

the whole world, including sinners! Jesus said in John 3:16 that “God so loved *the world* that He gave His one and only unique Son, that whosoever believes in Him, would not perish but have everlasting life.” Romans 5:8 says, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still *sinners*, Christ died for us.” This is good news for those of us who realize we are sinners!

The Bible teaches that believers are adopted into God’s family (Ephesians 1:5) and can personally address God as “Father” (Matthew 6:9, Romans 8:15). The God of the Bible offers mankind a personal relationship of great intimacy. That is not the case in Islam. In Islam there is no fatherly concept of God. To most Muslims, Allah is seen more as a remote judge, who is not personally involved with mankind. Islam is not about fellowship *with* God, but service, submission and allegiance *to* God. These are just some of the differences between the Qur’an’s portrayal of God and the Bible’s.

Has the Bible Been Corrupted?

The Qur’an states that the Bible has been corrupted but an overwhelming amount of evidence proves the Qur’an to be mistaken. Today there survives more than 24,000 partial and complete, ancient handwritten manuscript copies of the New Testament, not to mention tens of thousands of Old Testament manuscripts. An examination of these manuscripts by scholars and textual critics has verified that the Bible we have in our possession today is the same Bible that the early church possessed 2,000 years ago. You can view these manuscripts yourself in places like the British Museum, Cambridge University Library, The Smithsonian Institute, and Oxford University.

Another evidence that the Bible has not seen corruption are the writings of the Church Fathers (men like Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian, who were leaders in the early Christian church during the first and second century A.D.). In their writings, they quoted the New Testament alone 86,000 times! In fact, they referred to it so often and so thoroughly that textual critics can reconstruct the entire New Testament (except eleven verses) from their quotes.



Hundreds of ancient Biblical manuscripts found in the caves of Qumran by the Dead Sea between 1947 and 1956 have further confirmed the fact that the text of the Bible has not seen corruption.

The late Sir Frederic Kenyon, former director and principal librarian of the British Museum, was one of the leading authorities on the reliability of ancient manuscripts. He drew this conclusion, “the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established.” If you’d like to read more on the reliability of the text of the Bible, I’d recommend you start with *From God to Us* by Norman Geisler and William Nix, or *The New Testament Documents: are they reliable?* by F.F. Bruce.

Is the Qur’an the Word of God?

The Qur’an claims to be the word of God, but there are numerous reasons why one should reject the Qur’an as God-revealed Scripture.

1. The Qur’an contradicts authentic Scripture. Whether it be the Qur’an’s descriptions of the nature of God, the fall of man, biblical characters like Moses, Noah, Joseph, Zechariah, John the Baptist, Mary, Jesus, or how salvation is obtained, the Qur’an repeatedly contradicts the Biblical account. For example, the Qur’an confuses Saul with Gideon in sura 2:249. The Qur’an says that Mary, Jesus’ mother, was the sister of Aaron, Moses’ brother (sura 19:28). Haman is said to be the servant, not of King Ahasuerus in the Book of Esther, but of Pharaoh, who lived a 1,000 years earlier in a different country (sura 28:38; 40:24). Sura 5:116 states that Christians worship three gods: the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Mother (Mary)! Orthodox Christianity teaches that there is one God that eternally exists in three equal persons: Father, Son and *Holy Spirit*. Muhammad obviously misunderstood the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

2. The Qur’an contradicts known facts of science. The Qur’an teaches that there are seven earths, saying in sura 65:12, “God created seven universes [i.e. different atmospheric layers in the universe] and the same number of earths.” The Qur’an speaks of Alexander the Great traveling west – actually finds the place where the sun sets, in a muddy spring! It says he traveled “till, when he reached the setting-place of the sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring” (sura 18:86). Of course it is a scientifically proven fact today that the sun does not go down into a muddy spring. David, who wrote about 1,600 years before Muhammad was even born, said insightfully that the sun, rather than setting in a muddy spring, is actually on a circuit through space (Psalm 19:6). The Qur’an also claims that human beings are formed from a clot of blood. Sura 23:14 says, “Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (fetus) lump; then we made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then we developed out of it another creature. So blessed be Allah, the best to create!” If you know anything about the development of a human life, this is hardly a scientific description of embryonic development!

3. The Qur’an contradicts known facts of history. One of the most well-attested facts of history is that Jesus of Nazareth was put to death on a cross. It is a fact of history so well confirmed by historical sources, even outside of the Bible, that even the most liberal of scholars consider it an undisputable fact. And yet, the Qur’an makes a fatal error by saying that this event never occurred. Sura 4:157 says, “And for claiming that they killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of God. In fact, they [speaking of the Jews] never killed him, they never crucified him - they were made to think that they did. All factions who are disputing in this matter are full of doubt

concerning this issue. They possess no knowledge; they only conjecture. For certain, they never killed him.” What should we trust—the New Testament or the Qur’an? The New Testament was written down within the first generation after the events, while the eyewitnesses were still alive, and has been validated by secular sources like the Jewish *Talmud* and Josephus. The Qur’an is a book written 600 years later by men who were hundreds of miles and centuries removed from the events. I’ll trust the New Testament authors. They were there and they were willing to lose their lives preaching the message of a crucified and risen Jesus.

4. The Qur’an has many internal inconsistencies. Here are just a couple of examples. Sura 21:76 says that Noah and his family survived the flood, but sura 11:42-43 states that one of Noah’s sons drowned. Sura 28:40 says that Pharaoh, who pursued Moses and the Israelites drowned (also see 17:103, 43:55), but sura 10:90-92 says that Pharaoh survived.



The Qur’an was written down in the seventh century A.D. and claims to be the final and authoritative word of God, having superseded all previous revelations.

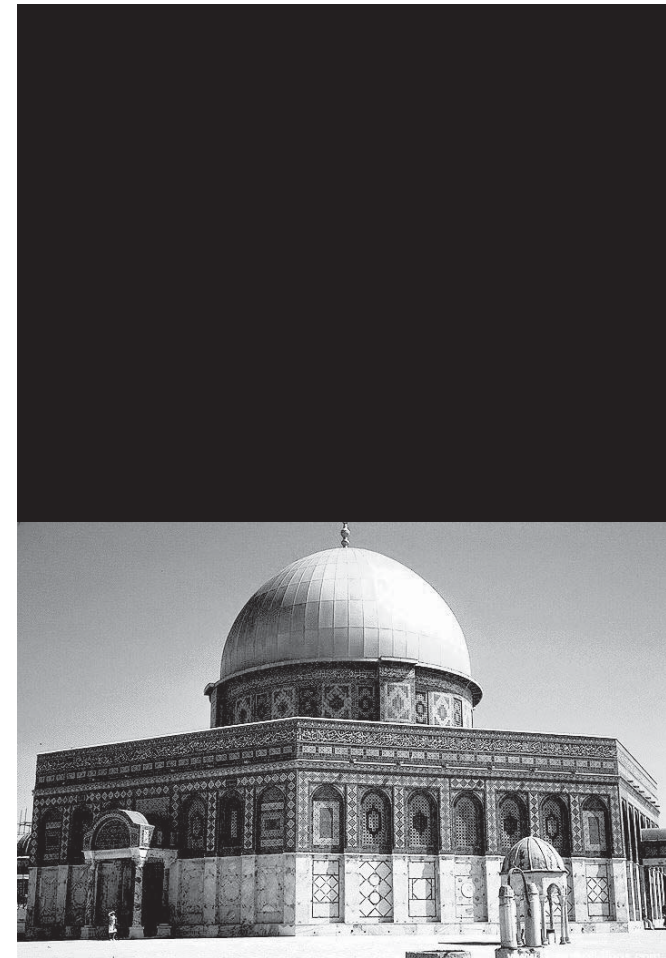
5. There are no particularly good reasons to accept the Qur’an as inspired Scripture. The most popular proof Muslims give for the inspiration of the Qur’an is its literary beauty and eloquence. Muslims believe it is unsurpassed. Sura 10:37 says, “This Qur’an could not possibly be authored by other than GOD.” In sura 17:88 Muhammad boasts, “If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur’an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support.” Muslims believe that the Qur’an is so beautiful in what it says that it could have only come from God. This is a highly questionable means of testing a document for divine inspiration. If beauty and eloquence are a means of proving divine inspiration and authority, what stops us from believing that Shakespeare’s writings are also inspired? They are very beautiful and eloquent, but we wouldn’t believe that they are divinely authoritative. For these reasons and others, it is wise to conclude that the Qur’an is not the word of God.

Sharing the Truth With Muslims in Love

If you would like to equip yourself to more effectively share the truth with Muslims there are three great books that I’d like to recommend to you. **1. Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Muslims** by Ron Rhodes. **2. Unveiling Islam** by Ergun and Emir Caner **3. Answering Islam** by Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb. You can order them at christianbook.com. You will also find the following websites helpful: Quran.org for looking up verses in the Qur’an, AnsweringIslam.org and debate.org.uk for good articles regarding the differences between Christianity and Islam.

“...a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition” (2 Timothy 2:24-25)

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ISLAM

A brief introduction and Christian response to the origin, beliefs and practices of the world's second largest religion.

by Charlie H. Campbell