

The Clash Between Emerging & Establishment Religions Textual Evidence

Reuven Firestone

THE NEW TESTAMENT

1 Thessalonians 2:14: "...the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all men by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they may be saved – so as always to fill up the measure of their sins."

Matthew 23

¹³Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of Heaven in people's faces; you do not enter yourselves, and when others try to enter, you stop them.

¹⁵Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You travel over sea and land to win one convert; and when you have succeeded you make him twice as fit for hell as you are yourselves...

²⁷Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You are like tombs covered with whitewash; they look fine on the outside, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and of corruption. ²⁸So it is with you: outwardly you look like honest men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness...

³¹So you acknowledge that you are the sons of those who killed the prophets. ³²Go on then, finish off what your fathers began! ³³Snakes! Vipers' brood! How can you escape being condemned to hell?

John 8

³⁷ 'I know that you are descended from Abraham, yet you are bent on killing me because my teaching makes no headway with you. ³⁸I tell what I have seen in my Father's presence; you do what you have learned from your father.' ³⁹They retorted, 'Abraham is our father.' 'If you were Abraham's children,' Jesus replied, 'you would do as Abraham did. ⁴⁰As it is, you are bent on killing me, because I have told you the truth, which I heard from God. That is not how Abraham acted. ⁴¹You are doing your own father's work.'

They said, 'We are not illegitimate; God is our father, and God alone.' ⁴²Jesus said to them, 'If God were your father, you would love me, for God is the source of my being, and from him I come. I have not come of my own accord; he sent me. ⁴³Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because my teaching is beyond your grasp. ⁴⁴Your father is the devil and you choose to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and is not rooted in the truth; there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie he is speaking his own language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵But because I speak the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶Which of you can convict me of sin? If what I say is true, why do you not believe me? ⁴⁷He who has God for his father listens to the words of God. You are not God's children, and that is why you do not listen.'

THE QUR'AN

Sūra 38 (ṣād)

⁴So they were surprised that a warner has come to them from among them. Those unbelievers say, "This is a lying conjuror!"
⁵Has he made the deities into one God? This is indeed a strange thing!" ⁶The chiefs among them go around saying, "God and be persistent with your gods. This is certainly something concocted." ⁷We have not heard such a thing among people recently. It is only a fabrication."

سورة صاد

وَعَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ {4} أَجْعَلُ الْأَلِهَةَ إلهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ {5} وانطلق المأ منهُم أن امشوا واصبروا على آهتكم إن هذا لشيء يراد {6} ما سمعنا بهذا في الملة الآخرة إن هذا إلا اختلاق {7}

Sūra 8 (Spoils of War)

³⁰And when the unbelievers have plotted against you to arrest you, kill you or drive you out, while they plot, God plots too; and God is the better of the planners. ³¹And when Our signs are recited to them, they say, "We've heard. If we wanted, we could say something similar to that. It is only myths of the ancients." ³²And when they say, "O God, if this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down stones upon us or bring us a painful affliction." ³³But God would not punish them while you among them, and God would not punish them while they sought forgiveness. ³⁴But what excuse do they have that God not punish them when they block entry from the sacred mosque. Were they not its keepers? Its keepers must be those who are true to God, but most of them do not know. ³⁵And their prayer in the House was nothing but whistling and clapping. So taste the affliction for your denying. ³⁶Those who deny spend their wealth to block [others] from the path of God. So they will spend it. Then distress will be upon them, and then they will be overcome. And those who denied will be herded into hell.

سورة الأنفال

وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ {30} وَإِذْ تَتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا قَالُوا قَدْ سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَذَا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ {31} وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ {32} وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ {33} وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوا أَوْلِيَاءَهُ إِنْ أَوْلِيَائِهِ إِلَّا الْمُتَّفِقُونَ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ {34} وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَاءً وَتَصْدِيَةً فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ {35} إِنْ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَسَيُنْفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ {36}

Sūra 5 (The Table)

⁵⁹Say: O People of the Book! Do you blame us only for believing in God and in what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down before? Most of you are degenerate. ⁶⁰Say: Shall I tell you of a worse (case) than that in the retribution of

سورة المائدة

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَقْمُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَأَنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ

<p>God? Those whom God has curse and against whom He is angry, among whom He has made apes and pigs and servants of Ṭāghūt. They are in the worst position and further astray from the even road.</p>	<p>فَاسْفُوتَ [59] قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرِّ مِّنْ ذَلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَن لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَعَظِيبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتِ أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ [60]</p>
<p>Sūra 22 (The Ḥajj) ²⁵As for those who scoffed and obstructed from the path of God and the sacred mosque that We made for [all] humanity equally, both those who live in it and the nomad; and those who wish to misuse it for evil, We will have them taste a painful punishment.</p>	<p>سورة الحج إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ الَّذِي جَعَلْنَاهُ لِلنَّاسِ سَوَاءً الْعَاكِفُ فِيهِ وَالْبَادِ وَمَن يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِالْحَادِ بِظُلْمٍ نُذِقْهُ مِن عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ {25}</p>
<p>Sūra 25 (Al-Furqān) ⁴Those who refuse to believe say, This is nothing but a lie that he invented, while other people assisted him." Thus they have done an injustice and set forth a falsehood. ⁵And they say, "These are myths of the ancients that he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and evening." ⁶Say: "It was revealed by the One who knows the secret in the heavens and the earth, being most forgiving and most merciful."...</p>	<p>سورة الفرقان وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا ظُلْمًا وَزُورًا {4} وَقَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا {5} قُلْ أَنزَلَهُ الَّذِي يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا {6}</p>
<p>Sūra 2 (The Cow) ¹⁰⁹Many of the people of the Book would like to render you again unbelievers after your having believed, because of envy on their part after the truth has become clear to them. But forgive and be indulgent until God gives His command, for God is the Power over everything.</p>	<p>سورة البقرة وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّوكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ [109]</p>

THE HEBREW BIBLE

Numbers 22-23

<p>Deuteronomy 7 ¹When the Lord your God brings you to the land that you are about to invade and occupy, and He dislodges many nations before you -- Hittites, Gergashites, Amorites... seven nations greater and more powerful than you, ² and the Lord your God delivers them to you and you defeat them, you must doom them to total destruction;¹ grant them no terms and show them no mercy. ³You shall not intermarry with them: do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. ⁴For they will turn your children away from Me to worship other gods, and the Lord's anger will blaze forth against you and He will promptly wipe you out.</p>	<p>ספר דברים ז א כי יביאך יהוה אלהיך אל-הארץ אשר-אתה בא-שמה לרשתה ונשל גוים-רבים מפניך החתי והגרגשי והאמרי והכנעני והפרזי והחוי והיבوسی שבעה גוים רבים ועצומים ממך: ב ונתנם יהוה אלהיך לפניך והכיתם החרם תחרים אתם לא-תכרת להם ברית ולא תחנם: ג ולא תתחתן בם בתך לא תתן לבנו ובתו לא תקח לבנד: (ד) כי יסיר את בנד מאחרי ועבדו אלהים אחרים וחרה אף ידוד בכם והשמידך מהר:</p>
<p>Deut. 4 ¹⁹And when you look up to the sky and behold the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them. These the Lord your God allotted to other peoples everywhere under heaven; ²⁰but you the Lord took and brought out of Egypt, that iron blast furnace, to be His very own people...</p>	<p>דברים פרק ד (יט) ופן תשא עיניך השמימה וראית את השמש ואת הירח ואת הכוכבים כל צבא השמים ונדחת והשתחווית להם ועבדתם אשר חלק ידוד אלהיך אתם לכל העמים תחת כל השמים: (כ) ואתכם לקח ידוד ויוצא אתכם מכור הברזל ממצרים להיות לו לעם נחלה...</p>

¹ The Hebrew root for this term is *herem*, meaning both prohibition and sacredness. In the context of war it denotes dedication to God. If it is man or animal, it should be sacrificed, and if property, devoted to God (Ex.22:19; Lev.27:29); Deut.13:16; 1Sam. 15:3). This meaning is found also in the Mesha Stele. By the Second Temple period and later, it acquired the meaning of expulsion and confiscation of property (Ezra 10:8).