

A Christian's Guide to the Koran, Lesson 14 , INTO THE KORAN

So we enter in.

Here in my hand is a Koran. Well, not really. It is very like a Koran, but in Arabic thinking, it's not a real Koran if it's not in Arabic. This is the closest I could come up with, since I don't speak that language. An English translation.

Now there are quite a few English translations out there. But I doubt if there are others translated by evangelical believers in Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, this is what I hold before you. Please understand that I am in no way selling Korans nor representing the ministry of this translator. Nevertheless, I would be amiss not to tell you a little of how I was made aware of this Koran.

I am on the mailing list, somehow, of Worldview Weekends, an organization that has mini-conferences that deal with issues affecting the Western Church and the conservative worldview of politics, too. It's a very patriotic Bible-believing bunch of folks.

I had just decided that it would be profitable for me to research and write about and publish a description of the innards of the Koran. So I began praying about and thinking about, where shall I begin here? I did some preliminary research online, and was debating between 2-3 different Korans, and then my email came. There was to be a Worldview Weekend in Rockford, Illinois, and here were the speakers. My eye gravitated to the name Usama Dakdok. The notice said that he was Egyptian-born, and a born-again Christian who was visiting the American churches, warning them of the dangers of Islam, and showing them what the Koran actually said.

I investigated him more and found that he also had, with much assistance of course, translated the entire Koran into an English that was not politically correct. Those kinds of translations are my favorite. I hate compromise. I wanted to read the Koran as it was meant to be read, not as some had doctored its pages with cover-ups to hide the real meaning.

I ordered his Koran, and here it is. And so, all quotations from the Koran in my work will be taken from *The Generous Qur'an*, copyright 2009, used by permission of Usama Dakdok Publishing, LLC.

I guess we should start with the title, shouldn't we? There is no such book as "*The Holy Koran*." Those who suggested the same were trying to elevate the Koran in Western eyes to the level of the Holy Bible. Our brother had to start his corrections of western Korans right there. The word is *generous*. I'll leave it at that for now.

More information about Brother Dakdok in a minute. Some, though not all, of the ideas I'm about to share now are from him, though.

Let me give you an idea of how long we will be in this study. Instant scholars may not apply. It's true that this book is only 80% of the size of your New Testament, but recall that your New Testament is written in very small letters. This Koran, in normal size print, is 360 pages. I shall not be reading every single word on every page and giving you a commentary on it. But expect to spend several months in this study.

Now, a couple reasons why it won't be necessary or possible to give you a word by word explanation. First, up to 20% of the Koran is undecipherable even by Muslim scholars. They simply don't know what it means. Lots of unnecessary guesswork would only waste our time. And second, there is much repetition in the Koran. I will do my best not to repeat. Thirdly, I am seeking mainly to find those things that are clearly different from the Christian faith, and there are a lot of them! I will tell you up front that there is much in the Koran that is similar to our beliefs, even exactly like them. That is because much was copied directly from the Christian and Jewish Scriptures that were easily available to the people of Muhammad's day. Even if one did not possess a scroll, the story of Christianity and Judaism was a tale oft told. The differences were either mistakes or deliberate perversions. Some of both, we believe.

I shared with you earlier that the Koran is ordered by the size of its chapters, not by chronology or time considerations. The suras are totally jumbled, and scholars through the years have had to ascertain which sura came out of Muhammad's days in Mecca, when he was just beginning, and which from his Medina years, when he was a fugitive and under pressure from many enemies. The findings of these scholars have been handily reduced to a chart in this Koran, sura by sura. Next to the sura number is the city where he was supposed to have been when it came forth.

This time consideration will become vitally important as we come to understand the doctrine of abrogation. This word has to do with the idea that Allah is allowed to repeal older suras and institute newer ones that may be in complete contradiction of the original! Yes, he really said that. I'll show you later. So we definitely need to know whether he was in Mecca or Medina when a particular sura was spoken.

Speaking of the word "sura", you'll notice here that our brother does not use that word that commonly references a "chapter" but rather the actual Arabic translation of *sura*, namely, "a portion". In this case, a portion of a revelation. One in a long series of portions, which added up equals the full revelation. That's the theory. We will see just how full it really is.

Notice also that there is a title given to each sura, or portion. Sura 1 is "the opening," suitably enough, and besides being the opening, it also is the chapter that breaks the rule of size order in the Koran. This one is among the shortest. Just a few lines. Sura 2 is 28 pages long!

Anyway, we won't be finished any time soon. Let's take our time and see for real what this book says. Thanks in advance to Usama and his Koran which not only gives an accurate literal non-politicized translation, but also some commentary and helps along the way. You may want one of your own. I can tell you for sure that you'll not find another Koran with an invitation to salvation through Jesus Christ in it!

Usama's ministry headquarters is in Venice, Florida, where those infamous Islamic pilots were trained to fly planes into the Twin Towers on 9/11. He says they are still training Islamic pilots there, by the way. Contact him at usama@thestraightway.org

Now let's see why he calls his ministry the *straight way of grace*... The reference is to portion 1, the opening. This little chapter is in the form of a prayer. Here's a prayer I would not mind praying too, although not to Allah. "Guide us to the straight way." The word "way", by the way, is not from an Arabic word. No, this word comes from Greek/Aramaic. It is one of hundreds of words in the Koran that are not originally Arabic! This comes as a shock to many Muslims, who thought their book was in the holy language only.

It is no shock to us that there is no holy language, I hope. Neither Hebrew or Greek or Aramaic or even English qualifies. God speaks to us through Jesus, and we hear Him quite well in that language. Jesus says that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The "way" that is the answer to every longing Muslim heart.

We can't get out of the first chapter without hearing a "dig" to all non-Muslims. This "way", says the author, is the way of a certain graced group of people, and excludes those with whom Allah is angry, and those that are just plain lost! Usama and others conclude that these two groups are probably the Jews and the Christians. We will see other references to both groups throughout the book, confirming that whoever wrote this book wasn't too keen on the religions that were currently in the world. This book is a call to them to reform and reconstitute. Of course, that reorganization is to be under the "prophet" of Mecca and Medina.

Next time, Sura 2.