

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) ABOUT THE BIBLE

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INTRO

'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQ) about the Bible which Muslims challenge us with and how we answer them in small 5-10-minute soundbites, employing the '3 C's' (**Quick, Concise, yet Comprehensive**)

01: Doesn't the Qur'an claim the Bible is Corrupt?

Where and When? Before, or after the 7th century, Muhammad, or the Qur'an?

Note: Surahs **10:94; 21:7; 4:136; 5:46-47, 68; 29:46. (S.2:79?** See vs.78 = Apocryphal books) all support the Bible Corruption argument was first introduced in **1096 AD** by **Ibn Hazam**, so everyone before used the Bible

02: We have an Original Qur'an, so why can't you find an original Bible?

Qur'an: No complete, nor same, nor unchanged MS until **1924 (or 1985?)** What is the 'Hafs' 1924 text?

Bible: 14,000 MSS (236 before 6th c.), 19,000 Translations (in 11 languages), 86,000 Early Church Father's quotations (36,000 before 4th c.). Qur'an = pyramid & Bible = upside down pyramid

03: Doesn't the BIBLE'S ALLAH = the QUR'AN'S ALLAH?

Is the Allah which we find in the Arabic Bible the same as the Allah we find in the Arabic Qur'an, since they share the same name?

I quickly dispense with that question by posing **3 problems**.

1st Problem: Just because they share the **same name in Arabic**, does not mean that they are the same God any more than my name Jay suggests that I am the same person as every other person named Jay.

2nd Problem: The reason 'Allah' was chosen for God's name in the Arabic Bible was because it was the only name available when the Bible was translated. Translators are told to find the "**Dynamic Equivalent**" for words between languages (Eugene Nida is popularly credited with that idea). Yet, unfortunately, when you choose the name of a foreign god, you bring with it their **foreign meanings** as well (the problem of '**form and meaning**'). Thus, you carry into the Bible all the baggage of the Islamic meaning for their god Allah, which has caused so much confusion today.

3rd Problem: The Allah of the Qur'an is probably the wrong name for both scriptures since it is derived from a pagan and **polytheistic god named 'ilaha'**, the **generic title** for the greatest god of the Nabatean religion, whose formal name is '*Dusharah*'. Yet, this Nabatean god named *Dusharah* has a wife named '*Al Uzza*', whose generic title is '*Al-lat*', which, interestingly, is the feminine form of 'Allah', proving that the Nabatean Allah is not only a pagan god, but one who is also polytheistic. Neither the Bible nor the Qur'an, therefore, should be using the name 'Allah' in their texts, because both claim that their God is 'ONE'.

Consequently, the best name to use for the true God is the Biblical God, **YAHWEH**, which is the unique, holy, and eternal name for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and found **6,823 times** in the Bible, and the very name Jesus claimed for Himself in **John 8:58**.

04: What about the Old Testament Violence?

What are we to do with the violence in the Old Testament? More specifically, what do we do with **Joshua 6:20**, or **1 Samuel 15:2-3** where God says to the Israelites that they were to 'kill all living things'? Muslims claim these are clear examples of **Genocide**, which is something you won't find in the Qur'an.

In order to understand how to answer these two situations, we need to look at the context behind them both. And we can see this in 1 Samuel 15:2 where the **Amalekites waylaid the Israelites** as they were coming out of Egypt, where they had been captive for 400 years.

Ezekiel 16:7-14: God had taken the **Israelites as babes**, dressed them, and nurtured them. But in **verses 15 through 24**, we find the Israelites responded by **sacrificing their children**, and **prostituting themselves to other gods**. In **verses 26 - 29** they were the gods of the **Egyptians, the Philistines, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians**.

Exodus 17:8: The reason they were seduced is because of the Canaanites, of whom there were **6 tribes**, attacked the Israelites, **seduced them**, and forced them to **worship their own gods**.

Deut. 20:17: The **6 tribes: Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and the Jebusites**

Exodus 17:14-16: God says that because of these attacks they would be **completely blotted out**, and that this would continue **from generation to generation (verse 15)**. So, 1 Samuel 15 and Joshua 6 are a **fulfillment of what God had promised back in**

Deuteronomy 20 rules of engagement were dictated by God for going to war. These rules delineated two kinds of people that they were to war against, those who lived near to them, and those who lived far away.

Those people who **lived far away** were not a real concern for the Israelites, so the rules for war were different for them than those who were much closer and would be more of a problem.

Deuteronomy 20:10-15 (Far away): The Israelites were to first **offer** the enemies **peace**. If they accepted peace (**verse 11**) they were then to be **put into forced labor**. For those who **did not accept peace (verse 12)**, they were to **attack them**. Then in **verses 13 to 15, and 16 to 17**, it is clear that the Israelites were to **only kill the men** and keep all other living beings as theirs.

Deuteronomy 20:17-18 (Near By): In **verse 16-17** the Israelites were to **completely eradicate them**. Why? In **verse 18** it says in order to **stop their seduction against God**.

So, God gives a whole different set of rules for those people **who lived nearby**, as these were the people who attacked them when they came up out of Egypt back in Exodus 17. And he **names them in Deut. 20:17**. These were the **Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites**, a total of **six tribes**. These 6 tribes the Israelites were to **completely eradicate**.

This **violence was for one time, for one place, and for a specific listed set of people**, not for everyone, everywhere, nor for all time.

So, **what seduction** is God referring to? To understand what he's talking about we need to refer to **Ezekiel 16** which gives us a **better picture** concerning just **how dangerous the surrounding nations were** to the Israelites and helps us understand why God wanted these people eradicated, so that they would never again seduce the

Israelites, who had been chosen by God to bring the Messiah to the whole world. The Israelites, having spent 400 years in captivity, were **innocent and naïve, and needed to be protected from these encircling tribes**. Note, that it is **only those six tribes** which God said must be attacked and eradicated, no one else. This **violence was for one time, for one place, and for a specific listed set of people**, not for everyone, everywhere, nor for all time.

What's more, an additional point often overlooked is that **God actually evacuated many of the Canaanites by sending an angel and Hornets ahead of Israel to drive them out**, in **Exodus 23:27-30, and 33:2**. A further idea concerns how we cannot really morally critique the moral actions of an omniscient being without access to that omniscient knowledge. For instance, what if God had commanded the killing of baby Hitler. People would say that was a moral abomination, oblivious to what God had just prevented.

So, God is not interested in genocide, but also offers peace, such as the case of the Gibeonites, or even Rahab, an enemy who was offered peace, took it, and then became the ancestor of the Messiah himself.

Muslims will continue to claim that these are all examples of **genocide** which are not found in the Qur'an. What about **Surah 7:84 and Surah 15:59**, where we find the stories of **Sodom and Gomorrah**, where all living things, much like we see in these previous Biblical accounts, were all eradicated; men, women, children, and everything which lives.

Another good example is the prophet **Muhammad's life** himself. Look and see what he did to the Jewish tribes living in Medina **between 624 - 627 A.D.** **The Jews** had lived in **Medina** for centuries, yet Muhammad had only been there for five years, and in that short time had thrown out two of the Jewish families, and then with the last remaining Jewish tribe killed 800 of their men, and took the women as concubines for his men, and the children as slaves.

What was their crime? They never attacked the Arabs, nor seduced them, nor forced anyone to turn to their own God. Their only crime was that they refused to accept him as their authority. I would suggest that is a better example of **genocide**, not what we see in the Old Testament.

Unlike Muhammad, and the Quran, which are models for Muslims for all times, and for everyone and everywhere, these few Old Testament examples of violence were only ever applied to six tribes, and were applicable for only that time, and for only that place.

05: Why is there violence in the OT & peace in the NT?

The question is often asked concerning why there is so much **violence in the Old Testament**, yet in the **New Testament**, we find only **peace**, with Christ stating clearly that we are not to use the sword, saying "for he who lives by the sword must die by the sword" (**Matthew 26:52**).

Doesn't this suggest that either **God changed his mind, or is confused, or that we have two different gods?**

Not at all, for it is **not God who changed** between the Old and New Testament, **but the children of Israel**. As an example, take for instance **Jay's 3 sons**; who, at one time were **6 yrs. old, 12 yrs. old, and 16 yrs. old**.

Jay had one set of laws for his 6-year-old, not allowing him to go outside the house by himself, while his 12-year-old could go all over London alone; and his 16-year-old could travel around the world by himself. So, at one time Jay had three different laws for his three different sons, yet he was the same father for all three. He hadn't

changed, nor was he contradictory, nor was he two different fathers. He contextualized his laws depending on the needs for all three of his sons who were at different stages of maturity.

Likewise, God does the same for us, his children. He had a **strict and all-encompassing set of laws for the children** of Israel in 1400 BC (called **Mosaic Law**), similar to Jay's restrictive laws for his 6-year-old, but in the 1st century AD God had a **completely new set of laws**, introduced by **Jesus Christ**, which we call the **New Testament**. They are much more freeing, but entail a lot more responsibility, much like the laws Jay reserved for his 12-year-old son. But what about Jay's 3rd son?

We are told that **600 years after Christ** initiated his new law (his New Testament), another supposed prophet called **Muhammad came** who introduced yet **another set of new laws called 'Shariah Law'**. Yet, they are similar to the old Mosaic Laws introduced at the time of Moses, **restrictive and violent, regressing** believers back to Mosaic times.

Can you imagine Jay imposing the laws of his 6-year-old onto his 16-year-old, regressing him back to his childhood? He would never do that. Yet, that is what Islam tells us Allah has done to Muslims, regressing them back to the Law God imposed on Moses in 1400 BC.

Jay as a father hasn't changed, but his three sons have. In the same way our God between 1400 BC and today hasn't changed, nor is he confused, nor contradictory, nor is he two separate Gods. He hasn't changed at all. It is we who have changed.

06: Why is the NEW TESTAMENT so PEACEFUL?

A legitimate question concerns why there is no violence in the New Testament, since this is allowed by God in the Old Testament?

We need to go to Jesus for that answer, and specifically to **Matthew 5:17** where he says, "I have not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill them". The operative word here is "**Fulfill**". He's come to bring about that which the Old Law was set up to deliver.

And then he gives us 6 applications of what he means by fulfilling the Old Testament Law by suggesting six comparatives between what he is now introducing.

In verse 21 where murder was condemned, he now says in verse 22 that not even anger is now permitted. This is the new law, the new covenant, the New Testament, which is not only different, but much more difficult.

In verse 27 where adultery was condemned, he now says in verse 28 that even looking at a woman lustfully is not now permitted.

In verse 31 where easy divorce was permitted, he now says in verse 32 that divorce is not permitted, except for infidelity.

In verse 33 where oaths were permitted, he now says in verse 34 that no swearing of any oaths are permitted.

In **verse 38** where he quotes '**an eye for an eye**', he now says to '**turn the other cheek**', which is much more difficult to do.

In **verse 43** where he mentions that in the Old Mosaic Law it was permitted to **love your neighbours and hate your enemies**, he now says in **verse 44** that we are to "**love our enemies**", something which is one of the most difficult things to do.

Every one of these new applications point to just how different this new law is, and yet how much more difficult they also are, especially the last one, to love our enemies.

This law is unique to the New Testament and to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and cannot be found in any other scripture, especially not in the Qur'an, where we find a verse like Surah 9:29 which tells Muslims to 'Make war upon the people of the Book', the Jews and Christians.

Or Surah 8:39 where they are to destroy the unbelievers, or even Surah 47:4 which enjoins Muslims to 'cut off the heads of the unbelievers'!

Everybody wants peace, yet the only place people can find it is in the New Testament, and more specifically in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So, if you want to really find peace, than come home to Jesus Christ, and His Gospel of Peace.

07: Doesn't Surah 2:79 prove the Bible is corrupt?

We've asked Muslims where in the Qur'an is there any reference to a corruption of the Bible, and the only one they can come up with is Surah 2:79, which says "*Then woe to those (Jews) who write the book with their own hands and then say, 'This is from Allah,' to purchase with it a little price! Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn.*"

This sound like the Jews are writing the scriptures with their own hands and then saying it's from God.

So, what's the context? In order to know what this is all about, you need to read the preceding **verse 78**, which says, "*And there are among them (Jews) unlettered people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires and they but guess.*"

So, this is referring to Jews, who are either illiterate, or do not know the scripture, so they guess with false desires...and what do they guess? Now read verse 79 which follows...they guess by writing another book with their own hands, and say it is from God.

What is this referring to? Any Jew can tell you that these are the **Apocryphal writings**, such as the **Talmud and the Mishnah**; which were written outside of scriptures, usually folk tales for children, which were never considered to be authoritative. More recently, we now know that much of the **core of the Qur'an** came from **Christian Syro-Aramaic lectionaries, hymns, and homilies**.

08: How did we get the 'CANON'?

- 1) Was it authoritative? Did it come from God? Did it have the seal of apostolic authority?
- 2) Was it prophetic? Was it written by a man of God?
- 3) Was it authentic? Rule-of-thumb: "if in doubt, throw it out"
- 4) Was it dynamic? Did it change lives?
- 5) Was it used? Was it read and collected by early Christians? (II Peter 3:16)?

09: How authoritative are our Biblical MANUSCRIPTS?

-Rule of thumb: 'the more MSS the more credible the document', and 'that which is closest to the event is most authoritative'.

-**New Testament Copies [extant]:** (5,686 = Greek MSS, 10,000 = Latin Vulgates, 9,300 = others => **25,000 copies**)
(**230 MSS & fragments** compiled before the 7th century, i.e. **before the first Qur'an**)

10: Why don't we have any Original Manuscripts?

MSS are rare, because **Vellum** (skins) was too expensive before the 4th century, thus used **Papyrus** (inter-locking leaves).

Originals: Criticism of N.T. Mss = late dates; yet many scholars now agree originals were written before 90 AD

- before: Jerusalem's fall (70 AD), Rome fire (64 AD), martyrdoms: James (62 AD), Paul (64 AD), Peter (65 AD)
- Thus, most likely written even before 62 AD, or 30 years after Jesus' death (i.e. Acts - between 52AD-62 AD=Delphi Inscription)

Gap: Criticism = too long of time between original and extant. Compare with secular historians and philosophers below:

- 1) latest **New Testament Ms** (below) over **400 years before** the earliest **secular Ms**.
- 2) Some N.T. Mss within 300 years of the originals, others as early as 40-250 years, (see graph below)
- 3) Secular Mss all have between 750-1,400 years gap! Which are more authoritative?

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date Written</u>	<u>Earliest Copy</u>	<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Copies (extent)</u>
Secular Manuscripts:				
Herodotus (History)	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1,300 years	8
Thucydides (History)	460 - 400 BC	900 AD	1,300 years	8
Aristotle (Philosopher)	384 - 322 BC	1,100 AD	1,400 years	5
Caesar (History)	100 - 44 BC	900 AD	1,000 years	10
Pliny (History)	61 - 113 AD	850 AD	750 years	7
Suetonius (Roman History)	70 - 140 AD	950 AD	800 years	?
Tacitus (Greek History)	100 AD	1,100 AD	1,000 years	20 (McDowell 1972:42 & 1999:38-40)
Biblical Manuscripts (N.T.):				
Magdalene Ms (Matthew 26)	1st century*	50-68 AD*	co-existent(?)	*debatable
John Rylands (John)	90 AD	130 AD	40 years	
Bodmer Papyrus II (John)	90 AD	150-200 AD	60-110 years	
Chester Beatty Papyri (N.T.)	1st century	200 AD	150 years	
Diatessaron by Tatian (Gospels)	1st century	200 AD	150 years	
Codex Vaticanus (Bible)	1st century	325-350 AD	275-300 years	
Codex Sinaiticus (Bible)	1st century	350 AD	300 years	
Codex Alexandrinus (Bible)	1st century	400 AD	350 years	

Qur'an Comparative: Sana'a = 705 AD, Topkapi, Sammarqand, Ma'il, Petropolitanus = 8th c., Hussein = 9th c.

-None agree with each other completely, none are complete, and none agree with the 'Hafs' 1924 MS.

11: Do we have any EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS? (internal Corroboration) (friendly eyewitnesses)

i.e. **Luke 1:1-3** = ("take account of the things accomplished among us") = held accountable by the **disciples**

Acts 2:22 = ("a man attested to you...in your midst...you yourselves know") = held accountable by **Jews**

Acts 26:24-26 = ("none of these things escape his notice, for this has not been done in a corner")

-held accountable by secular **Roman** (Festus) & secular **Jewish king** (Herod)

12: what VERSIONS OR TRANSLATIONS do we have for the Bible?

-19,284 translations: in over 11 languages: Latin (10,000:from 150AD on), Syriac (350:150AD on), Coptic (100+:3-4th C.), Armenian (2,587:400AD->), Gothic (6:4th C.->), Georgian/Slavic (4,101:5th C.->), Ethiopic (2,000:6th C.->), Nubian (6th C.->), Arabic (75), Persian (2), Frankish (1) -230 were quite early, written from 150 AD up until 6th century

13: What LECTONARIES do we have?

-2,135 Lectionaries from 6th century

14: What about the EARLY CHURCH FATHERS letters?

- **Clement of Alexandria** (150-212AD) = 2,406 quotes; **Tertullian** (160-220AD) = 7,258 quotes; **Justin Martyr** = 330 quotes; **Irenaeus** = 1,819 quotes; **Origen** = 17,922 quotes; **Hippolytus** = 1,378 quotes; **Eusebius** = 5,176 quotes
- **36,289** quotes from Early Church Fathers letters: **all 27 books** of New Testament included, **all but 11 verses of John** (<- 325AD)

15: What does Archaeology tell us about the OLD TESTAMENT?

-***50 Old Testament people** have been found and corroborated in extra-Biblical material

-***Noah's Flood** - 138 accounts of a flood have been found in every culture except that of Egypt (i.e. Gilgamesh Epic, Tablet 11).

-***Tower of Babel** (Gen. 11:1-9) found in Summerian tablets, and with the Babylonians.

-***Moses** "didn't write because writing not known then", yet Black Stele found = written laws of *Hammurabi* 300 yrs. before Moses.

-***Hittites/Horites** "didn't exist" (Gen.36:20), yet inscriptions found = 1,200 yrs. of Hittites, & Horites = Mesopotamian warriors

-**Abraham** = name appears on Babylonian inscription

-***Field of Abram in Hebron** (Palestine) = 918 BC mentioned by *Shishak* of Egypt, on walls of *Karnak* temple

-**Beni Hasan Tomb**: from 1900 BC depicts Asiatics coming to Egypt because of famine

-***Armana tablets**: (Egypt) 'Habiru' = (possibly) Hebrew, given to Abraham (Gen.14:13), only 4 fortified cities post Joshua in Canaan

-***Ebla tablets**: (Syria) 17,000 = *Tell Mardikh*, **2300 BC** = Deuteronomy law code (Deut. 22:22-30)

- Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, Zoar = (Gen. 14:8)

-***Mari tablets**: (Euphrates) *Arriyuk* = *Arioch* = (Gen.14), *Nahor*, *Harran* = (Gen.24:10), Benjamin & *Habiru* (Hebrew?)

-***Nuzi tablets**: (Iraq) speaks of 6 Patriarchal customs paralleled in Genesis

-**Doors of Sodom**: 2200-1600 BC = heavy (security) = (Gen.19:9), if 900-600 BC = arch/curtains (as no security needed)

-***Joseph's price**: (20 shekels) Gen.37:28 = 1,700 BC, earlier cheaper, later more (vs. Surah 12's *dirham*)

-**Joseph's Tomb**: Josh.24:32 = in *Shechem* found mummy with Egyptian sword! [David Rohl = found his house at *Avaris*]

-**Jericho's walls** fell outwards (Kathleen Kenyon) = Joshua 6:20, and Northern wall intact (Rahab's dwelling was there Joshua 2:15)

-**David's Water shafts** used by Joab (II Sam.5:6-8; I Chron.11:6) found by Macalister, Duncan & Kenyon.

-**Daniel** not 2nd but 6th BC, East India Inscription (6th cent.) = Dan.4:30 account of Nebuchadnezzar's building.

-***Cylinder Inscription of Nabonidus** (539BC) Balshazzar = Nabonidus' son, last Babylonian king, unknown to Herodotus 450 BC

-***Nabonidus Chronicle** (555-539 BC) co-regency of Nabonidus and Balshazzar, answering why Daniel was 3rd (Daniel 5:16).

-**Dead Sea Scrolls** = 100 BC = Massoretic MS = 916 A.D., parallel except for Jeremiah and Lamentation derivations.

-***The Oldest Biblical Inscriptions**: in 9 burial caves of Hinnom valley= **2 tiny silver scrolls with Biblical inscriptions** rolled up in charms (Tel Aviv archeologist Gabriel Barkay) = priestly blessing of **Numbers 6:24-26**, from **7th century BC** making them **2,600 years old**, and over 400 yrs. older than the Dead Sea Scrolls

16: What does Archaeology tell us about the NEW TESTAMENT?

-***27 New Testament people** have been found in extra-Biblical material.

-Pavement, **Gabbatha**, where Jesus was tried (Jn.19:13) found in the Tower of Antonia, Roman military HQ

-**Pool of Bethesda** found near church of St. Anne (N.E. qtr. of city), called *Bezetha* in 1st century.

LUKE'S accuracy: (as a historian)

-**Lystra & Derbe** were in **Lycaonia**, & not **Iconium** (Acts 14:6) contradicted by *Cicero*, but monument confirms it

-**Erastus** = *Corinth* treasurer (Rom. 16:23), pavement found in 1929 with this name.

-**Meris** = *Philippi* a "district" (*meris*) of *Macedonia* doubted until inscriptions used this word for a district.

-***Politarchs** = civil authority of *Thessalonica* (Acts 17:6) doubted, but 19 inscriptions use it, 5 in *Thessalonica*

-***Praetor** = *Philippian* ruler instead of *Duumvir* is accurate, Romans used Praetor as magistrates earlier.

-***Proconsul** = title for *Gallio* (Acts 18:12) - corroborated by Delphi Inscription (52 AD) Gallio held it for 1yr.!

-***Quirinius** = **governor of Syria** at Jesus' birth (**Lk.2:1-2**), **Josephus = 6AD. Antioch Inscription = 7BC-6AD**

F.F. Bruce states, "*Where Luke has been suspected of inaccuracy, and accuracy has been vindicated by some inscriptional evidence, it may be legitimate to say that archaeology has confirmed the New Testament record.*"

17: WHAT THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS SAY:

G.E. Wright states, "*We shall probably never prove that Abram really existed...but what we can prove is that his life and times, as reflected in the stories about him, fit perfectly within the early second millennium, but imperfectly within any later period.*"

Sir Frederic Kenyon mentions, "*The evidence of archaeology has been to re-establish the authority of the Old Testament, and likewise to augment its value by rendering it more intelligible through a fuller knowledge of its background and setting.*"

William F. Albright (a renowned archaeologist) says, "*The excessive scepticism shown toward the Bible by important historical schools of the 18th and 19th centuries, certain phases which still appear periodically, has been progressively discredited. Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history.*"

Millar Burrows of Yale states, "*On the whole, archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the scriptural record.*"

Joseph Free confirms that while thumbing through the book of Genesis, he mentally noted that each of the 50 chapters are either illuminated or confirmed by some archaeological discovery, and that this would be true for most of the remaining chapters of the Bible, both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Nelson Glueck (a Jewish Reformed scholar and archaeologist) probably gives us the greatest support for the Bible when he states, "*To date no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a single, properly understood biblical statement.*"

18: What about the Bible's FULFILLED PROPHECIES?

Deuteronomy 18:21-22; Isaiah 43:9; and John 13:18-21 demands for prophecy. The Bible is replete with fulfilled predictions

- **Moses and Isaiah** had prophecies:

- fulfilled immediately, or the next day:
 - defeat of Egyptians = Exodus 14:13-14,27-28,
 - holding the sun back = Isaiah 38:5-8
 - Sennacherib's rout = Isaiah 37:21-38
- fulfilled between 150-200 years later, or centuries later; others just now being fulfilled:
 - Israelites exile to Babylon = Isaiah 39:6-7
 - blessing/curses for Israel = Deuteronomy 28:1,15,64-66; 30:1,4-5
 - the fall of Babylon = Isaiah 13:1,19-20
 - return from exile = Isaiah 11:11-12

19: How about the Bible's EXTRAORDINARY UNITY AND HARMONY

-The Bible = 66 books, +30 authors, written over 1,500 years, yet with a common theme = God's redemption of humanity to Himself.

20: What about the Bible's AMAZING CIRCULATION

- Completed: +2,500 translations, in 260 languages (NT=580, portions=920) = now 93% in people's mother tongue!
- ongoing: 1,167 new languages, 1 trans. completed every 2 weeks, while one commences every 10 days = 60 yrs. more!
- In 1988 = gave 700 million Bible portions, 14 million Bibles, 13 million NT, in over 100 countries!

21: And the Bible's APPEAL TO ALL CLASSES EVERYWHERE? (conversion growth)

- 1900 = 558 m. Christians, **2,000 = 2.2 b.** (565m.=S. Am., 547m. = Eur., 390m. = Africa, 255m. = No. Am., 250m. = Asia)
- An even spread. Majority in southern Africa, N. & S. America, and Europe (not in Islam, Hindu India & China)

22: What about the Bible's WISDOM AND HIGH MORAL TEACHING?

- Basis of Law and Morality worldwide: (10 Commandments, Golden Rule, Sermon on the Mount)
- Gives patterns copied by the world (even non-Christian):
 - via colonialism (i.e. Hindu India, Muslim Senegal)
 - via adoption (Shinto Japan, laws based on U.S. Constitution, modelled on Bible)

-**UN Declaration of Human Rights** = most universal secular document used today as a standard:

Biblical thread throughout, in direct contrast to Islamic principles

- Art.4: no **slavery**: Abolition movements = Christian: Clapham sect = UK, 'underground railway' = US, Sierra Leone = Africa
- Art.5: no cruel, degrading **punishment**: Bible forbids it (Matt.5:39; 26:52; Lk.6:27-28; 1Cor.13)
 - Qur'an allows it (amputations S.5:38, floggings S.24:2, stonings = *Hudud* – 'Rajam'*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Vol. 8:817, pg.539
- Arts.7,8,10: **equality**: Bible encourages it (Gal.3:28) while Qur'an distinguishes between Muslim/Kufr (*wergild* 10/1, *Dhimmi* laws, *Jizya*)
- Art.16: **marriage & divorce** equality: Biblical (only one wife etc...) Qur'an = no *Kufr* wife, must convert first to Islam. Unequal (S.4:3,24; 2:230)
- Art.18: Freedom of **thought** and **religion** (to change): Bible allows choice (Jn.3:16; Rom.10:9-15)
 - Qur'an = fight unbelievers (S.8:39 = fight them; 9:5 = slay pagans, 29 = fight; 47:4 = smite, subdue, bind)

- Art.19: Freedom of **opinion & expression**: Bible (no censorship, only must not change scripture Rev.22:18-19)
 - Qur'an (no criticism of the Qur'an, Muhammad; i.e. Pakistan's = Sect.295-C Blasphemy law)
- Art.21: **Equal access** /will of people basis of authority = **Democracy**: Bible (separation of Church/state, Matt.22:21; Rom.13:1-7)
 - Qur'an = Caliph, Ulema, Shari'ah = authority, non-Muslim may not rule, or participate in high office, *Mawla*
- Shows that secular governments borrow Biblical principles, though they try to distance from the source of its authority.
- Islamic conservatism pines for '*Rushidun*' period, where Allah's laws were above other laws, discriminatory *Dhimma* treaty at Khaybar (628 AD)
- Muslim countries follow 'Biblical' colonial law, due to impracticality of *Shari'ah* law today.
- Any God-given scripture must be universally adaptable, to all cultures, for all times.
- Most countries use Biblical principles of morality and law
- No Muslim country uses strict Shari'ah laws, even when in absolute control; must revert back to Biblical principles.
 - Excuse = 'corrupt leaders', yet west has corrupt leaders also, but Biblical memory still exists.
 - Result = "just" and democratic society, improved economic environment = mass immigration to West.

23: What about the Bible's LIFE-CHANGING POWER?

(impact on societies through the spreading of the Bible in the world)

- Though 66,000 people die each day (around 46 each minute) without hearing about the Bible,
- 138,500 Protestant missionaries: 85,000 = N.Am, 35,000 = West, 30,000 = non-west (Johnstone Operation World, 1993:404).
- 3,500 new churches every week,
- **70,000 people receive Christ daily!** (5% for Evangelicals versus only 2.5% for Islam) (Johnstone 1993:183).
- One need only go into any Christian book shop to see the myriad of testimonials by those who have given their hearts to Christ because of the truth they found within the pages of the Bible, to find proof of its changing power. **Never in the history of humanity have so many been affected so much, by so few, and all due to the life-changing power which the Bible has for those who seek its truth.**

24: Does GOD EVER CHANGE HIS WORD?

(found in both the Qur'an and the Bible):

- **Qur'an: 10:64** = "No change can there be in the words of Allah." **6:34**: "There is none that can alter the words of Allah," (see also Suras **3:2,78; 4:135; 18:26; 35:42; 50:28,29**)
- **Bible: Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 5:17-18; 24:35; Revelation 22:18-20.**
- A recurring theme, so why would the Bible be different? This argument began with **Ibn Hazam (1064)**, so a much later polemic.

25: WHY NOT ACCEPT THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS?

-Agrees with Sura 4:157 that Jesus did not die, but was substituted by another (G of B says it is Judas Iscariot – sect.#217)

Problems:

- 1st MS discovered in Papal library in 1590 AD, in Italian, written around 1400-1500 AD
- Barnabas assumes he is one of the 12 apostles instead of Thomas, favoured by Jesus (#'s 19,25,72,

83,88,100,101,109,218,219,221)

- Calls Jesus 'Christo', but denies he is the Messiah, forgetting Christ means the Messiah (in Hebrew) (#s 42 and 96)
- Jesus is born in **#3 outside** Bethlehem, **#4 inside**, **#5 outside**, **#6 inside**, **#7 outside**: 5 contradictions in 5 paragraphs
- In #42 & 97 Jesus wears shoes, the kind invented for 15th c. Italian cold climates, unknown in Palestine in the 1st century.
- In #152, wine barrels are mentioned, but were invented quite a bit later (around the 10th cent.), not in Palestine, but in Europe.
- In #82 refers to "Jubilee of 100 years", but Lev.25:8-34 = 50 years, only in 1343 AD, pope Boniface VIII made jubilee of 100 years. This was later returned to the original time allotment of 50 years by Clement VI.
- In #20-21, Jesus traverses the Sea of Galilee & disembarks at Nazareth, and then walks up to Capernaum. In reality, Nazareth is found in the mountains, more than 25 kilometres from the Sea, and it is Capernaum which is next to the Sea.

26: WHY ARE THERE MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE?

Not Versions, but different Translations:

RSV was written in standard English and is the traditional favourite for many traditional denominations.

NIV: A newer, modern and increasingly popular English translation.

NASB: keeps to the exact meaning of the original text, word-for-word from the Hebrew and Greek.

J.B.Phillips: written in story-book fashion

Good News for Modern Man: uses only a 5,000 word vocabulary, to help new English speakers.

Qur'anic Translations: Yusuf **Ali**; Marmaduke **Pickthall**; Arthur **Arberry**; Muhammad al-**Hilali** & **Khan**; M.A.S. **Abdel-Haleem**

27: HOW CAN GOD'S WORD INCLUDE PORNOGRAPHY, BAD LANGUAGE AND BAD PEOPLE?

- Judah's incest with Tamar (Genesis 38), or David's sin with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11), yet it is also found in Sura 38:25-26
- Bible teaches that all **people are sinful**, and that their sins incur damning consequences, which therefore needs forgiveness.
- Bible doesn't condone sin, nor praise for dirty actions, but proclaims **God's impending judgement** (II Sam. 11:26; 27-12:1-19).
- Bible, indeed, uses human language to communicate God's revelation to humanity, making it **more understandable & relevant**.
- By including the bad actions of 'Men of God' the Bible proves it was **not sanitized, or corrupted**, as in Muhammad's Sira.
- Bible includes failed people, showing us that it is **God** who must be **given the credit** for the great things they do!
- **Tamar** = committed incest, **Rahab** = prostitute, **Ruth** = gentile, **Bathsheba** = adulteress; If God used them, then he can use ME!