

The Bible & Qur'an: what do they say and should I listen?

Introduction: two readings from the Gospel of Luke

Luke 1: ¹Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, ²just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, ³it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

Luke 24: ³⁶As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" ³⁷But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. ³⁸And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate before them. ⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

1 The Qur'an in its Own Words

- Eternal, sent down, complete and unchanged
- “By the Book that makes things clear – we have made it a Qur'an in Arabic, that ye may be able to understand. And verily, it is in the Mother of the Book in Our Presence, high, full of wisdom” (s43:2-4)
- “We have sent down to you a Book which is blessed, so that people may apply their minds to its revelations; and the men of wisdom may reflect” (s38:29)
- “...Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said, 'Read in the name of your Lord, who has created, has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous.' (s96:1-3)...” from Bukhari, Vol 1, Book 1, No 3, see www.sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/results.php5
- No one can imitate it (s2:23-24, 10:38, 11:13) e.g. <http://www.hamzatzortzis.com/essays-articles/exploring-the-quran/the-inimitable-quran/>
- Guarded from corruption (s15:09)
- One man, over 23 years, spoken partly in Mecca, partly in Medina, with later abrogating earlier (s2:106, 16:101) e.g. wine in s2:219, 4:43 & 5:90
- 114 surahs, assembled Uthman c650 (Bukhari Vol 6, Book 61, No 510)
- Like the Bible e.g. stories of Moses & Jesus, morals/laws, preaching etc.
- Unlike the Bible e.g. Noah's son not in ark s11:40-43, Mary/Mariam as Jesus' mother and Aaron's sister s3:33-45 and s19:28, Gideon and Saul muddled s2:249ff, Pharaoh and Haman and Babel together s28:38
- Says “I'm basically good and should try harder”

2 To be a Little More Critical

- Allah only speaks Arabic?
 - How is this for all humanity?
 - What does this say about Allah?
- Eternally from God and protected?
 - Very specific to Muhammad's life and his needs, e.g. "...Aisha said, "O Allah's Apostle! I do not see, but that your Lord hurries in pleasing you."" <http://www.alim.org/library/hadith/pdf/SHB/48/7> and s33:50-51, exonerates Aisha (s24:11-15), enables Muhammad to marry his adopted son's wife (s33:4-5, 37-38)
 - What about Satanic influence in s22:52 re 53:19-20 and 53:62 cf Ibn Ishaq *Life of Muhammad*, p165?
 - More here: <http://www.answering-islam.org/Green/uthman.htm>
- Complete and unchanged?
 - Why is there a missing verse on stoning for adultery? http://wikiislam.net/wiki/Qur'an,_Hadith_and_Scholars:Stoning
 - How do we know Caliph Uthman got the right one?
 - We have no Qur'an from 7th Century and variants still exist, e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5CQ5jQvIBw>
- Can't be imitated?
 - Who would judge? How?
 - Abd al-Masih ibn Ishaq al-Kindi: "if you say that there is nothing like the Qur'an in point of style and ornamentation, we reply that the style of our great poets...is pure and chaste and from the choicest Arabic...The Qur'an on the other hand, is broken in its style; hybrid in its diction and, while high sounding, often destitute of meaning." (*The Apology of al-Kindi*)
- No eyewitnesses
- Without beginning, end, order, structure, history or storyline

3 Trusting the Bible?

- The Qur'an and Muhammad accept it e.g. s5:43-46, 6:92, 10:37, 46:12
- God speaking through 35+ people, over 1,400 years e.g. 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 2:16-21
- The Bible as a consistent story says "I'm fallen and need rescuing"

Genesis 2: Blessings	Genesis 3: Curses	Revelation 21-22: Amazing Blessings
Intimate relationship with God v7-18 cf 3:8	Broken relationship with God v10-13	God will be with His people 21:3-4
Harmonious relationship with each other v22-24	Broken relationship with each other v6-7, 12, 16	No crying or pain 21:4, healed nations 22:2
In God's land v8-15	Out of the land v23-24	In God's city 21:1-3, 22-27
Pleasant work under God v15	Pain and suffering v16-19	No suffering, serving perfectly 21:4, 22:3
Eternal life v9 cf 3:22	Death v19, 22	Receive life, no curse of death 21:6, 22:3

- Jesus the Messiah is the fulfilment of God's promises (Luke 24:36-49)
- People who first read the Bible could verify its words (Luke 1:1-4) – agrees with history and archaeology
- Challenges every culture so must come from outside human cultures
- Makes most sense of life and who we are
- Full of prophecies being fulfilled, e.g. Abraham and Sarah having Isaac (Genesis 17:15-19 & 21:1-5), Israel being enslaved in Egypt (Genesis 15:13-16 & Exodus 12:40), God's righteous servant suffering for other people's sins (Isaiah 52:13-53:12 & Luke 23:32-46), God's Anointed One not decaying in the grave (Psalm 16:10 & Luke 24:45-47)
- So: read Luke, turn to Jesus the Messiah to be forgiven, have certainty about these things to proclaim them to others