

The Bible vs. The Qur'an

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Both the Bible and the Qur'an claim to be the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 1 Thes. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; Sura 4:82; 12:3; 32:1-3; 55:1-2), however, due to numerous conflicts, only one of these claims (or neither) can be true.

The Bible

Unity & Factual Accuracy

The Bible was written by at least 40 different individuals, from all walks of life (fishermen, a physician, shepherds, kings, tent-makers, etc.), from at least 3 continents, speaking 3 different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek), over a period of about 1600 years.

Despite these differences, it has a consistent message with no contradictions, while discussing a variety of topics ranging from psychology, philosophy, history, religion, medicine, and geography. It flows as if from one Author (2 Pet. 1:20, 21).

Scientific Foreknowledge

The Bible mentions scientific facts hundreds and thousands of years before they were discovered by man. This information could not have been known at the time it was written without some assistance.

1. The Water Cycle was not understood until the 16th and 17th centuries, yet the Bible explains this process rather simply (Ecc. 1:7; 11:3).
2. The ark that Noah built (Gen. 6:15) was the perfect ratio (30:5:3) for a large, seagoing vessel to carry a great amount of cargo and remain afloat.
3. People used to be bled to death because of a belief that contaminated blood should be removed to cure certain diseases. The Bible clearly states otherwise, that blood is what keeps us alive (Lev. 17:11-14).
4. Before modern medicinal procedures made the time much shorter, the ideal time to circumcise a baby boy was when he was 8 days old. This is because Vitamin K (important in blood clotting) is elevated above 100% of normal only on day 8. Abraham was told that circumcision was to be done on that day (Gen. 17:12).
5. For many years, men thought the Earth was flat, yet the Bible points out its spherical shape (Isa. 40:22).

Fulfilled Prophecies

The Bible contains predictions of events hundreds and thousands of years before they occurred.

1. Isaiah mentions Cyrus, future leader of Persia, by name about 150 years before the fact (Isa. 44:28-45:7).
2. Daniel envisioned the coming kingdoms of Persia (539 BC) and Greece (331 BC) while Babylon

was the world power (Dan. 8).

3. Jesus predicted the total destruction of Jerusalem 40 years before it happened (Matt. 24; Mk. 13; Lk. 19:40-44; 21).
4. Many Old Testament passages depict the coming Messiah (Christ) in vivid detail, many years before Jesus actually lived. For example, He would be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14), in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), rejected (Isa. 53:3), betrayed (Ps. 41:9) for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12), spit upon and beaten (Isa. 50:6; 53:5), have His hands and feet pierced (Ps. 22:16), and be resurrected from the dead (Ps. 16:10).

The Qur'an

Fulfilled Prophecies

The closest the Qur'an comes to a fulfilled prophecy is Sura 30:2-4, a vague reference to Roman victory in battle, hardly a true prophecy since the Romans were at that time ruling.

Other prophecies foretold in the Qur'an pertain to the afterlife, which cannot be presently verified. Therefore, Muhammad and the Qur'an do not live up to the simple test of a true prophet and true prophecy (Deut. 18:20-22).

Scientific Foreknowledge *(updated October 9, 2009)*

Muslims may cite the following as examples of scientific foreknowledge in the Qur'an:

1. Big Bang Theory of the origin of the universe was not proposed until the 20th century (Sura 21:30).
2. Description of human embryo development that was not understood until the 20th century (Sura 22:5; 23:12-14).
3. Orbits of the sun and moon (Sura 21:33).
4. Description of an exploding star (Sura 55:37).

One might note that the verses cited above and other similar claims are either a) too vague to be describing what they claim, b) not describing what they claim at all, c) not scientific fact, or d) contain information already mentioned by other sources available at that time (such as the Bible). Additionally, perhaps the following could be cited as examples of scientific ignorance:

1. Sun sets into a puddle of muddy water (Sura 18:83-86)
2. Shooting stars are fiery missiles hurled at demons (Sura 67:5)
3. Sperm comes from between the ribs and lower back (Sura 86:5-7)
4. Talking ants (Sura 27:18-19)

Unity

The Qur'an was revealed to one man (Muhammad), in one language (Arabic), over a period of 23 years. It claims to have no contradictions (Sura 4:82), and asserts that it could not possibly have been produced by

anyone but God (Allah, Sura 17:88). This does not hold true. Consider these examples:

1. Jews and Christians are saved (Sura 2:62; 5:69). Only Muslims are saved (Sura 3:85).
2. Be at peace with Jews and Christians (Sura 2:109). Fight against Jews and Christians (Sura 9:29).
3. Adulterer can only marry another adulterer or an unbeliever (Sura 24:3). Believers can only marry believers (Sura 2:221; 60:10).
4. Charge against wife received if the husband swears oath five times (Sura 24:6-7), but the charge is not sustained if the wife swears oath five times (Sura 24:8-9). The command is therefore meaningless.

The Qur'an claims that later verses cancel out earlier verses that contradict (Sura 2:106; 16:101), which causes us to wonder why Allah did not get it right in the first place.

Furthermore, the Qur'an indicates that Satan was able to influence the prophets to say things contrary to the will of Allah, but Allah annuls those things (Sura 22:52). But this very idea contradicts the claim that neither men or jinn (angels/demons) could come up with anything like the Qur'an (Sura 17:88).

Factual Accuracy

The Qur'an claims it is in agreement with and is a confirmation of the Bible (Sura 2:40-42, 136, 285; 3:3; 4:136; 5:43-51; 10:37, 94; 29:46; 35:31), while contradicting it in numerous points (e.g., character of God, identity of Jesus Christ, creation, salvation, afterlife, many others). If the Bible is fact, which even the Qur'an itself maintains, and the Qur'an contradicts the Bible, then it cannot be true. More will be said about these major points of contention in a separate handout, but note the following Biblical and historical discrepancies:

1. Borrows from Jewish fables (cf. Tit. 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16). See Miller, pp. 74-121.
2. Claims that the Israelites slew prophets in Moses' day (Sura 2:61), however, no prophet (except Moses) existed during that time.
3. Tells of an account of Pharaoh telling Haman to build a tower to heaven (Sura 28:38-39; 40:36-37), which is a mixture of the Pharaoh of Moses' day (~ 1500 BC), Haman of Esther's day (Esther 3:1ff.; ~ 470 BC), and the building of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11).
4. Describes the practice of crucifixion in Moses' day (Sura 7:124; 20:71; 26:49), which did not come about until the time of the Romans (6th century BC).
5. Inheritance rules are mathematically incorrect (Sura 4:11-12, 176). An example of this would be a man dying childless, leaving behind his two sisters (receive 2/3), two parents (receive 1/3), and wife (receive 1/4).

It should also be noted that the Muslim charge of Bible corruption is nowhere found in the Qur'an itself. Though it charges its adherents with twisting the Bible text (Sura 5:12-15), it appeals to the Scriptures available at the time it was written to prove its truthfulness (Sura 3:3; 4:136; 7:157).

Conclusion

The Qur'an possesses neither internal unity, nor external unity with prior revelations from God. Unlike the Bible, it contains numerous factual errors, and contains nothing sufficient to prove its divine inspiration (i.e., fulfilled prophecy). This supposed “revelation” from the angel Gabriel (Sura 2:97) is “another gospel” (Gal. 1:8) and should be rejected.

The Bible is the all-sufficient (2 Pet. 1:3; Jude 3), inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 2:13).

References

Miller, Dave (2005), *The Quran Unveiled: Islam and New Testament Christianity in Conflict* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).

Embryology in the Qur'an:

<http://www.answering-islam.org/Quran/Science/embryo.html>

The Qur'an and the Oily Red Rose Nebula:

<http://www.answering-islam.org/Quran/Science/rose-nebula.html>

Islam and the Setting of the Sun:

http://www.answering-islam.org/Quran/Science/sun_set.html

Astronomy and the Qur'an:

<http://www.muslimhope.com/AstronomyAndTheQuran.htm>

Talking Ants in the Qur'an?:

<http://www.answering-islam.org/Responses/Menj/ants.htm>