBATES**

## **G) PURPOSES FOR DEBATES**

- 1) Public
- 2) Laboratory
- 3) Mosaic
- 4) Focus

## **H) METHODOLOGY OF DEBATES**

- 1) Pray
- 2) Pairs
- 3) Rule of Thumb #1 – ‘Scratch where they itch’
- 4) Rule of Thumb #2 – ‘Scratch where they don’t itch’
- 5) Response
- 6) Praxis
- 7) Mannerisms
- 8) End Game

## **I) LESSONS FROM THE MUNAZARA OF 1854**

- 1) Debates can be Efficacious
- 2) Know your Material
- 3) Know your Audience
- 4) Choose your Team
- 5) Use Apologetics and Polemics
- 6) Keep it Simple
- 7) Demand Reciprocity
- 8) ‘The Best Defense is a good Offense’
- 9) Beware of ‘Ad Hominem’
- 10) Beware of ‘Threads’
- 11) Beware of Glass Houses
- 12) Beware of ‘3<sup>rd</sup> Parties’
- 13) Stick to the Agenda
- 14) Have the ‘Last Say’
- 15) End with a Bang!
- 16) Youtube yourself
- 17) Create a Repository
- 18) Replicate Yourself

## **J) LOGICAL FALLACIES**

- 1) **External Fallacies** (Forwarded by Muslims)
  - a) ‘B B’ Paradigm

- b) Imposition Paradigm
- c) Smokescreen/Red Herrings
- d) Historical Precedent
- e) Cyclical Arguments
- f) False Analogy/Equivocation
- g) The Fallacy of Irrelevance
- h) Phonic Fallacies
- i) Straw Man Arguments
- j) 'Might is Right' Fallacy

**2) Internal Fallacies** (Forwarded by Christians)

- a) 'Friendship First' (The 'Grace Method')
- b) Dialogue, not Debate
- c) 'Love' your enemy (Being 'Christ-like')
- d) Seek out 'Men of Peace' (CPM)
- e) Find 'Unity' (Look for Commonalities)
- f) 'No-one is won by an Argument'
- g) Fear paralysis
- h) Losing Friends
- i) Appearing Judgmental
- j) Seeker Priority/Post-Modern paradigm

**K) APOLOGETICS AND POLEMICS** (for debates)

- 1) Why should we do Evangelistic debates?
- 2) Who should do Evangelistic debates?
- 3) Responses towards Evangelistic debates
- 4) God's Sovereignty in Evangelistic debates
- 5) The differences between Apologetical and Polemical Debates
  - a) Purposes for each
  - b) The difference skills needed
  - c) The different Outcomes
- 6) Methodologies for debates
  - a) Irenic Approach
  - b) Confrontational Approach
  - c) Holistic Approach

**L) APOLOGETICAL DEBATE TOPICS** (FAQs)

**1) The Bible:**

- a) Has the Bible been corrupted?
  - i) Before Muhammad?
  - ii) After Muhammad?
- b) How can the Bible include pornographic material?
- c) What about the Contradictions in the Bible?
  - i) Numerical Problems
  - ii) Proper Noun Problems
- d) Why don't we have the original Manuscripts, like the Qur'an?
- e) Isn't the Old Testament full of violence?
- f) How can we accept non-Arabic, Human authorship?

**2) Jesus:**

- a) How can Jesus be the 'Son of God'?
- b) How can God become a Man?
- c) How can God be Triune?
  - i) Muslim misconceptions
  - ii) Christian misconceptions
  - iii) Trinity defined
  - iv) Biblical authority for the Trinity
  - v) Qur'anic contextual example
- d) Is not Jesus inferior to God?
- e) Who is the Historical Jesus?
- f) Is not Jesus greater than Muhammad?
- g) Who is the true Jesus – Issa or Yesuwa?

### **3) Peace & Violence:**

- a) Old Testament Violence and Peace
  - i) Isn't this violence for all time and all people?
  - ii) Isn't it worse than that of the Qur'an (i.e. Joshua 6:20)?
  - iii) Is there any Peace in the Old Testament?
    - (a) The paradigm of 'Shalom' in the Old Testament
    - (b) Old Testament passages on Peace
  - iv) The 6 Criteria for the use of Violence
  - v) The 3 Responsibilities of an Israelite King
- b) New Testament Violence and Peace
  - i) Isn't God the same in both Testaments?
  - ii) Peaceful passages in the New Testament (many)
  - iii) Violent passages in the New Testament:
    - (a) Luke 22:36-38 'Sell your cloak and buy a sword'
    - (b) Luke 19:27 'Kill the servant in front of me'
    - (c) Matthew 21:12-13; John 2:13-17 'The Temple Cleansing'
    - (d) Matthew 10:34 'I have not come to bring peace, but a sword'
    - (e) Revelation 19:15 The Violence at the end of time
- c) What about the Crusades, or the Inquisition, or the Salem witch burnings?

### **4) Potpourri Topics:**

- a) Did not Paul begin Christianity?
- b) Is Britain not a Christian country?
- c) What about the Hypocrisy of Christian Leaders?
- d) Isn't Sin the same in Islam and Christianity?
  - i) Sin and Salvation in Islam
  - ii) Sin and Salvation in Christianity
- e) Isn't Christianity a religion for women, and Islam for men?

## **M) POLEMICAL DEBATE TOPICS (FAQs)**

### **1) An Introduction to Polemics**

### **2) Has the Qur'an been corrupted?**

#### **a) Internal critique**

- i) Inimitable Claims
- ii) Literary criticism
  - (a) What the Experts say
- iii) Grammatical criticism

- iv) Linguistic Criticism: Perfect Arabic?
- v) Source Criticism:
  - (a) Jewish Apocryphal sources
  - (b) Christian Sectarian sources
- vi) Redactic Criticism:
  - (a) Collation problems
  - (b) Islamic Tradition References to changes
- vi) Relevancy Criticism:
  - (a) Problematic passages on Women
  - (b) Problematic passages on Violence
  - (c) Problematic passages on Peace
- vii) Contradiction Criticism
- viii) Historical & Scientific Criticism

#### **a) External critique**

- i) Five Questions:
  - (a) It is Eternal
  - (b) It was Sent Down (610-632 AD)
  - (c) It was complete (652 AD)
  - (d) It is unchanged (652-2015 AD)
  - (e) 'Prove it'!
- ii) The Six Earliest Manuscripts
  - (a) Topkapi
  - (b) Sammarqand
  - (c) Ma'il
  - (d) Houseini
  - (e) Petropolitanus
  - (f) San'aa
- iii) The Scholar's Conclusions
  - (a) Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu & Dr. Tayyar Altikulac
  - (b) Dr. Francois Deroche
  - (c) Dr. Gerd Puin, Dr. Ohlig, Dr. Von Bothmer
- iv) Dr. Dan Brubaker's Research on Corrections
  - (a) Insertions
  - (b) Erasures
  - (c) Erasures Overwritten
  - (d) Overwriting (without Erasures)
  - (e) Tapings
  - (f) Selective Coverings
  - (g) Selective Covering Overwritten
- v) The New Folio Controversy
  - (a) The Birmingham Folios
  - (b) The Sana'a Folios
  - (c) The sources for these folios?
- vi) Conclusions

### **3) The Khilafah vs. the Kingdom of God**

#### **4) Women in the Bible vs. Women in the Qur'an**

- a) Surahs 4:3, 11, 24, 34; 2:282, 223, 230
- b) Gen.2:24; Gal.3:28; Phil.16; 1Pet.3:7; Col.3:19; Mat.28:9; 1Cor.7:1-40...

**5) Allah vs. Yahweh**

**6) Jesus vs. Muhammad**

**7) Did Jesus die on the Cross?**

- a) The Qur'anic Confusion
- b) The Theological Confusion
- c) The Extra-Biblical Confusion
- d) The Eye-witness Confusion
- e) The Moral Confusion

**8) Is Muhammad a True Prophet?**

- a) Muhammad's Biography
- b) The Classical account
- c) An Historical assessment of Muhammad
  - i) Late Dates
    - (a) A Comparison with Jesus
  - ii) The Revisionist's Concerns
  - iii) The Revisionist's Findings
    - (a) Credibility
    - (b) Contradictions
    - (c) Proliferation
    - (d) Isnads
    - (e) Storytellers
    - (f) Geography
    - (g) Mecca
    - (h) Qibla
    - (i) Petra
  - iv) The Significance of these findings
  - v) The Historian's Conclusions
- d) A Christian Assessment of Muhammad
  - i) The 4 Criteria for Prophet-hood
  - ii) Was Muhammad the Seal of the Prophets
  - iii) Were there Prophecies concerning Muhammad (S.7:157 & 61:6)
    - (a) Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-20
    - (b) Other Old Testament Predictions
    - (c) Song of Solomon 5:16
    - (d) John 14:16 & 16:7
  - e) The Danish Cartoon Controversy (2005)
  - f) The Charlie Hebdo Controversy (2015)
  - g) Conclusions

**9) Which is More Relevant today, Christianity or Islam?**