My plan is to make this the final post for now on the issue of the Qur’an fragments discovered at the University of Birmingham. Obviously the discussion could go on forever (it’s been going on for 1500 years and is not likely to stop any time soon). But I’m not a scholar of the Qur’an or of Islam, and I would prefer sticking to topics that are within my realm of expertise.

I know that comment itself will prompt emails from two groups of people, (a) from Muslims urging me to study the Qur’an so I will see that it is true and convert to Islam and (b) from Christians urging me to subject the Qur’an to the same kind of scrutiny to which critical scholars have subjected the NT, in order to show that Islam too has abundant problems. The reason I know this will happen is because I get both kinds of emails, *all* the time! But I’m sorry to say, I’m not going to convert to Islam and I’m not going to write about something that takes many years of diligent study for any real competency. I have a lot on my plate already, and am quite happy both were I am in terms of my spiritual journey and the course of my future scholarship.

In this post I want simply to point out that there has been some very critical (negative) responses to the Qur’an fragments at Birmingham and to deal with one comment in particular I have received from a number of my Muslim readers.

First the responses. There are some scholars who are not convinced that the fragments are helpful for showing that the Qur’an has been faithfully memorized and recorded since the seventh century. I am no expert, and these scholars’ claims will be highly controversial – especially among the Muslim faithful. But it’s important to bear in mind several sides of the debate.

I am particularly aware of the cautions of ....

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