

INTRODUCTION TO MUSLIM EVANGELISM – WITNESSING EFFECTIVELY TO MUSLIMS

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1. Brief Introduction to Muslim Claims For The Quran

The Quran is held to be God's perfect and final revelation to mankind. It was revealed by God to Muhammad over a 23 year period through the medium of the angel Gabriel. The first revelation took place in the year A.D. 610 to Muhammad at the age of forty. This lasted until the latter's death in A.D. 633.

The Quran consists of 114 chapters called *suras* which are placed haphazardly, having no chronological sequence. This is due to the fact that Muhammad died unexpectedly, having failed to produce a chronological order of the chapters to the Quran.

Below we present some of the claims made by Muslims in support of the Quran's divine origin and our response to them.

A. Perfect Preservation of Text

The Quran has been transmitted with no variant readings, being virtually identical to the codices compiled by Muhammad's companions.

B. Perfect Eloquence

This argument is made stronger when one realizes that Muhammad, according to Islamic traditions, was illiterate. This makes it impossible for Muhammad to be the author of a Book

considered by Muslims to be the epic of Arabic poetry and eloquence.

C. Scientific Accuracy of the Text

It is presumed that not only does the Quran contain no demonstrable errors of science, but foretold certain facts only recently discovered. For instance, the Quran accurately lays out the different stages of embryonic development centuries before modern science ever discovered them.

This is supposedly documented by a french doctor, Maurice Bucaille, in his work titled *The Bible Quran and Science*.

D. The Challenge of the Quran

In S. 2:23 the Quran challenges unbelievers:

And if ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant,

Then produce a Sura like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (if there are any)

Besides God, if your (doubts) are true. Y. Ali

Accordingly, this challenge to produce a sura like it has never been met for nearly 1400 years, affirming the divine origin of the revelation.

1a. Response to Claims

A. To assume that the preservation of a text proves its inspiration is fallacious since every book that has been preserved accurately would be the word of God.

Besides, the Quran is not free from variant readings since thousands of conflicting readings existed during the caliphate of Uthman (d. 658 A.D.) , Islam's third leader. This has been documented by Arthur Jeffery's work *Materials For the History of*

the Text of the Quran.

B. Eloquence does not prove inspiration since there are records of men who, in spite of certain handicaps, were able to produce masterpieces that have stood the test of time. One example is the blind poet Homer who produced two Greek classics, *Odyssey* and *Illiad*.

C. Again the claim that a book containing accurate scientific information qualifies it as the word of God would make all documents that contain no factual errors God's word.

Furthermore, a careful analysis of the Quran indicates that it is far from being free from scientific errors. For instance, in S. 18:86 we are told that the sun sets in a muddy spring. Or that men were transformed into apes and swine. S. 2:65; 5:60; 7:166

Finally, the work done by Dr. Maurice Bucaille is far from being an unbiased critique of the Bible and the Quran. Bucaille often has to mistranslate and twist certain words of the Quran in order to arrive at his conclusions. An excellent response to Bucaille's work is Dr. William Campbell's *The Quran and the Bible in light of History and Science* available from Middle East Resources, PO Box 96, Upper Darby PA 19082.

D. This challenge of the Quran to produce a sura like it is purely subjective, since no matter what is produced a Muslim can never acknowledge that the challenge has been met. This stems primarily from the Quran itself which disallows any possibility whatsoever for it to be defeated:

But if ye cannot- **AND OF A SURETY YE CANNOT**- then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones,- which is prepared for those who reject faith. S. 2:24 Ali

Hence, to even attempt to meet the challenge defeats the purpose seeing that a devout Muslim will never admit to the criteria being met.

2. Muslim Claims For Muhammad's Prophethood.

A. Muhammad's Integrity.

Presumably, Muhammad was the epitome of virtue and honesty. His life was exemplary, a model for humanity to follow.

B. Advent foretold in Previous Scriptures.

The Quran claims that Muhammad's advent was foretold by God to both Moses and Jesus, as well as to their followers. S.7:156-157; 61:6

Two prophecies often pointed out by Muslims to prove that Muhammad is predicted in the Holy Bible are Deuteronomy 18:15-20, the Prophet like Moses; and Jesus' promise to the disciples that another Comforter was to arrive in John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26, and 16:7

2a. Response to Claims

A. An examination of Muhammad's life opens up many questions which need to be addressed. For example, the Quran itself testifies that Muhammad was a sinner in suras 4:105-107, 9:48, 40:55, 47:19, and 48:1-2. In fact, in S. 80:1-10 Muhammad is rebuked for ignoring a blind man's request focusing instead on a wealthy Arab noble.

We are also told that Muhammad was allowed to take his adopted son's divorcee as his wife in S. 33:36-38. To make matters more difficult, Muslim historians such as al-Baidawi indicate it

was Muhammad who was the cause of the divorce in the first place.

Another questionable aspect of his life is the fact that he took a nine year old girl by the name of Aisha to be his bride. This becomes more astonishing when we realize that Muhammad was 56 years old at the time. *Bukhari* vol. 7:64

B. There are no predictions of Muhammad in the Bible since the prophecies in question do not refer to him at all. The first prophecy is referring to Christ, who truly was the Prophet like Moses c.f. John 1:45, 5:46; Acts 3:20-26

The second prophecy refers to the advent of the Holy Spirit, who arrived shortly thereafter on the day of Pentecost, empowering the church of Christ to carry out the great commission of world evangelism. c.f. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8, 2:1-47

For a more in-depth critique of the above Muslim claims consult John Gilchrist's *Is Muhammad Foretold in the Bible?* available from South Asian Friendship Center, PO Box 607673 Chicago Ill. 60660

3. Muslim View of the Bible

Muslims believe that God, in the past, revealed inspired books to certain prophets for their respective communities to follow. These books include the Book of Abraham, the Law of Moses, the Psalms of David, and the Gospel of Jesus. S.5:44-47; 21:105; 87:18-19

Yet, Muslims presume that these books became corrupt in time and no longer reflect the original revelations. It therefore

became necessary for the Quran to be given in order to expose the corruptions and verify all that remained intact in the previous scriptures.

In response to this, it must be reiterated that nowhere in the Quran does it ever say that the Bible has ever been corrupted. In fact, the Quran affirms that an uncorrupted Bible existed during the time of Muhammad. S.2:113; 3:79, 93-94; 5:44-48; 28:48-49; 32:23; 53:36

We currently have in our possessions copies of the Holy Bible dating before, during and after the time of Muhammad that are virtually identical to the Bible we have today. This destroys the Muslim myth of Bible corruption since the Quran testifies to the authority and preservation of the biblical text.

In fact, the Quran commands Muhammad to verify his message by appealing to the book of the Judeo-Christian communities in S.10:94

4. The Nature of God Contrasted

A. Muslim Perspective.

God is absolutely One, allowing for no plurality in the Being of God. In fact to assume a plurality is to commit the unpardonable sin called *Shirk*, association of partners with Allah. S.4:116

It is not surprising then to find that the God of Islam is not a Triune Being of Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

Say: He is Allah (Arabic term for God), the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;

He begetteth not, nor is He begotten;

And there is none like unto Him. S.112:1-4

This verse will not only not allow for plurality, but denies God as Father since he “beggeth not”, i.e. has no children. Nor will it allow for God in the flesh, the Son Incarnate, since he cannot be “begotten”. Hence, the first two Persons of the Christian Godhead are eliminated in Islam.

Finally, in Islam the Holy Spirit is not God but the Angel of revelation, Gabriel. Hence, to assume that Muslims and Christians worship the same God is simply erroneous seeing that the Muslim deity is a singularity within unity.

B. Christian Perspective.

The God of the Holy Bible is a perfect Tri-Personal Being, a plurality within an indivisible unity. God exists in three distinct, yet inseparable Persons; each Person being fully God, each existing in perfect harmony and unity. Matthew 28:18-20

The Bible affirms God as,

- . The Father- 1 Peter 1:2
- . The Son- Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1
- . The Holy Spirit- Acts 5:3-4; Hebrews 9:14

Yet, all the while still one God- Deuteronomy 6:4; Galatians 3:20

Note- It should be pointed out that the Quran misrepresents the Trinity by presuming that Christians worship three gods consisting of Father, Mary the mother, and Jesus their Son. c.f. S.4:171; 5:73, 116

So embarrassing is this fact that Muslim translator A. Yusef Ali deliberately added the term trinity into his translation of the text of 4:171 and 5:73, when the word is not even in the Arabic

original.

This is done in a deliberate attempt to deceive non-Arabic speaking readers into thinking that the Quran attacks the trinity when in reality it is attacking a corrupt form of tritheism.

5. The Person of Christ Contrasted.

A. Muslim Perspective

Jesus was only a messenger of God sent to preach the pure Abrahamic monotheism that was eventually perfected by Muhammad, the religion of al-Islam. He was neither God nor the Son of God, and to assume such is utter blasphemy. S.5:17, 72; 9:30

In fact in order for God to have a son implies that he also has a wife. This indicates that Muhammad's understanding of sonship was purely carnal, implying that God had to have sexual relations in order to beget a son. S.6:102; 72:3

Christ is also given certain titles and attributes that he alone shares in the Quran, some of which include:

- . He is the Word of God- 3:39, 45; 4:171
- . A spirit from God- 4:171
- . A sign and mercy to man- 19:21; 21:91
- . Virgin born- 19:16-21
- . Author of Life- 3:49; 5:110- c.f. 15:28-29
- . Sinless- 19:19

Finally, according to the Quran Christ did not die nor was he crucified but ascended alive into heaven. From there, he will return as the final judge, ushering in the end of the age. S.3:55; 4:157-19; 43:57, 61

B. Christian Perspective

The biblical Jesus, which is the Jesus of history, was God the Son who for our sake became a perfect man. Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-3, 14.

The title, Son of God, is not to be understood in a carnal sense, but is used to assert a distinction between the first two Persons of the Godhead. Furthermore, it is also used to indicate the intimate love and communion Christ has shared with the Father from eternity. John 17:5, 24

The Bible also teaches that Jesus came as a sacrifice for our sins that through him we might receive forgiveness and assurance of salvation. Mark 10:45; John 1:29, 3:16, 10:27-28

After dying for sinners on the cross, he was resurrected on the third day to immortal glory. Mark 16:6-8; Luke 24:33-43; John 20:24-29; Acts 1:1-3

From there he ascended to heaven where he now intercedes for believers. He shall also come again to receive them into glory, as well as to judge the nations. John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11, 3:20-21; Hebrews 1:3, 7:24-25, 9:11-12; Revelation 1:7-8, 17-18

Hence, because of the perfect work of Christ believers are guaranteed eternal life seeing that Christians have a perfect savior who perfectly saves all who come to him. John 6:39-40; I Timothy 1:15

This is something no Muslim can ever be assured of since he depends on his imperfect works to justify him before a holy God.

Therefore, Christians should pray and fast that God would

illuminate Muslims in order that they might see and accept Jesus as their personal savior. After all, “the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” James 5:16

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