

**THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF THE BIBLE**

Islam's roots are based upon the Biblical text. Islamists teach and accept that the Bible was given by Allah and that both the Old and New Testaments are considered divine scripture. Therefore, the Qur'an utilizes the Testaments often and teaches its adherents to follow the Bible. However, when the Qur'an and the Bible are in contradiction, Muslims will claim that the Qur'an is correct and pure in its present form and that the Bible has been corrupted through its transmission (the copying of manuscripts). In this study session the following will be covered: evidences from Islamic sources that prove Islam teaches the Bible is from God, claims made of Biblical corruption compared to the superiority of the Qur'an, and a refutation of Islamic claims against the Bible.

**Islam Claims the Bible is God's Word**

The Qur'an (the authoritative book of Muhammad's "revelation"), the Hadith (the authoritative record of Muhammad's deeds and sayings) and the Sira (the authoritative biographies of Muhammad) prove that the Bible is God's word and it was utilized as such by Muhammad. These sources of authority are the foundation for Islamic tradition and religious practice. They completely and conclusively prove that the Bible is considered to be God's word, is to be followed, and was used by the prophet Muhammad to determine proper judgment.

The following verses are claims from the Qur'an that the Bible is God's word (all scriptures from the Qur'an are taken from the Yusuf Ali translation):

When the Qur'an was being written, the Bible was accurate, a book of "no doubt", and was from the "Lord of the worlds":

*And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): but say, 'We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our Allah and your Allah is one; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam). (Surah 29:46)*

*There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it,- a detailed exposition of all things, and a guide and a mercy to any such as believe. (Surah 12:111)*

*This Qur'an is not such as can be produced by other than Allah. on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it, and a fuller explanation of the Book - wherein there is no doubt - from the Lord of the worlds. (Surah 10:37)*

The Qur'an claims the Old Testament was given by Allah, was a "guide to the Children of Israel", and was to be confirmed (accepted as true) by Jesus:

*We did indeed aforetime give the Book to Moses: be not then in doubt of its reaching (thee): and We made it a guide to the Children of Israel. (Surah 32:23)*

*And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the apostle of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the Law (which came) before me... (Surah 61:6)*

*And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him... (Surah 5:46)*

The ministry and Gospel of Jesus is said to be from Allah and was considered accurate during the writing of the Qur'an:

*And Allah will teach him the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel, And (appoint him) an apostle to the Children of Israel, (with this message): "I have come to you, with a Sign from your Lord, in that I make for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave: And I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I quicken the dead, by Allah's leave; and I declare to you what ye eat, and what ye store in your houses. Surely therein is a Sign for you if ye did believe; (I have come to you), to attest the Law which was before me. And to make lawful to you part of what was (Before) forbidden to you; I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So fear Allah, and obey me. (Surah 3:48-50)*

*And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him: We sent him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the Law that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah. (Surah 5:46)*

*It is He Who sent down to thee (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; and He sent down the Law (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this, as a guide to mankind, and He sent down the criterion (of judgment between right and wrong). (Surah 3:3)*

In the following verses, Islamic teachings impress the need to follow the Bible and to utilize the Biblical text in order to be granted divine approval:

The Qur'an teaches Christians should not seek after a different revelation because Allah has already given it to them and if it is followed then happiness will come:

*Do they then seek after a judgment of (the days of) ignorance? But who, for a people whose faith is assured, can give better judgment than Allah. (Surah 5:50)*

*O People of the Book! ye have no ground to stand upon unless ye stand fast by the Law, the Gospel, and all the revelation that has come to you from your Lord. (Surah 5:68)*

*If only they had stood fast by the Law, the Gospel, and all the revelation that was sent to them from their Lord, they would have enjoyed happiness from every side. There is from among them a party on the right course: but many of them follow a course that is evil. (Surah 5:66)*

Muhammad was instructed to compare his own message with the Bible to determine whether what he was preparing was accurate:

*If thou wert in doubt as to what We have revealed unto thee, then ask those who have been reading the Book from before thee: the Truth hath indeed come to thee from thy Lord: so be in no wise of those in doubt. (Surah 10:94)*

The Sira (the authoritative biographies of Muhammad) records Muhammad's use of the Bible in order to execute proper judgment (first Muhammad is asked to confess his belief that the Old Testament is from God (the religion of Abraham and a belief in the Torah), then he carries out his judgment (the stoning) based upon the Old Testament scriptures):

*Rafi b. Haritha and Sallam b. Mishkam and Malik b. al-Sayf and Rafi b. Huraymila came to him [Muhammad] and said: "Do you not allege that you follow the religion of Abraham and believe in the Torah which we have and testify that it is the truth from God?" He replied, "Certainly,...*

*Salh b. Kaisan from Nafi freedman of Abdullah b. Umar from Abdullah b. Umar, told me: When the apostle gave judgment about them he asked for a Torah. A rabbi sat there reading it having put his hand over the verse of stoning. Abdullah b. Salam struck the rabbi's hand, saying, "this, O prophet of God, is the verse of stoning which he refused to read to you." ..... The apostle said; "I am the first to revive the order from God and His book and to practice it." They were duly stoned and Abdullah b. Umar said, "I was among those that stoned them.*

*- Ibn Ishaq, page 267 (<http://www.answering-islam.org/Silas/bible.htm>)*

### **Islam and the "Corruption of the Bible"**

The Bible is taught by the Islamic authorities to be God's word. Muhammad used the Bible in order to execute proper judgment, the Qur'an acknowledges and confirms the Bible as being God's word, and Muhammad and Christians alike are taught to follow the Bible. Since the Bible is recognized as being from God, a careful examination must then be given as to what Islam teaches regarding the preservation of God's word. It will be noted that the Islamic authority denies the possibility of the Bible (God's word) from ever being changed. However, it will also be noticed that modern day Islamists will claim that God's word has been altered and that the Qur'an is superior to the Bible in cases where the Qur'an and Bible are in contradiction to one another.

The plain claim of the Qur'an is that the Bible is God's word and Islam teaches that God's word (including the Bible) cannot ever be changed:

The Qur'an teaches that none can change God's words:

*The word of thy Lord doth find its fulfilment in truth and in justice: **None can change His words:** for He is the one who heareth and knoweth all. (Surah 6:115)*

***For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present and in the Hereafter; no change can there be in the words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme felicity. (Surah 10:64)***

The Hadith (the authoritative record of Muhammad's deeds and sayings) teaches that the Bible has never been changed but is only corrupted by misinterpretation:

*They corrupt the word" means "they alter or change its meaning." Yet no one is able to change even a single word from any Book of God. The meaning is that they interpret the word wrongly. (Hadith v. 9)*

NOTE the following in regards to the above Hadith reference:

“This is the commentary of Abdullah Ibn Abbas, **one of the Sahaba (companions) and Mohammed's cousin. His opinions, because he is a Sahabi (companion) are held to be above the opinions and commentaries of all other Sheikhs who are not Sahaba.** Since Ibn Abbas' above reference to "They corrupt the word" quotes part of Sura 4:46, it is not only a commentary on Sura 85:22, but also on the meaning of the Qur'anic charge against the Jews of corrupting the scriptures. This strongly confirms the results of various investigations of the passages in the Qur'an that speak about the earlier scriptures and their textual integrity and continuing authority.” (Directly Quoted from <http://www.answering-islam.org/Silas/bible.htm>)

More modern Islamic scholars, however, say that the Bible has been tampered with and that the Qur'an then is superior:

"[T]he books in their present state 'have been tampered with' [and] '[i]t is believed that the Qur'an is the noblest of the books" (Jeffery, *Islam, Muhammad and His Religion*, 126-128 as quoted in Geisler and Saleeb, *Answering Islam*, 213-214).

### **Islam's Inconsistencies Regarding Historical Facts and the Claims of “Biblical Corruption”**

Islam contradicts itself as to its stance on the Bible. The original, most authoritative documents (Qur'an, Hadith and Sira) reveal that the Bible is God's word, is to be followed and cannot ever be changed. However, as Islam has been challenged more heavily overtime to support its own religion by answering the contradictions between the Qur'an and the Bible, claims have been made to dismiss the Bible as being changed while upholding the Qur'an as being all authoritative. The Qur'anic author Muhammad and historic facts do not support these claims.

The Biblical manuscripts that are available today, date centuries before the origination of the Qur'an. Some of the Dead Sea Scrolls for example date as far back as 400 B.C. Within this discovery many books of the Old Testament were discovered including Isaiah, Psalms, Genesis, Deuteronomy, Exodus, Daniel, Jeremiah, Job, Ezekiel, 1 and 2 Samuel, Numbers, Leviticus, etc. (Gaster, Theodore H, *The Dead Sea Scriptures* as referenced in [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead\\_Sea\\_Scrolls](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead_Sea_Scrolls)). Moreover, New Testament manuscripts have been found dating as early as A.D. 125 (<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/manuscripts.html>). These manuscripts are responsible for the transmission of the present day Bible and would have predated the writing of the Qur'an which took place around A.D. 600 when Muhammad wrote in Surah 10:37 that *the Book - wherein there is no doubt - from the Lord of the worlds*, he confirmed that the Bible, at that time, was uncorrupted (*wherein there is no doubt*) and was from God (*the Lord of the worlds*).

A major problem occurs when one considers the writings of Paul and the early (pre 600 AD) manuscripts that exist of books such as Galatians compared to claims of modern day Islamists that “contradictions” are a result of post-Quranic corruptions. Consider Galatians 1:6-9: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:6-9).

So what is our plea? That truth may be ascertained through pure, unbiased review of Islamic authorities as compared to a review of the Biblical text. If Islam stands on and claims that the Bible is from God, then Islam and the Quran CANNOT stand! Any religion that claims it's founding on the Bible, with it's authority and tradition being based on additional revelation beyond the Bible, makes a claim that nullifies itself. Since the Bible states that the Bible is the final authority and that no other revelation/gospel is to come after it (cf. Galatians 1:6-9), one cannot claim that the Bible is authoritative along with an additional gospel/revelation. The question is, why would Muhammad say that the Bible is inspired and from God and then claim additional revelation beyond the Bible saying that it too is authoritative, when the Bible clearly states there was to be no other revelation or additional gospel? When asking a Muslim this question, the common response is that the book of Galatians as quoted above was corrupted after the writing of the Quran and that we have “no proof” that Galatians 1:6-9 was written prior to the life of Muhammad and the transcription of the Quran. However, when considering the photographed manuscript evidence of Galatians 1:6-9 via “Papyri 46” and it's approximate 200 AD date, such a response is invalidated:

Photograph of Galatians 1:6-9 “Papyri 46” which is dated around 200 AD:



Image Source: <http://www.earlybible.com/manuscripts/p46-Gal.html>

Source for the 200 AD dating of Papyri 46: [http://www.british-israel.ca/is\\_the\\_new\\_testament\\_reliable.htm](http://www.british-israel.ca/is_the_new_testament_reliable.htm)

Modern day Islamists are going against history, their prophet Mohammad, and their own religious authority when they claim contradictions between the Bible and the Qur'an prove the Bible is corrupted and the Qur'an is superior. Islam teaches that the Bible is from God, is to be followed, and cannot be changed; conclusively, when the Bible is then compared to the Qur'an clearly only one CANNOT be correct because the two books contradict each other. The Bible teaches that Jesus is God's Son who died on the cross and the Qur'an teaches that God had no son and that Jesus did not die on the cross. However, the Bible was written by 40 authors over a period of 1500 years and the Qur'an was written by one man, Mohammad, within his lifetime (Jones, *Shadowland*, 50). The Bible's credibility has remained strong for centuries; therefore, Mohammad made an acknowledgment of its credibility (by confessing it is from God) in order to further the credibility of his own writings (Dave Miller, *The Qur'an Unveiled*, 75-76).

## Review Questions

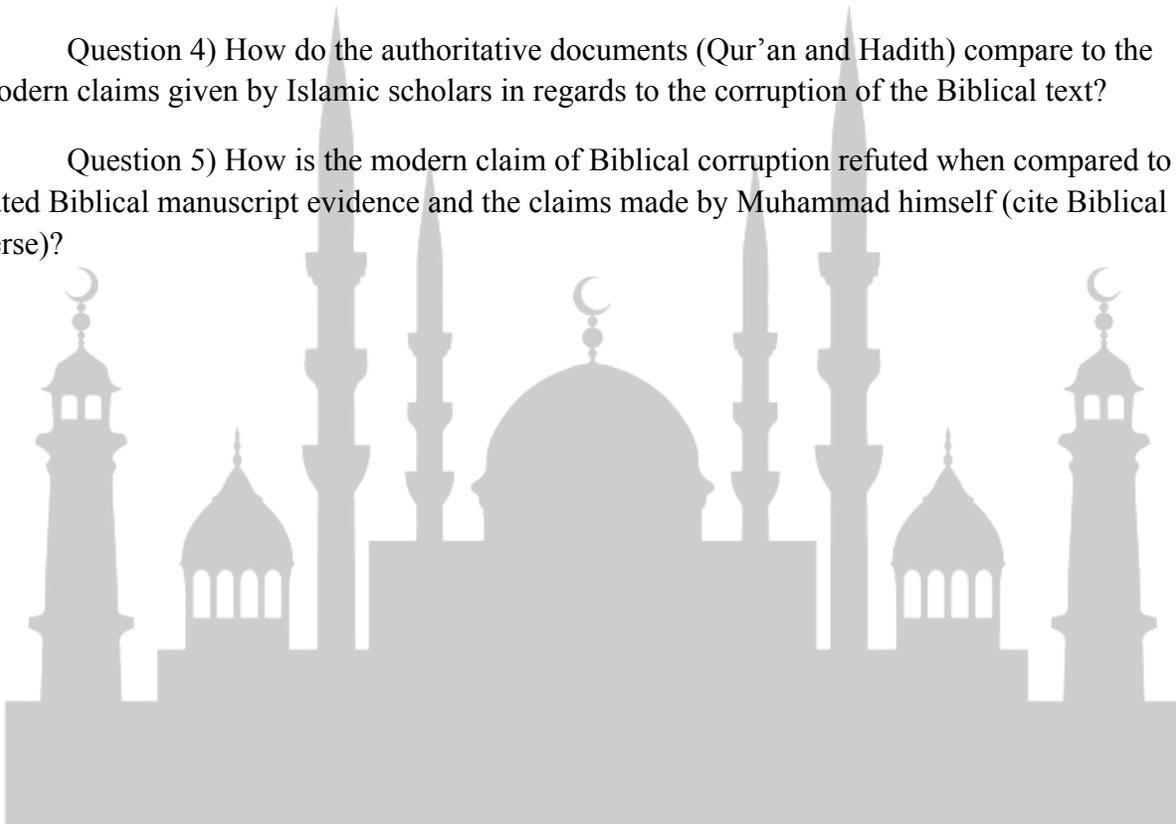
Question 1) Did Muhammad believe in Biblical revelation and what Surah's prove he did believe the Bible was from God?

Question 2) According to Muhammad, how credible were the Old and New Testaments during the writing of the Qur'an (provide Surah references) and did he approve of Jesus' and His ministry?

Question 3) Did Muhammad instruct Christians to follow his writings or the writings of the Bible and how did Muhammad respond when he learned of commandments given within the Old Testament?

Question 4) How do the authoritative documents (Qur'an and Hadith) compare to the modern claims given by Islamic scholars in regards to the corruption of the Biblical text?

Question 5) How is the modern claim of Biblical corruption refuted when compared to dated Biblical manuscript evidence and the claims made by Muhammad himself (cite Biblical verse)?



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