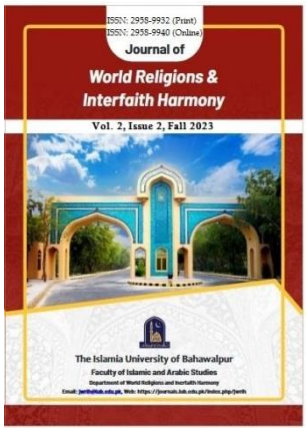


Journal of World Religions and Interfaith

ISSN: 2958-9932 (Print), 2958-9940 (Online)
Vol. 2, Issue 2, Fall 2023, PP. 216-226
HEC:https://hjrs.hec.gov.pk/index.php?r=site%2Fresult&id=1089593#journal_result
Journal homepage: https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/jwrih
Issue: https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/jwrih/issue/view/145
Link: https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/jwrih/article/view/2095

Publisher: Department of World Religions and Interfaith Harmony, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

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Received on: 30 August, 2023
Accepted on: 15 December, 2023
Published on: 31 December, 2023

Citation: Dr. Tayyaba Razzaq. 2023. "An Analytical & Critical Study of the Concept & Techniques of Distortion in Sacred Books of Semitic Religions and Quranic Interpretation". *Journal of World Religions and Interfaith Harmony* 2 (2):216-226. https://doi.org/10.52461/jwrih.v2i2.2095.

Publisher: The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

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An Analytical & Critical Study of the Concept & Techniques of Distortion in Sacred Books of Semitic Religions and Quranic Interpretation

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Abstract

This concentrate research study essentially targets featuring the ways utilized by Jew Rabbis and Christian Priests in contorting the heavenly Torah and Gospel separately in the illumination of Qur'anic sections that manage those habits of mutilation. The techniques utilized in this study are inductive and logical. Data gathered from the information concerning the twisting of the Torah and Gospel from the old style and contemporary books of Qur'anic translation, different books and on-line sources connected with the review. This research paper seeks to identify and highlight the linguistic detail of distortion, its concept and used techniques in sacred books of Semitic religions. Main points of the argument are; Quranic Interpretation of the concept & techniques distortion, mutilation the Jews and Christians in their exercises: crediting human works to the expressions of Allah almighty, concealing various uncovered texts, stirring up reality with lie, misspeaking the hallowed texts, overlooking the divine texts, having confidence in specific refrains of the radiant book and excusing some others etc. The paper would depend on the concept- aligning & explaining Quranic Interpretation of distortion. This paper work will provide theoretical orientation; make reference to relevant theoretical and empirical literatures for adequate clarification, comprehension and action sought where needed. The research study will extract the distortion methods from the Quranic verses. Qualitative research methodology has adopted.

Keywords: Distortion, Torah, Gospel, Qur'anic Interpretation, Christians.

Introduction of Distortion

Distortion is actually the dishonesty & modification of the documents.[1] Linguistic meaning: In the language books 'there are a number of linguistic meanings of the word "*Al-Tahrif*" are mentioned: First: It is the deviation of a thing from its direction, and its inclination from it to another It is in a real sense implies changing the spot of letters or changing a letter in a word, or changing the significance of an assertion. More explicitly Distortion is to deliberately adjust any word in Divine Sacred texts[2], tweaking[3], Changing the speech and removing it from its original meaning[4].

The term of distortion, as Muhammad Sayed Ṭanṭawī, said in his book "The Children of Israel in the Qur'an" and the Sunnah: "Extracting revelation and the law from what it came with, by changing and altering words, or by concealment and corrupt interpretation and falsehood."[5]

As indicated by Islam, there are a couple of sorts of contortions:

1. To misspeak specific letters of a word and hence to give an alternate significance to it,
2. To confound a hadith or Quranic stanza,
3. To make changes in the texts of the Qur'an and the Hadiths purposely and accordingly to make bogus augmentations to them.

Distortion implies ruining and modifying the embodiment of a heavenly sacred text, has been utilized in Islamic Writing to allude to the progressions that The Torah and The Gospel went through and to the impedance of their soul. The examinations have shown that there are not many explanations and sections in Torah that can be acknowledged as the Expression of Allah. There are more words, stories; lessons and exhortation were added by Rabbis, and Jewish translators and interpreters to that number of articulations and entries which bear the nature of being Heavenly Text. In this regard, it is very hard to recover the first text by eliminating the augmentations. In distortion activities, which are:

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[1] : "Tahrïf" in H. A. R. Gibb & J. H. Kramers, **Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam**,(Leiden: E J. Brill, 1991) 560. Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn, Muhammad bin 'Umar, **Mafātīh al-Ghaib** (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2000)3rd edition,3/134

[2] Muṣṭafā, Ibrāhīm wa 'ākharūn. No. **Al-Muʿjam al-wasīṭ.** No. Turkiyā: al-Maktabat al-Islāmiyyah No: 1/167

[3] Ibn Manẓūr, Muḥammad ibn Mukarram al-'afrīqī. No. **Lisān al-ʿArab.** Bayrūt: Dār 'iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'arabī. 3/129

[4] Al-Zubaidī, 1996: 6/67-68

[5] Ṭanṭawī, Muḥammad Sayyid. 2000. **Banū 'isrā'īl Fi al-Qurān wa al-Sunnah**. al-Qėhirah: Dār al-Shurūq.p;71-73

writing books from themselves and attributing them to God Almighty; Concealment of many divine text statuses; overlaying the truth with falsehood? Rabbis and priests also forgot a large part of memorized texts of the Torah (provisions) and Bible (Gospel).

Purpose of the Study

This article aims mainly to highlight the concept & methods used by the Jewish Rabbis and Christian priests in the distortion activities in Torah and Bible. The study relied on the inductive method Analytical and deductive. Data collected from the distortion that occurred in the Torah and Bible from both ancient and modern interpretations, and other general books, and Internet.

The research study relied on the analytical method in establishing evidence on the concepts and methods of distortion in Semitic religions. The research study extracted the distortion methods from the Quranic verses.

Types of Distortion

There are three kinds of distortions in the Bible: explicit distortions caused by changes, removal of verses and phrases; omissions, and lastly additions to the original text. Those are clearly related to the actual or original text's changes. The implicit distortions occur when the text is deliberately misinterpreted without actually changing.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi divided the distortion into five categories:

1; combining lies and truths in such a way that they cannot be distinguished from one another

2; the concealment of the facts

3; Keeping the truth hidden

4; interpreting and verbalizing the words in a way that is different from how they are used.

5; Reading the text in ambiguous way to confuse the listener[6]

Concept of Distortion in Semitic Religions

Since all Christians, Protestants and Catholics alike, acknowledge the existence of such distortions in the Bible, there is no room for debate regarding their existence. Opposing to popular belief, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are not the four canonical Gospel authors. Because no one of the sacred book was written before the collapse of Jerusalem (70 A.D)

The Rabbis and Christian Chaplains or priests in the early church, have been written sacred text and their explanations'. With the passage of time, these religious leaders became so popular in the masses that they forget the actual teachings and started following these explanatory text of the saints etc. They

[6] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi, **Zad al-Ma`ad**, Cairo: al-Matba`ah al-Misriyah, n.d., vol. 3

made distortion in the actual texts and given them the meanings of their own choices. They claimed that Jews distorted the Old Testament passages that contained Christ-related orientations and commands that Jews considered to have eternal value through misinterpretation. Protestant theologians assert that Catholics have distorted numerous Old Testament and New Testament texts. Protestants are also accused by Catholics of distorting the Bible's text. The Christians have already provided historical examples of implicit distortions. As far as textual distortion is concerned, Protestants deny it have opinioned that these writings, present false arguments and erroneous statements are an effort to sway Muslims into doubt about them.

Regarding the Torah, differences between the three Hebrew, Syrian, and Greek versions, which were referred to by Jews, Samaritans, and Christians, were sought as evidence for verbal distortions. They considered these differences to be evidence for the unreliability of the existing Torah, along with the date at which it was compiled, the absence of frequent transmissions of its copies, and Ezra's writing of it.

Dirks give his view about the authenticity of 'Torah' and concluding that "Torah is collection of constant incision & attached material, whose derivation is undated and untraceable.[7]The writers & the compilers of the Christian Gospels Association of Gnostic, Pauline, and Pertine were pushed to please too much coalition. (It was the cause of many ideological & foundational conflicts, like the reality in existence of this world or the next?[8]Many agnostic ideas have been attached to the Bible as The Bible "of Christians" was written after Jesus.[9]Jesus had not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it.[10]Richardson viewed that such changes occurred as the Christian church possessed over it. They captivated several irreligious approaches with it. These extensions hanging like a load over the Biblical research.[11] Bucaille (A French scientist) says that these dogmas were taken as a sample for experiment. He says; "*The Church has deeply changed the life, tradition& wisdom of Jesus*."[12] A lot of Christians feel humiliated and even

[7] : Dirks, Jerald F., **The Cross & The Crescent**, (United States: Amana Publications, 2001) p. 48
[8] : Guthrie, Gary D., **The Wisdom Tree: A Journey to the Heart of God and Man's Religions**, (USA: Paperback, 1997) p: 101
[9] : Paine, Thomas, **The Age of Reason,(** Prometheus Books, 1984) p. 25.
[10] : Matthew 5:17
[11] : G. H. Richardson, **The Value of Biblical Archaeology, Biblical World Journal**, 1916, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 17.
[12] : Richard Fletcher : **The Cross and the Crescent: Christianity and Islam from Muhammad to the Reformation**,(USA: Paperback, 2005)

confused in understanding the definite depiction of Gospels.[13]Some missionary distorted definite occurrence in Jesus life by defending a certain point of view and ignore certain events. The events described were in the fictitious nature.[14]The Biblical scholars criticize the inconsistent topic even in very first chapter of the book of Genesis.[15]

'Quranic' Point Of View

Refers to misinterpretations caused by verbal changes made to scriptures' texts, Qur'an resolves of the problem of distortion. The Qur'an declares that Christians and Jews tampered with sacred texts. Hadiths also talk about the distortions. Muslims have typically relied on variations in various manuscripts and versions of the Bible to demonstrate the verbal distortions in the Torah and the Gospel. They argue that the Bible's omission of the stoning punishment for adultery and the omission of the Prophet Muhammad's (P.B.U.H) name are the most significant distortions. These scriptures are also regarded as evidence for distortions due to some irrational content like the Trinity and the contradictions in their texts.

The Holy Qur'an referred to the loss of the Torah, as Jewish and Christian scholars and rabbis deliberately distorted the Book of God Almighty, and wrote books and deposit with their opinions they invent that contradict what God revealed to Moses (peace be upon him) of the beliefs and rulings of the religion. It is nothing but their false and corrupt interpretations, and they have made people worship them, and they have corrupted their religion, deluding their common people and their ignorant ones. As stated in the Holy Quran;

'فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُواْ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًاۖ فَوَيْلٌ لَّهُم مِّمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَّهُم مِّمَّا يَكْسِبُون "[16]

This verse was revealed about the Jews who distorted Torah by changing the description of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and changing his epithet. An-Nasa'i narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbass: "Those who write the book with their own hands" was revealed for the People of the Book.[17] Imam Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani said

[13] Bucaille, Maurice, **The Bible The Quran And Science**, Translated by Alastair D. Pannell,(Kazi Publications, Lahore) p. 44

[14]: The Bible The Quran And Science, P:108 ; Paine, Thomas, **The Age of Reason**,(USA: Prometheus Books, 1984)

[15] : Watham, Arthur E., **The Bible in the New Light, Biblical World Journal** (1910) Vol. 36, No. 1, p 49.

[16] Sūrat al-Baqarah 2: 79

[17] Al-Nasā'ī, Abū ʿabd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad. **Tafsīr al-Nasā'ī**. Bayrūt: Mu'assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyyah. 1990: 1/172

about the interpretation of this verse: "People from among the Children of Israel wrote books for people to eat form them, and then said: These are from God but these were not from God.[18]

The trait of rabbis was Concealment and intentional concealment of many divinely revealed texts while they recognize Scripture and the ˹Prophet˺(P.B.U.H) as they recognize their own children. Yet a group of them hides the truth knowingly. As Quran says'

"ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَعْرِفُونَهُۥ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ[19] "

"Those We have given the Scripture recognize this ˹Prophet˺(P.B.U.H) as they recognize their own children. Yet a group of them hides the truth knowingly" Quran also says;

"يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا كُنتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَيَعْفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٍ ۚ قَدْ جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَٰبٌ مُّبِينٌ[20] "

"O People of the Book! Now Our Messenger has come to you, revealing much of what you have hidden of the Scriptures and disregarding much. There certainly has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book". Quran further says;

"وَمَا قَدَرُواْ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ إِذْ قَالُواْ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ بَشَرٍ مِّن شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ مَنْ أَنزَلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ٱلَّذِى جَآءَ بِهِۦ مُوسَىٰ نُورًا وَهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ ۖ تَجْعَلُونَهُۥ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا ۖ وَعُلِّمْتُم مَّا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوٓاْ أَنتُمْ وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِى خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ"[21]

"And they have not shown Allah His proper reverence when they said, "Allah has revealed nothing to any human being." Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ "Who then revealed the Book brought forth by Moses as a light and guidance for people, which you split into separate sheets—revealing some and hiding much? You have been taught ˹through this Quran˺ what neither you nor your forefathers knew."

[18] Al-Ṣanʿānī, 1989: 1/50-51
[19] Al-Baqarah 2: 146
[20] Al-Mā'idah 5: 15,
[21] Al-'Anʿām: 91

Say, ˹O Prophet, (P.B.U.H) "Allah ˹revealed it˺!" Then leave them to amuse them with falsehood".

"فَبَدَّلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ قَوۡلًا غَيۡرَ ٱلَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمۡ فَأَنزَلۡنَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ رِجۡزٗا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَفۡسُقُونَ" [22]

The wrongdoers changed the words they were commanded to say. So Allah sent down a punishment upon them for their rebelliousness. One type of intentional concealment is twisting tongue or letters and change with amplification of words. Meaning in this verse is distortion of the tongue by means of a letter of the alphabet into another letter that approximates it; deliver to ears of the listener.

Abu Al-Saud said: The concealment [23]is leaving the intentional display of a thing even there is a great need for it; by simply covering or concealing it, and it may be by removing it and putting something else in its place, these Jewish rabbis and monks did[24].

These religious chiefs made distortion in the actual texts and given them the meanings of their own choices. If we examine what is meant by confusing truth with falsehood in the books of interpretation, we will find it in many forms: Expressing and declaring the good news of the Prophet and concealing falsehood in the heart. The prophet hood was bestowed upon on Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and He brought it from God.

The Holy Book 'Quran' points out and says; "*They have taken their rabbis & their priests as "the Lord" instead of God*".[25]They have written their books after their Prophets.[26]Allah Almighty demanded purity & believe in the oneness of Allah and not to take anyone's "believe & commandments" other than the Lord.[27]

Abu al-Ala al-Mawdudi said: They distort the meanings of the sacred Book given by Allah and overturn its words to extract from its other meanings and when they recite the book, they come up with a word or a paragraph that contradicts it.

[22] Al-Baqarah 2:59

[23] Āl ʿimrān 3: 71, Sūrat al-Baqarah 2: 42

[24] Abū al-Saʿūd, Muḥammad al-ʿimādī al-Ḥanafī. No. **Irshād al-ʿaqlu al-Salīm 'ilā Mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm**. al-Riyād: Maktabat al-Riyād al-Ḥadīthah. 1:290

[25] :Touba 9:31

[26] : Ibn Taymiyya, Taqiyy al-Din, **Al-Tafsir Al-Kabir**, Edited Abd ul-Rahman Umayrah,(Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-ìlmiyyah n.d.), I/ 207-209.

[27] Al-Imran 3:64

According to their developed interests, beliefs, and theories they twist their tongues to change meanings.[28]

Allah Almighty sent His Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) may God's prayers and peace be upon him; to clarify the matters that were hidden by the People of the Book before his advent, and to pardon many. As the Almighty said;

"يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمۡ كَثِيرٗا مِّمَّا كُنتُمۡ تُخۡفُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَيَعۡفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٖۚ قَدۡ جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ نُورٞ وَكِتَٰبٞ مُّبِينٞ"[29]

Messenger has come to revealing much of what they have hidden of the Scriptures. There certainly has come from Allah with the light of a clear Book.

The Bible about the Prophets:

The Prophets are the greatest, purest and best of all human beings, and the bearers of God's message and words are supposed to be so. But the holy Bible presents prophets with the characteristics of bandits and criminals. It describes the prophets of God as a group of men with attributes promiscuity[30], debauchery[31], and evil so much that they cannot control their whims and desires. And that is the holy book that accuses the best of the prophets by killing virtue and assassinating a model, accusing the prophets of adultery, accusing them of indecency, and polluting them in front of their followers.

The Jewish and Christian rabbis concealed the ruling on stoning the married adulterer, when they asked the Prophet (P.B.U.H) about his ruling and he judged them both. The stoning, then they left it and tried to suppress it, but the truth appeared from the mouth of Abdullah bin Soria, as we see in the Almighty's saying that among the Jews are avid listeners to falsehood. They distort words beyond their proper usages, beware. Those are amongst for whom Allah does not intend to purify their hearts. For them in this world is disgrace, and for them in the Hereafter is a great punishment.[32]

The Quran said that there is a number of "distortions" in Semitic scriptures, in connotation of the text [33](change in words & meanings[34]false

[28] Al-Maudūdī, Abū al-'aʿlā. **Tafhīm al-Qurān**. al-Kuwīt: Dār al-Qalam, 1978. 1/83
[29] Al-Mā'idah 5: 15
[30] Al-Kitāb al-Muqaddas, old Testament; 20
[31] Bible ; 372-373, 414, 736
[32] Mā'idah 5: 41
[33] :Al-Baqarah 2:59
[34]: Al-Tabari , Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Jafar.(n.d). Jami' **al-Biyan fi Tafsir ayi al-Quran**, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Hijr, 1988), I/303

impressions with their tone[35]& concealing[36]). These people "Jew-scholars"[37] had written it with their hands and said it is from the Lord.[38]They listen from the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and deliver with change to others; [39]they are cursed[40]& heavily punished in life hereafter.[41]The main dogma of the world religion is almost the distorted form of actual religious scripture except Quran, as Allah Almighty has taken the obligation of its protection.

"إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ "

"*Definitely, We (Allah) have sent this scripture, and We will certainly safeguard it*".[42]

Distortion Methods Revealed by the Qur'an

- Write books by themselves and attributing them to Allah
- Concealment of divine texts
- Confusing truth with falsehood to mislead and deceive people
- to mislead and deceive people by their Tongues
- Forgotten (rabbis and monks)the sacred texts of the Torah and the Gospel
- The followers of the rulings of the Torah and the Gospel, if they are in accord with themselves, otherwise left it.
- Lying and denial
- Disruption
- Belief in some of the Book and disbelief with others
- Neglect

[35]: Al-Imran 3:78. Al-Qutabi, Abū 'Abd Allāh, Muḥammad bin Ahmad,(n.d). **Al-Jāmiʿ li Aḥkām al-Qurān**. (Bayrūt: Muʾassisah Manahil al-ʿIrfan) II, part 4, 78. Jami' al-Biyan fi Tafsir ayi al-Quran 3/ 323.

[36] : Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. **Jāmiʿ al-Bayān ʿan Ta'wīl 'ā'i al-Qurān**. Markaz al-Buḥūth wa al-Dirāsāt al-ʿArabiyyah wa al-Islāmiyyah, Dār al Ḥijr. 2001. 2/52-53-89

[37] : Jami' al-Biyan fi Tafsir ayi al-Quran, I/367-368 Suyuti, Jalal al-Din ,Abdul-Rahman b. Abi Bakr , **Al-Durr al-Manthorfl al-Tafsir al-Ma'thur** (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-ìlmiyyah, 1990), I/157.

[38] : Al-Baqarah 2:79

[39]: Al-Baqarah 2:75; Al-Nisa 4:46

[40] : Al-Maida 5:13.

[41]: Al-Maida 5:41.

[42] : Al Hijar 15:9

-Kitāb al-Muqaddas. 2008. al-Qẻhirah: Dār al-Kitāb al-Muqaddas, Version-7, Publish 4

al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn. 2003. al-Durr al-Manthūr Fi al-Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr. al-Qẻhirah: Markaz Hijr li al-Buḥūth wa al-Dirāsāt al-ʿarabiyyah wa al-Islāmiyyah.

- Presumption

Conclusion

The research study revealed that Distortion is to take the revelation by unlawful act, by changing the wording, by concealment, or by corrupt and false interpretation. There is no doubt that the Torah and Gospels have been distorted, whether it is a verbal or implied distortion, and there is no dispute among Muslims. This study has lifted the veil of hideous deeds of Jewish rabbis and Christian monks related to distortion in the Torah and the divine Bible for the presidency and gaining people's money unjustly.

Seventeen verses of the Qur'an[43] revealed eleven techniques used by rabbis and monks in distortion activities, which are as follows: write and attributed to Allah Almighty; intentional concealment of many revealed divine texts; covers Truth with falsehood to mislead, confuse and deceive people; Oral-linguistic style of distortion in the way of pronouncing words; may be the letters, twisting tongues. The rabbis and monks forgotten abundant material of sacred they memorized from the texts of the Torah and the Bible with the passage of time and the lack of people who memorize it, due to the abandonment of religion and the lack of its practice and education. They follow the rules that were not found in the Torah & Gospels**.** There was disruption; Belief in some of the Book and disbelief others**.**

The followers of the Jews and the Christians are two groups. On group is ignorant, and they know nothing of the sacred Book except conjecture, and they are forgiven for everything they work and the sins they commit. Other one takes advantage of this ignorance and illiteracy to defame the Book of God, and distort the words from their places, make corrupt interpretations, and they are sinners tormented on the Day of Resurrection.

The things that the Jews and Christians distorted are three: the good news (blessedness) of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) his attributes and legal rulings found in the Torah and the Bible and the actual teachings of the Torah and Bible.

[43] : Al-Baqarah 2; 42, 78 ،79 ، Al-Imran 3; 71, 78, 93,187. Al-Nisa 4; 46. Al-Juma 5 85, 101, 159, 146. Al-Maida 5; 13,15,41. Al-Anam 6; 91.