

**Muslim:** I don't need any textual proof because I know that the Bible is corrupt.

**Non-Muslim:** But how do you know this?

**Muslim:** The Koran is true in all things.

Perhaps the best way to deal with this issue is to lay aside all prior assumptions of the inspiration of either the Bible or the Koran and simply compare the Bible and the Koran as two literary documents. This literary approach will help us stay objective in comparing the life of Jesus and the life of Muhammad. In this literary comparison, we will restrict ourselves to the founding literary documents of each religion. The life of Muhammad will be drawn only from the Koran just as the life of Jesus will be drawn only from the New Testament. This will keep things honest and fair. We will not utilize any of the later Muslim legends which try desperately to elevate Muhammad's life above mediocrity and add to it elements of the miraculous.

**Prophecy**—The birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus were clearly prophesied in the Old Testament according to the New Testament. For example, Micah 5:2 gives us the very name of the town in which the Messiah would be born. On the day Christ died, no less than 33 Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled. The coming of Christ was preceded by the preaching of John the Baptist, in the spirit and power of Elijah, according to the prophecy in Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3 & 4.

This is in stark contrast to the coming of Muhammad, which was not predicted by pagan soothsayers, Old Testament prophets, or New Testament apostles. It is a vain attempt by some modern Muslims to claim that when Jesus predicted the coming of a "comforter" (*John 14, 15 & 16*) he was referring to Muhammad. The comforter is plainly identified as the Holy Spirit (*John 14:26*) whom the Father would send in Christ's name. Muhammad never claimed to be the Holy Spirit. Thus we find that while the coming of Christ was preceded by numerous prophecies, the coming of Muhammad was not predicted by anyone.

**Births**—The birth of Jesus Christ was miraculous in that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary.

The Koran and orthodox Islam fully accept the virgin birth of Jesus. It is only in modern times that we find some small heretical Muslim groups who deny and ridicule the doctrine of the virgin birth. They do this out of a reaction to the fact that there was nothing miraculous or supernatural about the birth of Muhammad. He was the natural product of the sexual union of his father and mother.

**Sinlessness**—According to the New Testament, Jesus Christ lived a perfect and sinless life (*2 Cor 5:21; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22*). When his enemies came to accuse him before Pilate and Herod, they had to invent charges because no one could find anything against him. But when we turn to the life of Muhammad, we find that he was a normal human being engaged in the same sins which afflict all of us. He lied; he cheated; he lusted; he failed to keep his word, etc. He was neither perfect nor sinless.

**A Sinful Muhammad?**—After giving a lecture on Islam at the University of Texas, I was challenged by Muslim students to prove that Muhammad was a sinner. My first response was to point out that the burden of proof was not on me but on them. I then asked, "Where in the Koran is it ever stated that Muhammad was sinless?" They could not refer me to a single passage in which such an idea is even suggested, much less taught. They demanded that I show from the Koran where Muhammad was said to be a sinner. In Sura 18:110, and elsewhere, Muhammad is commanded by Allah: "Say, I am but a man like yourselves." Allah tells him that he is no different than any other man. Nowhere in the Koran is Muhammad said to be sinless.

Those Muslims who claim that Muhammad was sinless have failed to note Sura 40:55, where Allah told Muhammad to repent of his sins! Muhammad Pickthal translates Sura 40:55 as saying: "Ask forgiveness of thy sin." The only way out of this passage is to state that Allah was wrong to tell Muhammad to ask for forgiveness because there was nothing to forgive! Pickthal's translation of Sura 48:1-2 states: "Lo! We have given thee (O Muhammad) signal victory, that Allah may forgive thee of thy sin, that which is past and that

which is to come, and may perfect His favour unto thee, and guide thee on a right path." Not only was Muhammad commanded to repent of his sins and to seek forgiveness, but he was also reminded of his past sins that Allah had already forgiven and of future sins which would need future forgiveness! Muhammad was not sinless according to the Koran. He was just one more poor sinner in need of forgiveness and redemption.

**Miracles**—During his lifetime, Jesus did many great and mighty miracles. He healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out demons, and even ruled the wind and the waves. But according to the Koran in dozens of places such as Sura 17:91-95, Muhammad never performed a single miracle. He did not heal the sick, raise the dead, or cast out demons. He had no more power than any normal man. Ali Dashti comments:

Moslems, as well as others, have disregarded the historical facts. They have continually striven to turn this man [Muhammad] into an imaginary superhuman being, a sort of God in human clothes, and have generally ignored the ample evidence of his humanity. They have been ready...to present these fantasies as miracles (*23 Years, p 1*).

**The Love of God**—According to the New Testament, Jesus preached the love of God and was the greatest example of that love: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (*John 3:16*). In contrast, we do not have any record in the Koran of Muhammad ever preaching the love of God. As a matter of fact, neither God's love for man nor man's love for God plays any significant role in the preaching of Muhammad, the Koran, or the religion of Islam.

**Human and Divine Nature**—According to the New Testament, Jesus Christ was unique in that he was divine as well as human. This is why Jesus is called "God" (*John 1:1-3; 20:28; Acts 20:28, 1 Tim 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Heb 1:8, etc.*). When we turn to Muhammad, we find that he was only a man.

**On Beauty of Speech**—When you study the speeches of Jesus as given in the Gospels, for example, the Sermon on the Mount, you find that Jesus was the greatest

speaker who ever lived. Even his enemies had to confess, "Never man spake like this man" (*John 7:46*). But when you turn to the ecstatic, confused speeches of Muhammad as found in the Koran, you do not find anything outstanding. There is nothing which matches the beauty, substance, or style of the way that Jesus preached the Gospel during his lifetime.

**A High Moral Example**—The way Jesus lived and the way he was willing to die for sinners has given us a high moral example to follow. But with Muhammad, we do not find a high moral example; we find him involved in many acts which must be deemed as immoral and unjust.

**Killing or Robbing**—Jesus never killed or robbed anyone. If he had done so, this surely would have been brought up during his trial. When we turn and look at the life of Muhammad we find that he clearly killed and robbed people in the name of Allah according to the Koran.

**Coercion**—Jesus never used physical violence to force people to believe his message or to accept him as the Messiah. In fact, when Peter took out his sword Jesus told him to put it up (*John 18:11*). Physical persuasion through violence was not the way of his kingdom (*Matt 26:51,54*). But with Muhammad, we find that he frequently used physical violence to force people to give up their idols and accept Islam.

**Directing Disciples to Kill**—Jesus never instructed his followers by way of example or command to rob, to kill, or to subdue enemies in his name. But Muhammad did. He taught his disciples by example and command that they could and should kill and rob in Allah's name and force people to submit to Islam.

**Taking Another Man's Wife**—Jesus did not take any man's wife. Muhammad did. This is one of the most distressing aspects of Muhammad's life. His adopted son, Zaid, had married a beautiful young woman with whom he was deeply in love. Then one day, according to early Muslim traditions, Muhammad saw Zaid's wife without her veil. Her beauty was such that he lusted after her. He asked Zaid to divorce his wife and to give her to him. But

Zaid and his wife refused such an outrageous request. Faced with this refusal, Muhammad had a “convenient” revelation from Allah, which not only commanded Zaid to give up his wife to Muhammad but also decreed that there was no evil in a father-in-law taking his daughter-in-law away from his own adopted son! Zaid and his wife were told that they did not have any choice in the matter. They had to submit to the will of Allah.

It is not for any believer, man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in the affair. Whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has gone astray into manifest error. When you said to him whom Allah had blessed and you had favoured, “Keep your wife to yourself, and fear Allah,” and you were concealing within yourself what Allah should reveal, fearing other men; and Allah has better right for you to fear him. So when Zaid had accomplished what he would of her, then we gave her in marriage to you, so that there should not be any fault in the believers, touching the wives of their adopted sons, when they have accomplished what they would of them; and Allah’s commandment must be performed. There is no fault in the prophet, touching what Allah had ordained for him (*Sura 33:36,38*).

This passage in the Koran has led many Muslims to renounce Islam.

**Child Brides**—Jesus was never a child molester or someone who was sexually involved with young children. But this is the only description that one can give of Muhammad’s marriage to an eight-year-old girl who was still playing with her dolls according to the Hadith.

**Dying for Others**—When Jesus died, he died for the sins of his people in order to deliver them from the wrath of God (*Isaiah 53:11-12; John 10:11; 1 Cor 15:3-4*). But when Muhammad died, he died for his own sins.

**Resurrection**—Jesus did not remain dead. He conquered sin, death, hell, and the grave, and physically rose again on the third day in the same body that had hung on the cross. Just as he died for our sins, he rose again according to the Scriptures for our justification (*Rom 4:25*). But when Muhammad died, he stayed dead. He did not rise from the dead. Muhammad is dead while Jesus Christ is alive.

**Ascension**—Jesus ascended bodily into heaven. This was witnessed by many disciples (*Acts 1:9-11*). But Muhammad did not ascend into heaven. The Koran never states that he ascended.

**Heavenly Intercession**—Jesus is now in heaven as our intercessor and Savior, the only mediator between God and men (*1 Tim 2:5*). But Muhammad is not an intercessor or a savior. In fact, the Koran states that there is no intercessor or savior (*Sura 6:51,70; 10:3*). You have to save yourself.

**Worship**—In the New Testament, Jesus was worshiped as a living Savior (*Matt 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; Mark 5:6; John 9:38; 20:28*). But the Koran never speaks of Muhammad being worshiped. That would be blasphemous. Muslims will admit that Muhammad should not be worshiped by anyone because he was only a man.

**Personal Relationship**—According to the New Testament, people can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as he enters into their hearts through his Spirit at conversion. This is why Christians talk about their love of Jesus. On the other hand, what Muslim speaks of Muhammad in terms of loving him? There is no personal relationship possible with Muhammad. He is dead!

**Returning to Earth**—Jesus will return to resurrect and judge all men. Even orthodox Muslims will often admit that this is clearly true. But there is no teaching in the Koran that says that Muhammad will return one day or that he will resurrect or judge anyone.

**Legends and Myths**—Western scholars are perfectly aware of the fact that in later conflicts between Muslims and Christians there were those Muslims who attempted to renovate the life of Muhammad so that it would more closely correspond to the life of Jesus Christ. According to Ali Dashti, these stories are “an example of myth-making and history-fabrication of Moslems” (*23 Years, p 3*).

These later legends claim predictions were made for Muhammad’s coming, add a supernatural element to his birth, depict him doing miracles, and claim that he was sinless and perfect and that he ascended

into heaven. But these claims are not found in the Koran or in early Muslim traditions. As all the standard reference works point out, they are later fabrications made by embarrassed Muslims who were faced with the rather obvious fact that Muhammad was inferior to Jesus Christ. This led them to remold the life of Muhammad to parallel the life and miracles of Jesus. As Professor Alfred Guillaume observes:

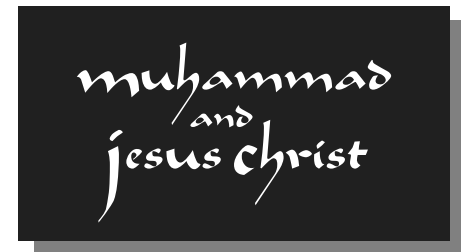
Muslim theologians...borrowed also events from the life of Jesus, attributing them to their prophet...Muhammad apologists could not afford to allow their apostle to labour under the disadvantage apparent when his everyday mundane life was compared with the mighty works of Christ...The curious and interesting fact is that the later picture of Muhammad approximates...that of the Jesus of the Gospels (*The Traditions of Islam, pp 133-135*).

Followers of Krishna in India responded to the Christian teaching that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, by saying, “Well, then Krishna too must have died on a cross for our sins.” This fabrication did not last long as it was revealed that in all the literary sources concerning Krishna, no such death or crucifixion was mentioned until after the followers of Krishna had engaged in debates with Christians.

In the same way, Muslim legendary material about the miracles of Muhammad all date after debates between Christians and Muslims. These myths and legends were created in response to the challenge that Jesus Christ was obviously far superior to Muhammad.

Anyone who rationally examines the differences between the biblical Jesus and Muhammad of the Koran must come to the conclusion that Jesus and Muhammad did not both represent the same God. They did not live or preach like each other. On all the essential issues they were poles apart. □

—Adapted from the writings of Robert Morey



Since Islam claims that Muhammad and Jesus of Nazareth were both Muslims and both prophets sent by Allah, these two mighty prophets must coincide in all points and never contradict each other. After all, if the same Allah sent both of them, it is only logical to assume that their ministries and messages cannot in principle contradict each other. Otherwise, Allah would be contradicting himself. This is, of course, received as a tenet of faith by the orthodox Muslims and is not open to question in their minds. Yet Westerners cannot gratuitously accept such a belief without first comparing the ministries and messages of these men to see if, in fact, they are in complete accord.

But how is this to be done? Everyone agrees that the life and teaching of Muhammad can be reconstructed from the Koran. But what about Jesus of Nazareth? Some Muslims seek to block any attempt to compare the biblical Jesus to Muhammad of the Koran by claiming that the Bible is hopelessly corrupt and that the Jesus of the New Testament is not the true Jesus.

But this approach lands them in yet deeper problems. Because the Koran uses the New Testament Gospels for information on Jesus (such as his virgin birth), if they are corrupt, then so is the Koran. Modern Muslims attempt to limit our information of Jesus to what the Koran says about him reflecting circular reasoning.

In one friendly debate with a Muslim student, this conversation took place:

**Muslim:** The Koran is true in all things.

**Non-Muslim:** But it contradicts the biblical Jesus.

**Muslim:** Then the Bible is corrupt.

**Non-Muslim:** But how do you know that the Bible is “corrupt”? Do you have any textual proof?