

Islam or Christianity – Which is True?

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Introduction: We need to know how God has spoken.

- A. The evidence of God's existence is overwhelming. All men know they need to seek and find the God that made them. **(Rom 1:20; Acts 17:26-27)**
 - 1. When men take the knowledge of God and pervert it into idolatry or a false religion, the results are tragic. **(Psa 115:4-8)**
 - 2. How many false prophets and religious cults have arisen and captured people's minds to the extent that they would do anything? (Ex. Jim Jones)
- B. What are the basic claims of Christianity and Islam?
 - 1. Jesus openly challenged everyone to test their beliefs. **(Jn 7:17; 8:32)**
 - 2. I have received e-mails from Muslim apologist challenging me to test Christianity and the Muslim faith. This lesson is the fruits of those tests.

I. The Claims and Teachings of Muhammad

- A. Muhammad claimed to be a Prophet of God. "In the year 610 (believed to be the 26th of Ramadan), while in a cave on Mt. Hirah, Muhammad said that the angel Gabriel appeared to him and commanded him to recite (96:1-19). This recitation became the Qur'an." ⁴
- B. Muhammad claimed to work no miracles. ¹
- C. Muhammad claimed that the prophets of the Old and New Testament were from God and that that message had been put in writing. ¹
- D. "He said that the Day of Judgment was coming and that a man's works will be weighed on that day. Those whose good deeds outweigh their bad may, by Allah's grace, be saved and enter Paradise which is full of sensual pleasures." ⁴
- E. You simply must accept these claims because Muhammad gave no evidence to establish himself as a Prophet.
 - 1. Even though He claims to believe the Bible prophets, He does not believe in the Bible. His sayings alone are to be considered.
 - 2. "One of the reasons I am so skeptical about Muhammad's "so-called" revelations is that they lack any credible evidentiary verification and review, there are no independent witnesses as to the content of his revelations, he dictated them from memory after the fact, and that source of the Quran is from only one person, there is no verifiable prophecy, and no verification of facts are available from anyone other than Muhammad himself."
 - 3. Why would anyone become a believer in this man's claims?

II. The Claims and Teachings of Jesus

- A. Jesus showed that His life, death and teachings were foretold by a large volume of prophecies found in the Old Testament. **(John 5:39; Luke 24:25-26; 44-45)**
 - 1. This point is also made by New Testament writers. **(Acts 3:18)**
 - 2. All of these writings were in existence before the birth of Christ. The Dead Sea scrolls prove this.
 - 3. Here is a detailed description of Christ's crucifixion. **(Psa 22:1, 6-8, 14-18)**
 - 4. Look at the account of the New Testament writers. **(Matt 27:35, 41-46)**

5. There are many other examples like this! (**Isa 53**)
- B. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and, as a result, freely accepted worship without rebuking the worshippers. (**Matthew 28:9-10; John 20:27-29**)
- C. Jesus claimed that the sacrifice of Himself on the cross would provide the only path to God. (**John 8:24**).
- D. Jesus claimed that His miracles proved that He was from God.
 1. Jesus pointed to these without contradiction. (**John 5:36; 10:25**)
 2. The blind man Jesus healed could see the implications. (**John 9:32-33**)
 3. What other answer is possible?

“During His lifetime, Jesus performed many miracles. He healed the sick, the lame and the blind. He turned water into wine. He walked on water. Twice, He fed thousands just out of a small amount of bread and fish. He raised the dead. He cast out demons. He forgave sin. He clearly exercised power over Satan. His miracles are so numerous that we need not list all of them here. Even a brief examination of the Gospels proves the point. According to the Quran, there are dozens of Suras which state that Muhammad never performed a single miracle. He did not heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons, or rule over the elements of nature. Muhammad, when asked about miracles, either stayed silent, or simply responded that "he was just a man."”

III. The Koran and the Bible

- A. Muslims believe the angel Gabriel revealed the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad a little at a time. The revelations began about A.D. 610 and continued until Muhammad's death in 632. They believe that the earthly book, bound between covers, is a copy of an eternal book that is kept in heaven.
 1. What will you find when you read the Koran?
 2. It is a disjointed, incoherent collection of contradictory laws.
 3. There is no fulfilled prophecy of claims of prophecy that predicted Muhammad or his work.
- B. Muslims must attack the Bible so that it will not be seriously examined. Here are their lines of attack.
 1. We do not have the original manuscripts (autographs) of the Bible.
 2. The original manuscripts were copied by fallible men and as a result every copy that we possess today contains errors. In fact, no two manuscripts are alike.
 3. Because these errors exist, then whatever was originally in the Bible is “unknowable” today.
 4. The copyists intentionally put their own “mischievous” beliefs into the text since the Bible records examples of sexual sins. One example he cites is that the Bible “displays lady's nude bath! (II-Samuel 11: 2-5).”
- C. Let us compare the assertions and charges of this fallible man to the promises of Jesus. (**Matthew 24:35**).
 1. The original ancient texts had to be copied by hand in order to be preserved. There are no original manuscripts in existence.
 2. However, honest scholars can easily determine if the present Bible was transmitted accurately or if there was some conspiracy to later change

the text.

- a. We have at least 5,366 manuscripts of the Greek New Testament in existence today, in whole or in part, that testify to the accuracy of the New Testament.
 - b. There are nearly complete manuscripts that date from 280 to 350 AD and there is a fragment that is dated around 125 AD.
 - c. For the Old Testament we have the Dead Sea Scrolls that were written around 100 BC, which include a complete scroll of the book of Isaiah, along with other ancient manuscripts.¹
 - d. When the text of Isaiah found in the Dead Sea Scrolls was compared to what had previously been the oldest known text of Isaiah (written 900 years later), the two texts matched word for word with only minor variations.⁶
 - e. Jesus read from one of these texts of Isaiah in His ministry and called it scripture (**Luke 4:16-21**)! By doing so He gave His approval for the accuracy and authority of these scrolls produced by copyists.
3. What kind of “errors” are we talking about? The bulk of these differences are in spelling and word order that have absolutely no affect upon the meaning! For example: “**The king Herod**” verses “**Herod the king**” and “**Jerusalem with Him**” versus “**all Jerusalem with Him**”⁷
 4. If some men had developed a conspiracy to deliberately change the text, then there should be numerous examples of major differences in these manuscripts.
 - a. These kinds of differences simply do not exist.
 - b. It would have been impossible for any later conspirators to find all the manuscripts that were spread over several countries and then change them (in some cases parts of scripture were copied and buried with the bodies of Christians!).

D. I challenge all to read the Bible and to read the Koran! Many Muslims will not take up this challenge!

1. Consider one Muslim who was caught reading the Bible.

“He asked me what I was reading. I told him and he responded angrily, “I fear lest you become a Christian.” I was very much provoked at his reply and, although I did not wish to seem disrespectful, I could not help saying: “Why should I become a Christian? Does the mere reading of the New Testament make one a Christian? I am reading it in order to destroy Christianity root and branch. You should encourage me in this matter instead of finding fault with me.” He replied: “I said this because I have heard that he who reads the New Testament becomes a Christian. Have you not heard what a certain poet has said: ‘When he reads the New Testament, the heart of the faithful one turns away from Islam?’” “This information is inaccurate,” I replied. After giving me further counsel, the mawlavi returned to his room.” <http://www.the-good-way.com/eng/article/a18.htm#1#1>

IV. The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus

- A. Jesus pointed to His own resurrection as the ultimate proof to his enemies.

(John 2:19-21; Matt 27:63-64)

1. This made the enemies work harder to prevent it.
2. This was "the sign" to all unbelievers. **(Matt 12:39-40)**
- B. The Motive and lives of the eyewitnesses testify to their credibility.
 1. There was nothing to gain by these men making up lies. **(1 Cor 15:30-32)**
 2. These men all died a martyr's death, except John.
- C. Test the evidence presented by the eyewitnesses **(Matt 27:57-66)**
 1. Jesus was dead. **(John 19:32-36)**
 2. The body was placed in a new tomb. **(Matt 27:60)**
 3. The tomb was cut out of rock. **(Matt 27:60)**
 4. A large stone covered the entrance. **(Matt 27:60)**
 5. A Roman seal was placed on the stone. **(Matt 27:66)**
 6. A Roman Guard was placed at the tomb. **(Matt 27:65-66)**
 7. The tomb was inspected carefully. **(John 20:3-8, 11)**
- D. Who moved the stone?
 1. Did the Jews? **(Matt 27:62-66)**
 - a. The Jews were the very ones trying to prevent the resurrection.
 - b. If so they could present the body 50 days later! **(Acts 2:32, 36)**
 2. Did the Romans?
 - a. The Romans would not want to risk their necks for "Jewish superstition."
 - b. The penalty for a Roman guard's failure was death. **(Acts 16:27; 27:42)**
 3. Did the Disciples?
 - a. This was the best explanation the Jews could produce. **(Matt 28:11-15)**
 - b. If they were asleep, how did they know it was the disciples?
 - c. Why did the Romans authorities not prosecute the apostles?
 - d. Did the apostles give their lives for a lie?
 4. Who then moved the stone? **(Acts 13:27-31)**
- E. Jesus' tomb is empty while Muhammad's is occupied.

Conclusion: Will you find the forgiveness of God?

- A. Jesus pointed to His sacrifice as the only way to God. **(John 3:16; 8:24; 14:6)**
- B. Muhammad pointed to an impersonal God that has scales to weigh your works.
Salvation is wholly of man and is earned. How good is good enough?
- C. Forgiveness is assured through the promises of God! **(Acts 2:38, Romans 4:1-6)**

¹**The Hutto – El Dareer Debate**, Birmingham, Alabama October 21-25, 1974

²**The Origins of the Koran: Classic Essays on Islam's Holy Book**, Edited by Ibn Warraq; Prometheus Books, 1998 <http://debate.org.uk/topics/books/origins-koran.html>

³**The Compilation Of The Qur'an As Recorded In The Hadith** - By Ney Rieber
<http://www.bible.ca/islam/islam-quran-changed-editing-process.htm>

⁴**Muhammad**, CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS & RESEARCH MINISTRY,
<http://www.carm.org/islam/muhammad.htm>

5 - Bruce, F.F. (1953), *The New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), fourth edition.

6. - The Reality of Copyists' Errors URL: <http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/608>

7. J. W. McGarvey (1886), *Evidences of Christianity*, Pages 13-15