

## QUESTIONS CHRISTIANS CAN ASK MUSLIMS

Muslims claim that Moses, David, and Jesus and others were prophets and gave the true message of God but that the message was corrupted over the years. Yet, it is claimed that Allah preserved the Quran without error. Why was he then incapable of preserving previous revelations?  
*The point is to make them see an inconsistency in the Muslim view.*

Do you know that the term 'Son of Man' is used in the New Testament in reference to Jesus' deity?

Do you know what the Quran says about sin?

The human soul is certainly prone to evil. Sura 12:53

Man is given up to injustice and ingratitude. Sura 14:34

Man transgresses all bounds. Sura 96:6

If God were to punish men for their wrongdoing, he would not leave a single living creature on the earth. Sura 16:61

Since the Quran teaches that man has a serious sin problem, would you mind if I told you what the Bible says about this?

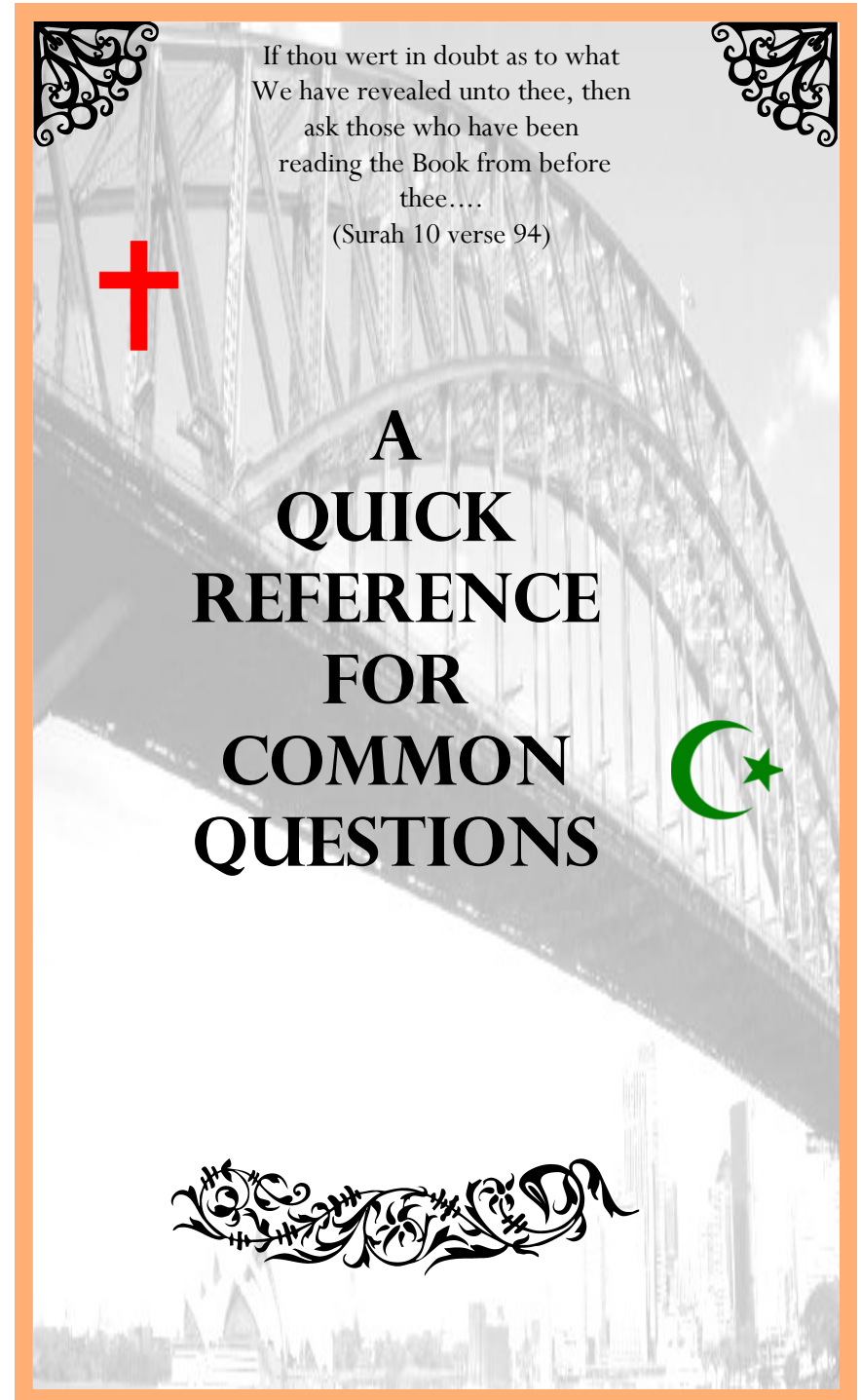
Romans 5:12, 19; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 43:11; Luke 2:11;

Romans 3:23

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This booklet is not intended to be exhaustive or to make you an expert in arguing with Muslims. It is to give you insight into their thinking and beliefs so that you might be able to intelligently communicate with them. The use of the Quran is not intended to cite it as an authoritative work, but rather to illustrate what Muslims believe concerning an issue. Remember, our goal always ought to be not to argue their beliefs to turn the individual from Islam, but rather to present Christ so that they may turn to HIM. Read the references in the Bible and the Quran before you attempt to cite them. This ensures you understand and will be able to communicate the point being made. Look for one or two references that are powerful and clear to you. It is these that you will be able to use most powerfully to others. Better one or two strong points than myriad weak ones.

## QUESTIONS MUSLIMS ASK CHRISTIANS

### HAS THE BIBLE BEEN CORRUPTED?

The argument is that those who want to make Jesus appear to be God were able to corrupt the Bible so that passages denying His deity were lost and passages proving it were introduced.

When/Where/How? Are the 3 key questions to respond with.

If changes are before Muhammad:

How can we understand these statements from the Quran?:

In Surahs 10:94 and 21:7 Muhammad is instructed to ask people who read the Bible to help him understand the revelations he has received.

“Muslims are to believe in the Bible” (Surah 4:136)

"God's word does not change" (Surahs 3:2,78; 4:135; 6:34; 10:64; 18:26; 35:42; 50:28-29).

“No difference between Bible & Quran” (Surahs 2:136; 3:2-3).

“Dispute not with the Christians” (Sura 29:46)

“Christians are to believe in the Bible” (Surahs 5:46-47, 68)

If the Bible was corrupted by this time, why does the Quran speak like this concerning it? One would think that it would contain warnings. There are no warnings against its corruption. In fact the argument did not exist until Ibn Hazam (1064), showing that it is a 11th century Muslim polemic.

If the changes are after Muhammad:

If the Bible was changed after Muhammad's life, what do we do with:

- (1) 24,000 Manuscripts: in Greek, Latin and other languages, 230 MSS **before 6th century** which are in agreement concerning the present text.

cific time and place and are not universal commands of slaughter such as what can be found in the Quran, ie. Surah 9. You will need to also point out that Christians have their final paradigm in Christ and his example is one of peace. He taught us to live peaceably and he modelled peace. Matthew 5-7 is a great example of his teaching and then take them to 26:47ff for his actions.

### WHAT ABOUT ALL THE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE BIBLE, ESPECIALLY WITH THE RESURRECTION ACCOUNTS IN THE GOSPELS?

Don't be taken off guard with how certain contradictions may be pointed out. Many of them can easily be explained. If you're not sure initially, this a good time to say, “give me a week,” and then go find the answer. Again, remember to get them to look at the context of a passage, which often sorts out the seeming contradiction.

When it comes to the resurrection accounts in the gospels, the differences of the various accounts actually works in our favour. If every writer told the exact same thing, it would suggest some type of collusion has taken place and imply deceitfulness on the gospel writers. The fact that they all tell of the same event but have some minor differences gives excellent evidence for authenticity of an eye witness account. None of the “discrepancies” takes away from the actual event. The differences are merely minor ones. There is more good material you can easily find regarding the resurrection accounts but this should give you a start.

### BE PREPARED FOR MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ISOLATED VERSES OR PASSAGES.

It's usually quickly solved by simply looking at the context of the verse. Don't get tricked into isolating a verse. If you're not sure, a good answer is “Give me a week and I'll get back to you.”

You can also refer to the website, [www.answering-islam.org](http://www.answering-islam.org) and click on the “Questions and Answers” tab for help in answering more of these questions.

The booklets mentioned can be found at [www.bridgesoption.org](http://www.bridgesoption.org), copies for your literature table can be obtained from The Bridges Option [info@bridgesoption.org](mailto:info@bridgesoption.org)

Quran: Sura 19:33,15 “Blessed be on me, the day I was born, the day I Die, and the day I rise again” (Jesus )

### ISN'T SIN THE SAME IN ISLAM & CHRISTIANITY?

**For a Muslim Sin is horizontal**, Satan is at fault and so it is easily forgivable (note the consequence of Adam & Eve’s sin in Eden – Surah 2:30-39; 7:19-25; 20:116-123).

Adam and Eve’s disobedience, was forgiven, yet they were banished to earth-Why? No relationship existed with God, so none lost.

Sin is the breaking of God’s law. It is not because of corruption, just weakness to Satan’s seduction

In Islam, good works balance out sin. So if a wife has done 300 good days is she then allowed to do one bad day of adultery?

**Christians see Sin as vertical**, it is our fault (Rom.3:23), to have justice it deserves death (Rom.6:23).

Adam was sinless (perfect) - in relationship with God.

He sinned (imperfect) - knew right & wrong, broke trust, hid, evicted from Eden, lost relationship with God (Men & nature)

God is pure & holy (Ps.77:13; 99:9) and can have no sin in His presence (Hab.1:13)

Thus, sin separates us from God (Is.59:1-2)

### WHY DON'T YOU BELIEVE THAT MUHAMMAD WAS A PROPHET?

If we believed that Muhammad was a prophet, then that would make us Muslims. We do not accept him as a prophet based on the Scriptural mandates for prophethood. Deut. 18 is a good place to start, since it states a prophet must be from the Israelite lineage. Muhammad is not since he traces his lineage back to Ishmael and not Isaac. The Deut. passage also gives other requirements which work against Muhammad’s claim to prophethood.

### HOW CAN GOD BE LOVING WHEN THE OLD TESTAMENT IS SO FULL OF VIOLENCE?

You can be sure that passages will be brought up that are quite disturbing, such as Joshua 6. We do have to contend with these verses, but it does help to understand that those were specific instructions for a spe-

- (2) 15,000 existing copies of the various versions written in Latin and Syriac , some of which were written as early as 150 A.D., such as the Syriac Peshitta (150-250 A.D.) Because Christianity was a missionary faith from its very inception (Matthew 28:19-20), the scriptures were immediately translated into the known languages of that period. For that reason other written translations appeared soon after, such as Coptic translations (early 3rd and 4th centuries), Armenian (400 A.D.), Gothic (4th century), Georgian (5th century), Ethiopic (6th century), and Nubian (6th century). The fact that we have so many translations of the New Testament points to its authenticity, as it would have been almost impossible, had the disciples or later followers wanted to corrupt or forge its contents, for them to have amassed all of the translations from the outlying areas and changed each one so that there would have been the uniformity which we find witnessed in these translations today
- (3) 2,135 lectionaries from the **6th century**, which are in agreement with the present text;
- (4) 86,489 quotations of the N.T. in the early church father's letters of which 36,000 are **before 325AD**. In fact, there are enough quotations from the early church fathers that, even if we did not have a single manuscript copy of the Bible, scholars could still reconstruct all but 11 verses of the New Testament from material written within 150 to 200 years of the time of Christ.

Questions to ask:

‘Who made the changes, the Jews or the Christians?’

‘How or Why do they have identical scriptures?’

‘Why is there no record of corruption?’

‘If the New Testament was changed, then why not expunge the embarrassing stories i.e. Peter’s denial of Christ Matthew 26:69-75 or Paul’s disputes with Barnabas Acts 15:39?’

This is treated in more depth in the Bridges Option Booklets “Was the Injil Changed at Nicea?” and “Can We Trust the New Testament?” or see <http://debate.org.uk/topics/history/bib-qur/bibmanu.htm>

## WHY DID THE CHURCH CHOOSE WHAT BOOKS THEY WANTED IN THE BIBLE?

This is a reference to the council of Nicea and the assumption that the church chose the books of the Bible at this council. In fact, most of the council had nothing to do with choosing books, but rather with dealing with heresy. From the earliest times, those letters written by the apostles or during the time of the apostles, were naturally accepted as authoritative and used by the early church. When heresies arose, or other “gospels,” which refuted the earliest accounts of Jesus, then the church needed to verify those texts that had always been accepted as their authority. Also, in light of the fact that the early Christians were being killed for their faith, including their books, it was imperative that they know which books had always been accepted by the church. The early church fathers are a great indicator of those books which were always accepted - the 27 we now have in our current New Testament. See also The Bridges Option booklet Was the Injil Changed at Nicea?

## WHY DIDN'T JESUS WRITE HIS OWN GOSPEL?

This question could also be asked of Muhammad. Why didn't he write down his own revelations? Another answer to this is to help them understand the culture of the day. It was customary for rabbis or teachers to have a scribe to record their words, (consider Matthew as a scribe for Jesus). We must not place our modern modes of communication on first century culture, nor even on the 7th century culture of Islam. Also, it was more important for Jesus to be preaching and healing, than spending his time writing down messages, which was a tedious task that required vast amounts of time. It is also to be realized that for Christians, Jesus himself was the revelation so he didn't need to write it down as such. It was the early disciples who captured the essence of Jesus as revelation from God. God's most complete revelation came in the form of a person, not a book.

## DO YOU KNOW THE SURNAMES OF THE GOSPEL WRITERS?

This is another attempt to put today's expectations on a culture that doesn't share them. Surnames were not important in 1st century Judaism. It was clear to the early church who the authors were, which is why those authors sometimes don't use their “names.” They knew that their audience was familiar with them. Luke's gospel is a good example of

express three crucial truths:

- (1) The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons,
- (2) each Person is fully God,
- (3) there is only one God.

The complexity is not an argument against its truth, if anything it is the strongest point in its favour. After all, we are dealing with the nature of the eternal God of the Universe. He is greater than the heavens and the earth – should it be surprising to us, who are merely mortal, finite creatures, to find that his basic character is incomprehensible?

*Isa 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

I am quite happy to say “ The God of the Bible is too great to be able to be fully comprehended by mortal man”

This is not an evasive answer, but instead focuses on the greatness of God

It is wonderful to be loved by and cared for by a God who is greater than man could ever comprehend.

God is so great that a mortal could never explain or comprehend

Him, all we can do is accept what the scriptures say about Him God's being is not limited by what I can understand.

‘Would you like to get together and I will show you from the Bible what it says about God?’

## DID JESUS REALLY DIE ON THE CROSS?

Often Muslims cite Mark 14:50 and say that since even Jesus' disciples deserted Him, we have no eyewitnesses to the crucifixion. Further, they will argue that the appearance of His death was somehow faked. (Sura 4:157-158) The verses immediately following 14:50 indicate that Peter returned. John 18:15-16 tells us another disciple was with Peter. John 19:25-27 has Jesus' mother and John at the foot of the cross. Luke 23:49 indicates that other followers watched from a distance. Rather than no witnesses, we find that the crucifixion was witnessed by His closest followers.

Extra-Biblical evidence:(Thallus = 50AD, Josephus 80-90AD, Tacitus 80AD, Pliny the Younger 112AD)

come human, but Yahweh of the Bible can take on human form yet still remain the infinite all powerful ruler of the universe, and indeed has. It seems that the Muslim god is too small because he can't do something as simple as become human." Keep the discussion on the material of history and the Scriptural, eyewitness accounts.

### CAN YOU SHOW ME ONE PLACE WHERE JESUS EVER SAID, "I AM GOD?"

Refer to the passages above and explain that in the first century context, this was equivalent to saying, "I am God. Worship me." This is what the Jews hearing him understood and is why they tried to stone him in the Matt 26 passage and others like it. See also The Bridges Option booklet The Answer is God.

### HOW CAN GOD BE A TRINITY?

Christians have often been accused by Muslims of worshipping 3 gods (Sura 5:73). Some Muslims think the Trinity is God the Father, God the Son, and Mary the Mother. Many Christians have been asked the question, "How can 1+1+1 equal 1," assuming that 1 represents a separate god. This is not what Christians believe. God is not made up of three separate gods, but three "persons" expressed in the one God. It would perhaps be more correct to respond, "doesn't 1x1x1 equal 1"? All Christians strongly believe that there is but ONE God, and He alone must be the object of our worship and service. The Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments repeatedly tells us that there is only ONE God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; Romans 3:30; 1 Timothy 1:17; James 2:19). Perhaps 1 Corinthians 8:4 says it best, "There is no God but ONE".

Not 3 Gods, Not God the Father, God the Son, and Mary; God as Father or Son must not be viewed within a biological context  
The word "Trinity" never appears in the Bible. It is a word which did not even exist at that time. The word trinity is in fact a theological term adopted later by Christians to define what the Bible teaches concerning God  
The Bible is very clear – there is ONE God  
The doctrine of the Trinity means that there is one God who eternally exists as three distinct Persons - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
Or, God is one in essence and three in person. These definitions

this. He was writing to his friend Theophilus in a very personal way. He didn't need to use his name. The lack of an identified author does not imply that the account is fabricated or untrue. It must also be remembered that the authorship of the gospels is accepted by the early church.

### JESUS NEVER CLAIMED TO BE GOD OR THE SON OF GOD, HE PREFERRED THE TITLE THE SON OF MAN.

3 responses:

\* Here are 5 references where Jesus claims or strongly implies He is the Son of God: Matthew 26:63-65; Matthew 27:43; Luke 4:41; John 5:25; John 11:4, 25-27

\* These 7 passages demonstrate that Jesus claimed to have the powers, authority, and attributes of God. Further details can be found in the ABC booklet 'The Answer is God' Matthew 24:30,31; Matthew 28:20; Matthew 28:18; John 3:14-16; John 6:35 (see also 6:48-51); John 8:34, 36; and John 11:25

\* While Muslims will often think of 'Son of Man' as pointing to a denial of deity and a claim for humanity. They miss the Messianic import of it. These passages show the full meaning of what Jesus meant by claiming the title for Himself:

But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, then He said to the paralytic, Arise, take up your bed and go to your house. (Matthew 9:6)

The Son of Man shall send out His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who do iniquity, (Matthew 13:41)

For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He shall reward each one according to his works. (Matthew 16:27)

For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. (Matthew 18:11)

And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that you who have followed



Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matthew 19:28)

...even as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:28)

For as the lightning comes out of the east and shines even to the west, so also will be the coming of the Son of Man. And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:27, 30)

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. (Matthew 25:31)

Jesus said to him, You said it. I tell you more. From this time you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of the heavens. (Matthew 26:64)

And He took the Twelve and said to them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. (Luke 18:31)

For as the Father raises the dead and makes alive, even so the Son of Man makes alive whomever He wills. (John 5:21)

### HOW CAN JESUS BE THE SON OF GOD?

Not in biological or sexual sense. “Son of...” in eastern thinking indicated likeness or sameness of nature and equality of being. Even the Arabic word *ibn* has a metaphorical sense referring to having the nature of... An example is when a traveller is called a son of the road.

When Jesus claimed to be or accepted the title Son of God, his Jewish contemporaries fully understood he was making a clear claim to be God. That is why they wanted to stone him for blasphemy, John 19:7; 5:18.

Also, it is not correct to say Jesus became the Son of God in His incarnation. He was eternally the Son of God. John 3:16-17 says the Son was sent into the world, implying He was the Son before the incarnation.

While Muslims may object that Paul’s writings are part of the corrupted scriptures, you are ready with an answer from page 2 of this booklet.

### HOW CAN GOD BECOME A MAN?

Not man becoming God ↑, but God becoming man ↓ (Phil.2:6-8). In his omnipotence, can God do anything ? Thus, can he become a man? So, the question is not how. Are you as wise as God? But why? To Eradicate SIN. **Already God had appeared in human form:** God appears to Abraham - Genesis 17:1-4, 9-10, 15-16, 22; 18:1-3, 10  
God wrestles with Jacob - Genesis 32:24-30  
God appears to Moses in the burning bush— Exodus 3:2-6  
The Commander of the army of the LORD appears to Joshua. Joshua 5:13-15  
The presence of the LORD with the three children in fire—Daniel 3:22-25

### WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THAT A MAN COULD BE GOD?

We don’t believe that a man could be God, but we do believe that God could become a man. Beginning with Genesis 3:8-9, God has taken on human form many times in the Bible. We also look to the claims that Jesus made about himself, equating himself with God, (Jn 8:58; 10:27-30; Matthew 26:62-66; cf Daniel 7:13-14). See also The Bridges Option booklets Is Jesus God? , How Can Jesus be God and Man?, and The Answer is God.

### IF GOD WAS IN JESUS, IN HUMAN FORM, WHEN HE WAS ON THE EARTH, THEN WHO WAS RUNNING THE UNIVERSE AT THAT TIME?

This question often comes up when you may be presenting the evidence for the deity of Jesus, both from historicity regarding the resurrection, and from the Scriptures. This is a “red-herring” argument. It takes the focus off of the material presented about Jesus and diverts the argument to the characteristics of God in general. Be careful not to get sidetracked. A quick response is, “Why do you want to limit God and tell him what he can and cannot do? Maybe the god of Islam cannot be-