

Jesus in the Koran

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Many Christians are surprised when they hear Muslims know of Jesus, read about Him in their Holy Scriptures (the Koran), and even respect and follow His teachings. Muslims respect Jesus while Christians rarely look at Muhammad or his writings. My boss this summer was telling me how he follows Jesus, and used to when he was younger, but is now more in belief that his good actions must outweigh his bad actions. All around us people long for good in this broken world. Christians know Jesus is the only answer and remedy for this brokenness from sin (1 Corinthians 15:22). Muslims have the answers as well: it is Jesus and He is written across their Koran. Unfortunately, this Koran portrays Jesus incorrectly.

The Bible and the Koran are in agreement that Jesus was sinless (1 Peter 2:22). All the prophets before Him sinned; only Jesus was perfect and righteous (1 Peter 1:18-19). But the Koran claims that Jesus is not God, where the Bible explicitly says Jesus is One with God the Father (John 10:30).

Muslims respect the rejected and wounded Jesus Christ. But he is just there alongside perhaps 124,000 messengers Allah has sent, and one of the 25 listed in the Quran.

Christians believe in the Trinity--God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20), while the God of Islam is one God, one person.

Although Muslims hold a high regard for Jesus, they don't believe He is divine. In the Surah 2:87 they claim Moses came before Jesus and received the Scriptures. Christians are in agreement, but further believe Moses' life points to Jesus (John 5:46). Jesus did have the clear proofs. He was the Word Incarnate (John 1:1-14). He was the gospel message Himself (Isaiah 4:17-21). In this Surah, Muslims are in agreement that Jesus had the Holy Spirit. Though it seems Muslims believe Jesus was more supported instead of indwelt by the Spirit. The Bible is clear that Jesus is One with God and the Holy Spirit (John 4:24; Ephesians 4:4). Finally, it is true, just like the prophets and judges before the people always needed more. They grew tired of

whoever was speaking to them. Even Jesus was rejected and crucified by those He came to save (John 1:11; Mark 6:4-5; Luke 4:28-30).

In the Surah 2:252-53 God speaks of Jesus as just another messenger, though one with the “clear miracles” and “Holy Spirit.” The Bible claims Jesus could do miracles because He was God. Jesus was indwelt with the Spirit, not just strengthened. The explanation for God’s actions and Jesus as a prophet from God is just that “God does whatever He desires.” That is not strong evidence. For Christians, God, before the beginning of time, knew humans would need a Savior for their sins so He made the plan to send His One and only Son Jesus to die for the sins of the world and come back in resurrection, restoring us into relationship with God (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9). Christians would agree that Jesus had the clear signs and no one after Him should have been confused or needed anything else. Jesus challenged those who demanded Him for miracles, calling them a cursed generation (Matthew 16:4). According to the Muslim and Christian view, because God sent Jesus, He should not have had to send another prophet in the form of Muhammad. Yet the Koran says God did send Muhammad, while the Bible ends with Jesus.

The Surah 3:42-64 shares the story of Mary and Jesus. The Koran is in agreement with the Bible that Jesus did come from the Virgin Mary (Luke 1). She was chosen by God. She was purified by God.

This Surah also claims Jesus is the Messiah. It states that Jesus spoke as a baby. Could Jesus really speak from the crib since He was human? This does not appear in the Bible.

The Koran is true in affirming Jesus came to heal and revive and perform other miracles. He had God’s power as He is divine. But He did so much more than just give signs to point to God. He was God. He was showing people that He was the only way to God (John 14:6). The “straight path” is not just in following the law and doing good, but rather following Jesus and giving everything for Him. Believing in Him is the only way. Jesus didn’t come to just explain

parts of the Torah either, and clarify some things, but He was the Word Incarnate (John 1:1-12). He came to fulfill the Old Testament and provide a way to God, through Himself. Jesus is the Gospel, he doesn't need to learn it as the Koran claims.

The disciples in this Surah are already following God. But the truth is, within the system of the old Covenant, they were broken before God. They needed Jesus. It was Jesus who called them out and told them to follow Him (Matthew 4:18-22). He chose the broken, not the righteous as seen here in the Koran.

In the Surah 3:55, "O Jesus, I am terminating your life, and raising you to Me, and clearing you of those who disbelieve. And I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve, until the Day of Resurrection." Here God takes Jesus back to Himself. It doesn't seem that He dies physically on the cross, goes into the grave, and then resurrects and spends time on the earth. No, rather God just plucks Him from the earth back into Heaven.

God is also just seen here as judging those who believe and those who don't believe. That is true of the God of the Bible (Isaiah 33:22), but God is relentless in His pursuit of His people (John 3:16). Look at the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). He isn't looking to judge and condemn people, but rather restore them into relationship with Him. God sent Jesus to do just that. He didn't send Him to create more moral and good people. Jesus came to show people that they can't possibly reach God on their own by trying to stay faithful to the law. He said to keep all the commandments (Matthew 5:48; Matthew 19:17). This is obviously impossible. If you want to be judged by that standard, go ahead, but you will fail. Jesus came to offer Himself as the only way. God is not looking for those with good works as the Koran states, but rather those who have believed in Christ and been righteous in Him.

The Surah 3:59 states, "The likeness of Jesus in God's sight is that of Adam: He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be," and he was." The Bible says Jesus was like Adam. But Adam was sinful where as Jesus redeemed us all. Through one man sin entered the world.

Through one man, humanity was reconciled to God (Romans 5:12-21). Jesus was not created by God like this Surah states. Jesus is God.

In the Surah 19:16-40 Jesus is the pure son. That is true. But Jesus is more than just a sign and a gift of mercy. The Koran also states that Jesus spoke from the crib. This is not very human. Did Jesus have Scriptures from birth? Did he know initially He was a prophet? I am unsure. The Bible is not clear. But we do know He is God. At what point He knew, I am unsure, but it does not shake my faith.

This Surah says to worship God. This is true and good. But the Bible says that Jesus is the invisible made visible (Colossians 1:15-16). We worship Him as He is God. We worship Jesus, the living God.

The Surah 19:33 states: "So Peace is upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the Day I get resurrected alive." This seems inconsistent to the Muslim view of Jesus since, they don't believe Jesus died and was resurrected, but that God provided way out. What the Bible does agree on is Jesus is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6; John 14:27). He is peace Himself. He brings peace.

The Surah 19:35 says, "It is not for God to have a child—glory be to Him. To have anything done, He says to it, "Be," and it becomes." But Jesus is the Son of God according to Scripture.

The Koran is clear that God can't and shouldn't have a son. Surah 19:88-95 uses such strong language as to say it is monstrous to believe that God had a Son. But, that is how it is.

Jesus is more than just an example as the Surah 43:57-65 claims. He is not just a blessed servant. God is not just Jesus' Lord, but He is God. He doesn't just lead to the straight path but He is the straight path (John 14:6; Matthew 7:13). He didn't just come to clear up some Scriptures, but to be the fulfillment of Scripture.

The Surah 43:81 states, "If the Most Gracious had a son, I would be the first to worship." It is not if God had a Son, but He did have a Son from the beginning of time.

In the Koran Jesus is recognized as a great prophet from God, born of the Virgin Mary and a worker of miracles filled with the Holy Spirit. At the same time, the Koran asserts that Jesus was not crucified and that He came only to deliver the message of Allah. Muslims strongly declare that Jesus was not God's Son.

Muslims believe later Christians and Jews twisted Jesus' teachings so they are no longer holy. That is why they hold fast to Muhammad's Koran and Hadiths. They believe they need his word as the current Bible is faulty.

Christians read of Jesus in the Old Testament this way: "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering.... He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:3-5). The New Testament furthers this idea: "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:15-16).

Within the Koran, the blasphemous view of Jesus makes logical sense: Since there is no original sin there is no need for a savior. Man is basically good but has free-will to make their own choices. Muslims who follow the Koran and submit to God can return to a state of sinlessness, with no help from Christ needed. Sincerity and good works bring salvation.

The Bible speaks a different message. Because of our rebellion against God, we need a savior. Our sin is too great for us to come to God alone. He is too Holy to have us in His presence. We are doomed without a Savior. God knew this would be the case so He sent Jesus, His One and Only Son, to take on our sin and die in our place so we could be restored into right

relationship with Him. As Christians we can do nothing on our own strength to be made right with God, but choose to believe and follow Him. Everyday we make a conscious choice to repent and believe in the Gospel. Jesus is our One and Only Savior. He is hope to the hopeless. He is salvation for the sinner. He is life for the dead. We need Jesus today. Muslims need Jesus today. He is their only hope and future. May Jesus be made manifest in the lives of the Muslims today we pray.