

### Fast 9: Religious principles taught to Israelites — (3) Mixing truth with falsehood

- The next verse in this section, addressing the Israelites and their religious leaders, is as follows:

“And do not mix up truth with falsehood,  
nor hide the truth while you know.” — ch. 2,  
v. 42

وَلَا تُنْتَلِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُسُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ

تَعْلَمُونَ

To support this verse, we quote from an article at the website of *The Times of Israel*. It was published in one of its blogs by Dr. Israel Drazin, an attorney, rabbi and author of books on the Bible, written 20 December 2017 ([link](#)). He opens:

“Many, if not most, rabbis, even ultra-Orthodox rabbis, recognize that as Judaism evolved, changes were introduced into the Torah wording for a myriad of reasons.” These, he says, are known as “corrections by the scribes”, and were changes “made in the original wording of the Hebrew Bible during the Second Temple period, perhaps sometime between 450 and 350 BCE.” He adds that various ancient Jewish commentaries of the Torah: “unabashedly and explicitly accepted that the divine text was changed. They believed that those who made the change felt that their respect for God required that **they hide the true text** and portray God in a better light than what was in the original wording of the Bible.”

If they made these changes in order to “portray God in a better light than what was in the original wording”, it clearly means that the original wording was wrong, and therefore their scriptures, as available to them 400 years before Jesus, already contained human error. (The other possibility is that these scribes misunderstood the original wording which they took as not being respectful towards God.)

- When Jesus came after the Old Testament prophets of the Israelites, he condemned the religious leaders of the Israelites for giving higher regard to their interpretations and traditions than the revealed word of God. He said to them:

“And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? ... Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ‘... They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules’.” (Matthew, 15:3–9)

“You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions. You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!” (Mark 7:8–9)

Even in the time of Jesus, 600 years before Islam — and as Jesus points out, even in the time of their prophet Isaiah who lived 700 years before Jesus — the truth was being mixed up with falsehood by giving preference to human interpretations over the word of God. So it is not the Quran or Islam which first levelled the allegation against the Jewish religious leadership of mixing falsehood with truth and hiding the truth. This fact had been recognized centuries before.

On a number of occasions, while arguing with the Jewish priests, Jesus asks them: “have you not read in the scriptures”, and then he quoted something at them. This also shows that many things which were in the scriptures were, in effect, being hidden by them because they were simply ignoring them.

- Undoubtedly the Jewish scriptures, now in the Old Testament of the Bible, had much truth, true examples and true teachings in them. But they contain statements which cannot be accepted as true, such as the following:
  - After creating the world, God “rested from all the work of creating that he had done” (Genesis, 2:3).
  - Then there is this part of the story of Adam and Eve: “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’” (Genesis, 3:8–9).
  - The punishment which God gave to all women for Eve’s enticing of Adam to eat the forbidden fruit was: “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labour you will give birth to children” (Genesis, 3:16).
  - Before the flood of Noah it is stated that “The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. So the Lord said, ‘I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created — and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground — for I regret that I have made them.’” (Genesis, 6:6–7).
  - Then there is the story of the tower of Babel. The “whole world had one language and a common speech.” People began to build a city with a tower in it. “But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The Lord said, ‘If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other’ ” (Genesis, 11:1–7). According to this, God became worried that mankind, all speaking the same language, would be able to achieve

anything whatsoever. So He made them disunited and scattered them around the world, speaking different languages, unable to understand one another.

- Besides these statements about God, as regards the righteous prophets of God there are the most lurid allegations of gross immorality or idolatry on their part; for example, against the prophets Noah (Gen. 9:21), Lot (Gen. 19:30–36), Aaron (Exodus, 32:1–8), David (2 Samuel 11) and Solomon (1 Kings 11:4–9).
- Thus the above verse of the Quran is quite right in its claim that in the Jewish scriptures the truth had been mixed with falsehood.
- We may point out though that the followers of the Bible read their scripture in its translations. Now leaving aside the unacceptable statements in it, **the readers do at least find** a great deal of truth and wisdom in the Bible. Most Muslims, on the other hand, read the Quran in Arabic only, without being able to understand its contents. So while the Quran is wholly the truth, with no falsehood in it whatsoever, they learn nothing at all of that truth while reciting its words.