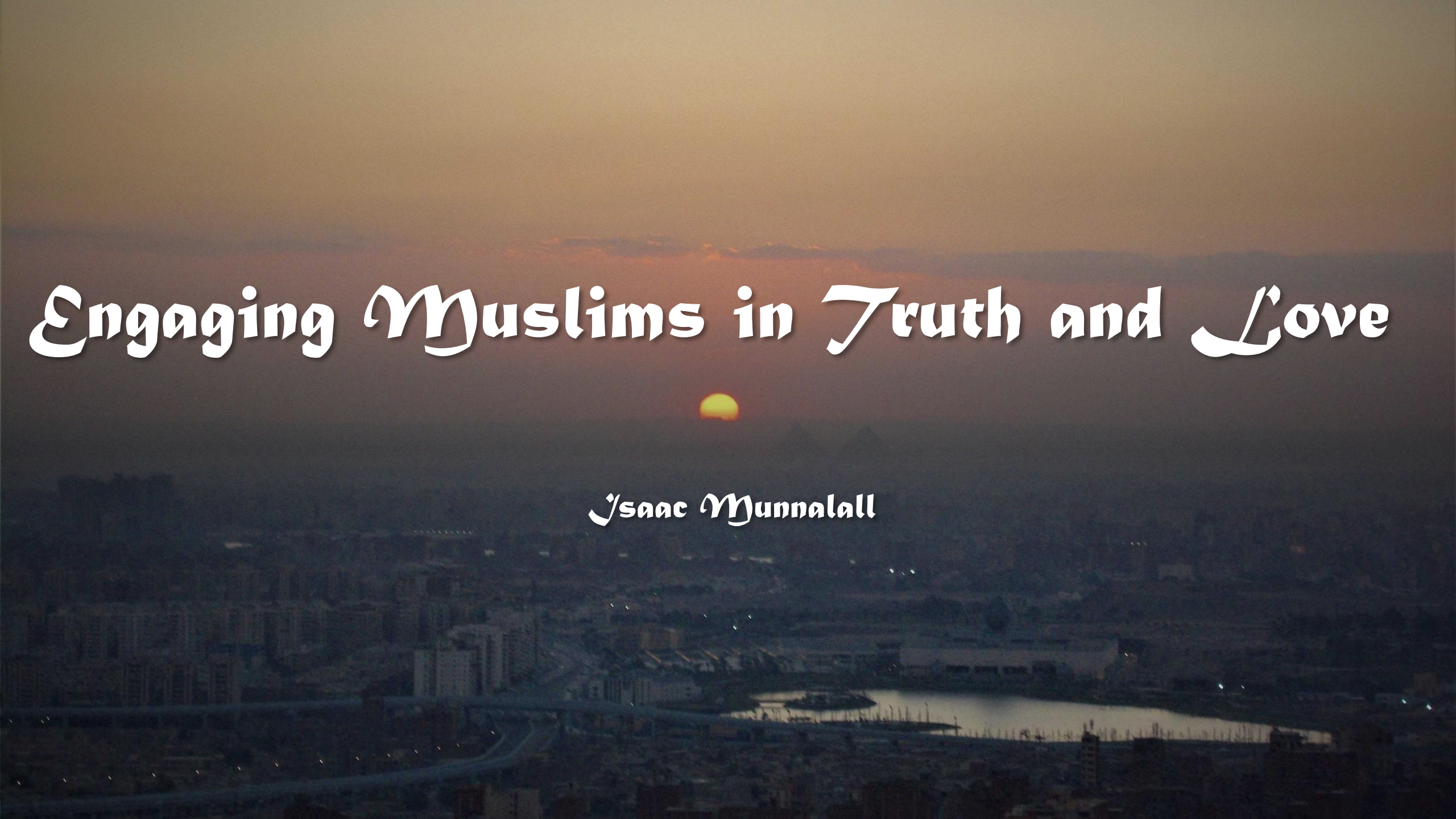




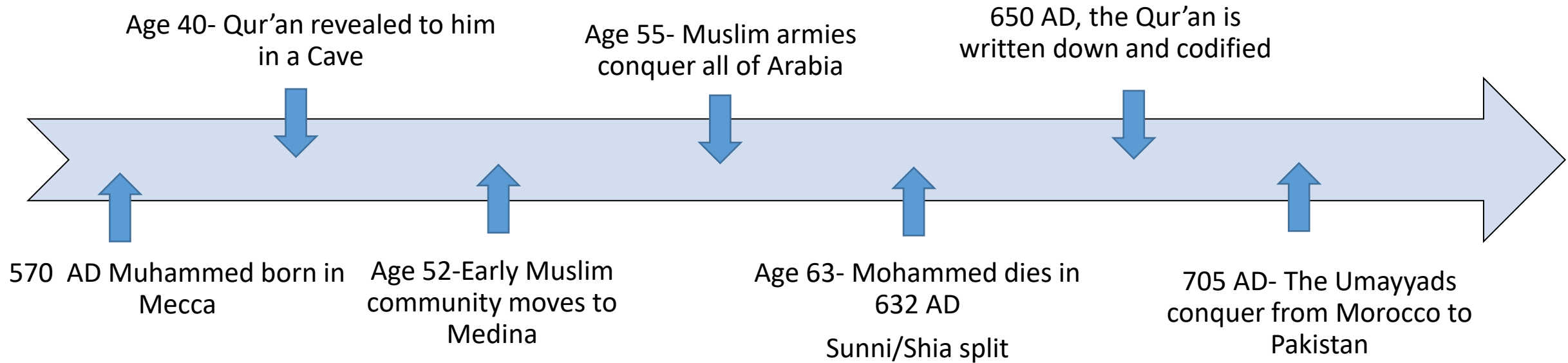
Engaging Muslims in Truth and Love

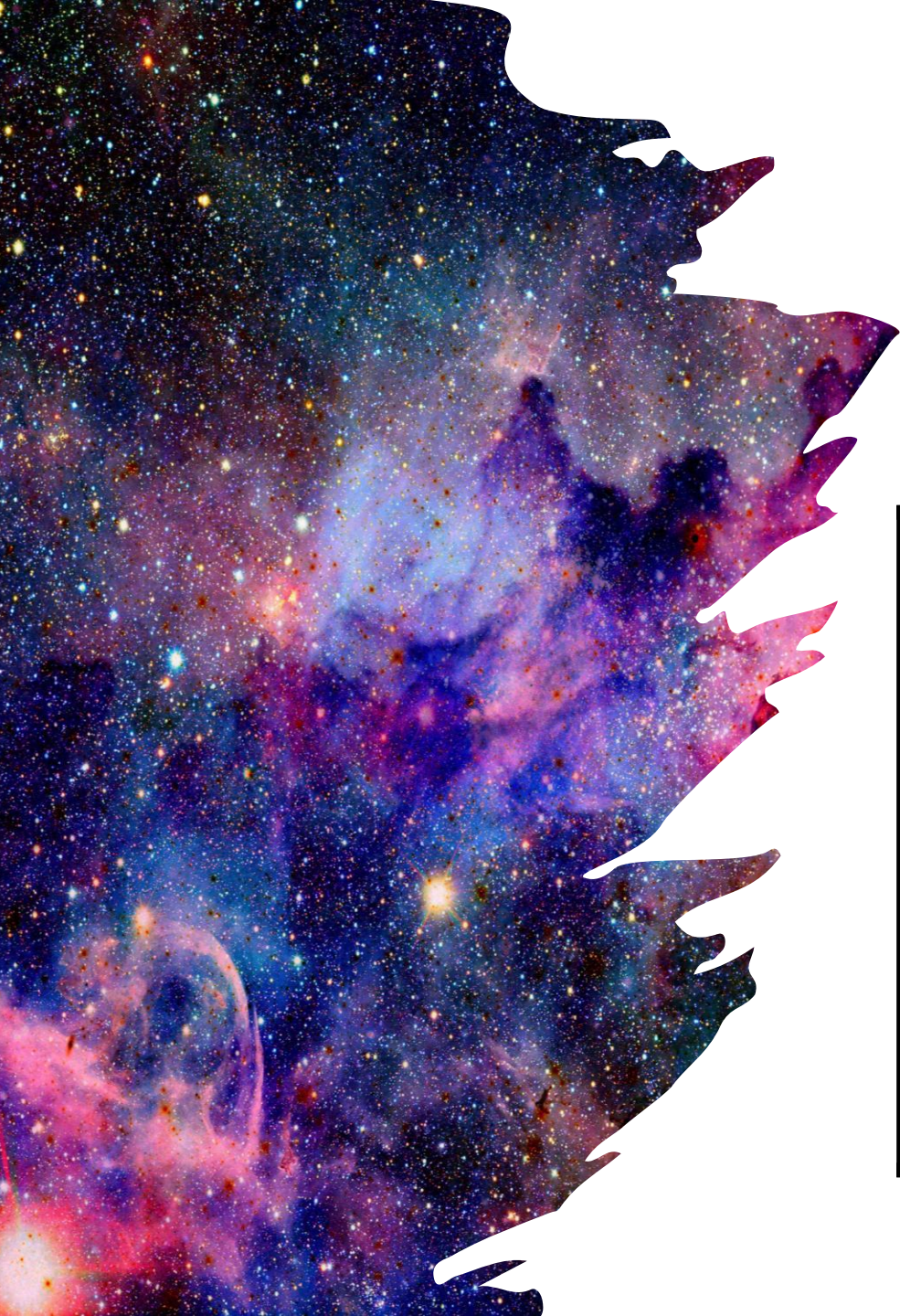
Isaac Munnalall



Part 1. What do they
believe?

Early Islam Timeline





Who is God?

Christianity	Islam
Greatest Being Theology	Greatest Being Theology
Monotheism	Monotheism
Trinitarian	Unitarian
Jesus is God	Jesus is only a prophet
God is faithful	God is capricious
God is equally just and merciful	God's mercy trumps his justice
God comes down to earth	God never comes to earth
We will live with God	We will never live with God

Whom Does God Love?

God loves not the unbelievers" (3:33)
"God loves not the impious and sinners" (2:277)
"God loves not evildoers" (3: 58)
"God loves not the proud" (4:37)
"God loves not transgressors" (5:88)
"God loves not the prodigal" (6:142)
"God loves not the treacherous" (8:59)
"God is an enemy to unbelievers" (2:99)





Foundations

Five Pillars of Islam

1. Shahada
2. Alms (Zakat)
3. Prayer (Salat)- what does Prayer mean?
4. Pilgrimage (Hajj)
5. Fasting (Ramadan)

The Qur'an

1. The Qur'an has existed **in Heaven** before creation- maybe eternally
2. In the 7th Century AD the prophet Mohammed received the words of the Qur'an orally from the angel Gabriel over 23 years
3. Mohammed **perfectly memorized** every word of the Qur'an and recited them to his followers despite being illiterate



What is the Nature of Salvation?

How to be Saved

- Recite the Shahada sincerely
- Live in submission to God
- Good works outweigh bad works on judgement day
- God averts his eyes to the evil
- Big sins may automatically guarantee Hell (Shirk, murder, adultery)



What is the Nature of the Afterlife?

The goal is getting to Paradise and avoiding Hell

- Paradise is NOT heaven-God is not there
- Paradise is very similar, if not identical, to earth- just better
- Concept of Hell is relatively similar to Christian doctrine





Forgive people
so that perhaps
Allah
may forgive you.

forgiveness

- God may forgive sins against him on judgement day
- Sins against others require restitution/forgiveness from the injured party
- Forgiveness **does not** require atonement

What is the Role of Religion in Society?

- Islam is everything- politics, economics, leisure, business, sports, education etc.
- Traditionally no separation of mosque and State
- Islam has never existed without political power somewhere
- But many Islamic countries are experiencing minority reform movements





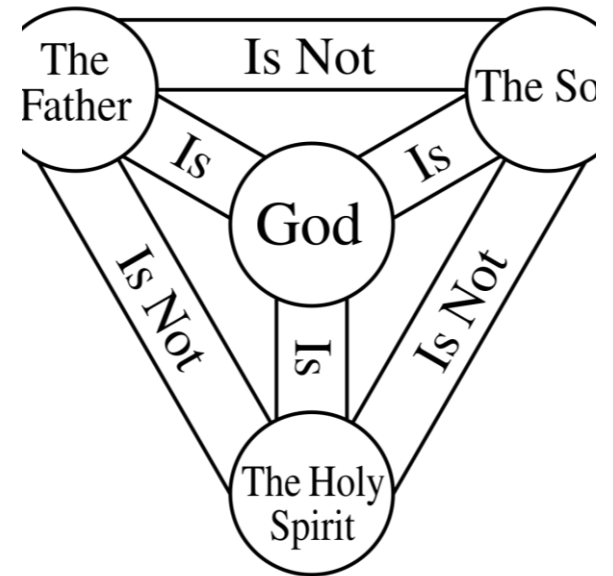
Part 2. Responding Muslim Critiques of Christianity

Responding to Muslim Objections

- The Trinity is illogical
- Jesus didn't claim to be God
- The Bible is corrupted
- We love Jesus/Jesus was a Muslim
- Christians and Muslims worship the same God

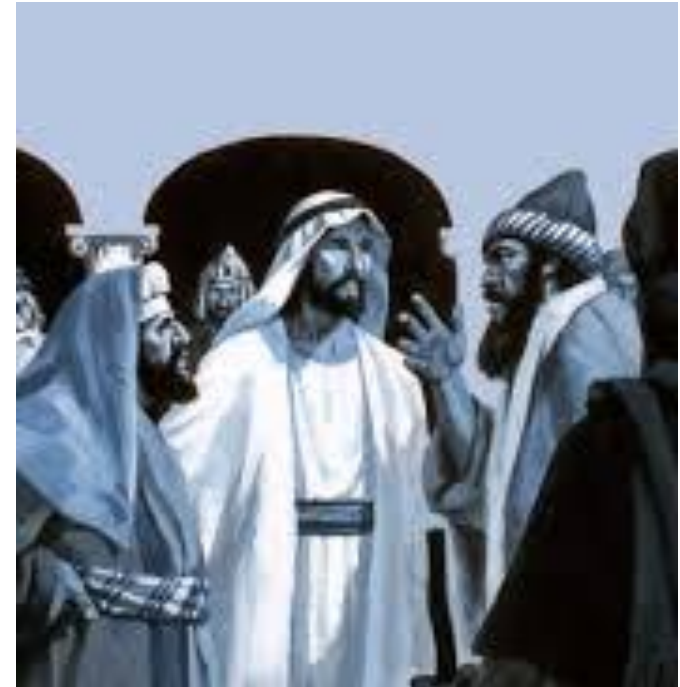
Is the Trinity illogical?

- No- it's the idea that three **persons** are one **being**
 - **Beinghood** the quality/essence that makes a being what it is
 - **Personhood**- the quality/essence that makes a being who it is
- Beinghood and personhood are not identical
 - A rock is a being with zero persons
 - A human is a being with one person
 - There's no logical reason that God can't be a being with three persons
- **All of God's attributes are both logically possible, as well as impossible for us to conceive of.** So, if the trinity is logically possible, then the fact we can't conceive of how it works is not a problem.



Did Jesus Claim to be God?

- Zakir Naik “Nowhere did Jesus unequivocally say ‘I am God, worship me’”.
- Jesus’s actions demonstrated his divinity
 - He controls nature (Mark 4)
 - He has authority over the supernatural realm (Mark 1)
 - He can forgive sins (Mark 2)
 - He accepts worship (Matthew 14)
- Jesus’s words demonstrated his divinity
 - “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58)
 - “If you have seen me, you have seen the father” (John 14:9)
- The people of Jesus’ time thought he was claiming divinity
 - Thomas “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28)
 - Peter “You are the Christ, the son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16)
 - The Jewish leaders: “You, a man, are claiming to be God” (John 10:33)





Do Muslims love Jesus/ Was Jesus a Muslim?

- Jesus tells us that what matters is if we know him personally- not just do good things on his behalf
 - Jesus said “if you love me you will obey my commands”. (John 14:15)
 - Muslims do not obey Jesus’ commands (i.e. Take up your cross and follow me, the great commission, etc.)
- Islam means submission (to God)- a Muslim is a submitter
 - The shahada requires a belief that Muhammed is the messenger of God
- Jesus never believed that. If being a Muslim just means submission to God, then all theists are Muslims.

Do we worship the same God?

- If I say the pope is seven-foot tall African man, and you say he's a five-foot tall American man, are talking about the same pope?
- If I say God became man and died for our sins so that we can live with him forever, and you say God cannot become man, he did not die for our sins, and we will never live in God's presence, are we talking about the same God?
- In a sense yes, because there is only one pope. We are talking about what the pope is- the leader of the catholic church- the heir of Peter's see, etc.
- In a sense yes- there is only one God, and we agree on what He is- all powerful, creator, all loving, etc.
- But one of us is very wrong about who the pope is.
- But one of us is very wrong about who God is.



Is the Bible Corrupted?

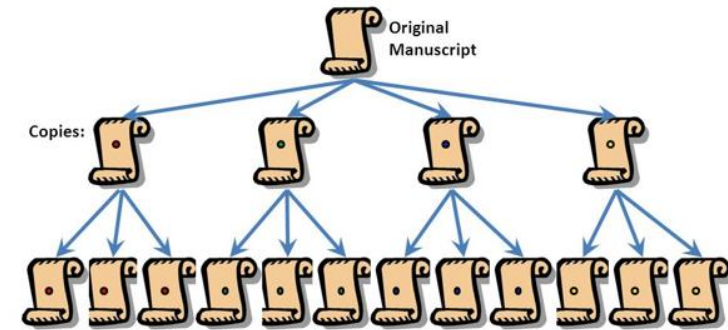
- What do we mean by “corruption”?
 - Manuscript vs message
 - More manuscript corruption = less message corruption

Controlled vs. *Free* transmission

Transmission of the Qur'an



Multiple Lines of Transmission



Is the Bible Corrupted?

The Qur'an says to trust the Bible

- (5:46)"And We sent, following in their footsteps, Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming that which came before him in the Torah; and We gave him the Gospel, in which was **guidance and light and confirming that which preceded it of the Torah as guidance and instruction for the righteous.**
- (5:68)"Say, 'O People of the Scripture, **you are [standing] upon nothing until you uphold [the law of] the Torah, the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord.**'"
- (3:3)"He has sent down upon you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, **confirming** what was before it. **And He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.**"
- (10:94)"So if you are in doubt, [O Muhammad], about that which We have revealed to you, then **ask those who have been reading the Scripture before you.** The truth has certainly come to you from your Lord, so never be among the doubters."

Is the Bible Corrupted?

The Islamic dilemma

- (5:48) And We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, **confirming what was before it of the scripture and as a criterion over it.**
- Problem 1: We know that the Bible wasn't corrupted in the 7th Century, since our current Bibles are based off of older manuscripts (Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are from the 4th Century)
- Problem 2: What does "Muhaymin" mean?
 - Option A: If the Bible was corrupted before Muhammad's time, then the Quran is false because it claims to "confirm" a corrupted, untrustworthy book.
 - Option B: If the Bible was intact and the Quran "confirms" it, then Islam is still false because the Bible explicitly contradicts the Quran on foundational doctrines—such as the crucifixion, resurrection, and divinity of Jesus Christ

Is the Bible Corrupted?

- The level of corruption necessary would require a full-scale rewrite.
 - No evidence of an “original Gospel message”
 - Such a thing would not have been possible at any point
 - If we suspect the Bible of corruption, the Qur’an is far sketchier
- Muslims are comfortable with accepting the teachings and events of Muhammed through hundreds of years of oral tradition- Narration chain methodology.
- Even if the NT were corrupted, by Islamic standards, we have every reason to trust the testimony of the disciples of the apostles (Ireneaus, Polycarp, etc.)

Historicity of the Biblical text

- Specific dates, events, and people are given (Pontius Pilate, crucifixion procedure, Egyptian loanwords, Pharisees)
- External sources corroborate the Old and New Testaments
- Includes clearly recognizable genres so we can determine what is meant to be historical and what isn't





Historicity of the Qur'an

- Not externally verifiable
- Written in Arabic
- No dates, specific names, or events
- Not a story, revealed as a response to events in Mohammed's life (i.e. the issue of adoption)
- Admittedly unknown genre
- Many stories are copies of the apocrypha

History in the Qur'an

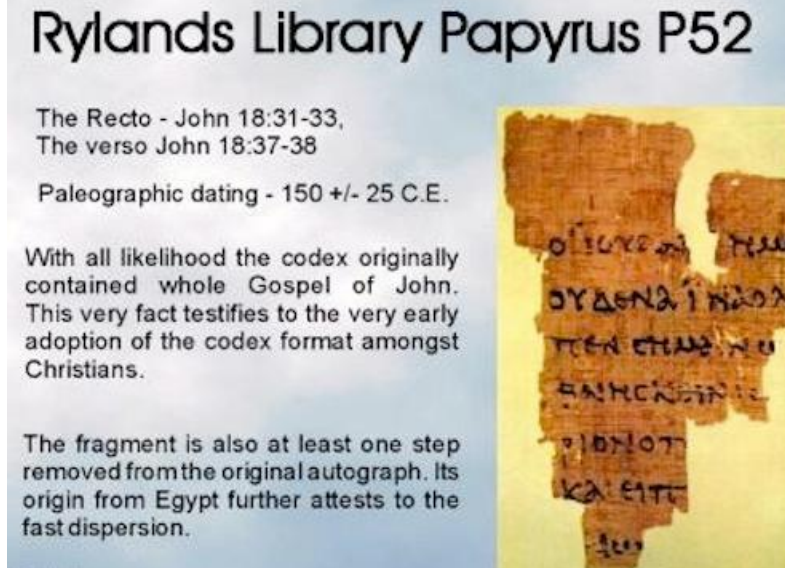


1. It **confuses** Miriam, Moses' sister, and Mary, mother of Jesus
 1. Says that Mary's father is "Imran", and her brother is "Aaron"

"O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a wicked man nor was thy mother a harlot." (19: 28)
2. It claims that Abraham and Ishmael **lived in Mecca** (built the Ka'aba)
3. Names are **transliterations of Hebrew** names instead of Arabic translation
 1. Isma'il, Ibrahim, 'isa, Harun, Isshaq, etc.
4. It claims that **Jesus did not die**, which is an extremely well-attested event

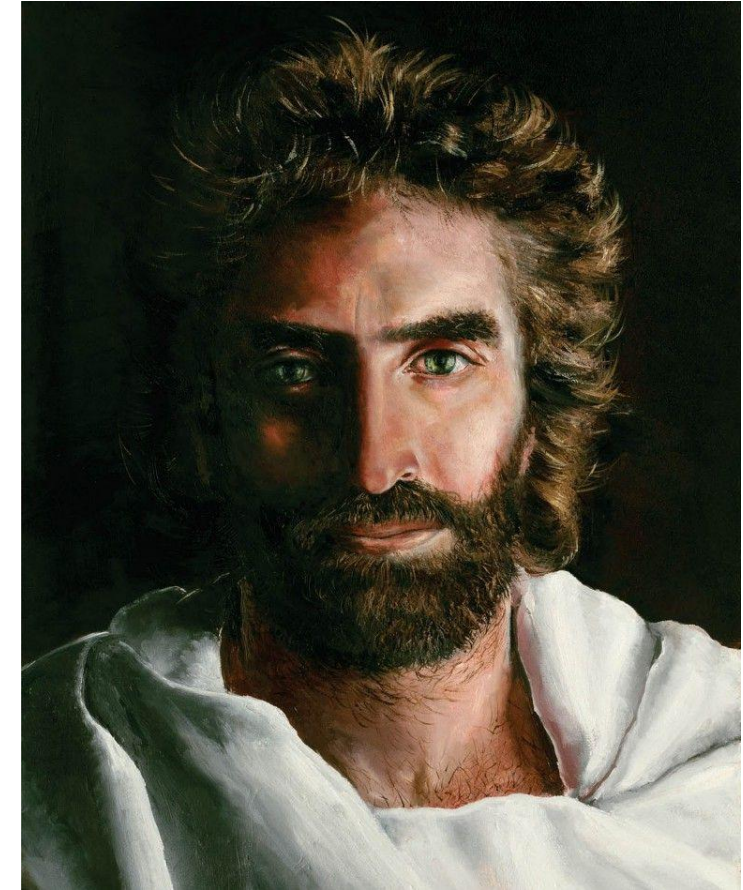
The Bible and the Qur'an

1. **Borrowing stories** from the Apocrypha and Christian traditions
 1. The Gospel of Pseudo Matthew (Story of the palm tree)
 2. Gospel of Thomas (Story of the clay birds)
 3. Rabbinic literature (Sinai Story)
 4. Jacob of Serugh (the companions of the cave)
 5. Arabic infancy Gospel (Jesus speaking from the cradle)

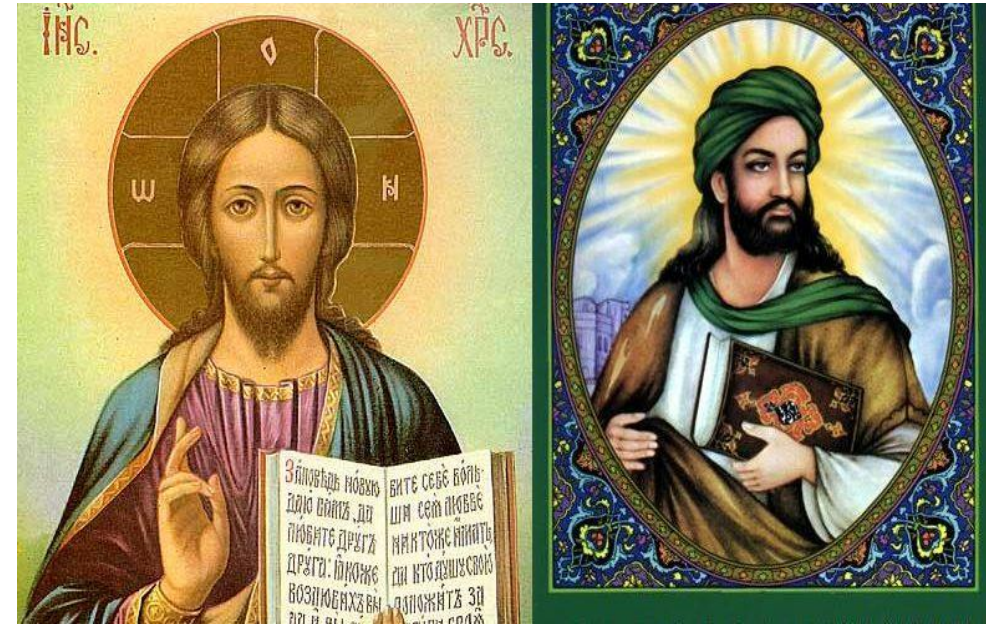


Jesus in the Qur'an

1. Jesus' declared, "I am truly a servant of Allah. He has destined me to be given the Scripture and to be a prophet. He has made me a blessing wherever I go, and bid me to establish prayer and give alms-tax as long as I live, and to be kind to my mother. He has not made me arrogant or defiant. **Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I will be raised back to life!**" That is Jesus, son of Mary. 'And this is' a word of truth, about which they dispute. (Surah 19:30-34)
2. And [beware the Day] when Allah will say, "**O Jesus, Son of Mary, did you say to the people, 'Take me and my mother as deities besides Allah ?'**" He will say, "Exalted are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right. If I had said it, You would have known it. You know what is within myself, and I do not know what is within Yourself. Indeed, it is You who is Knower of the unseen (5:116)
3. Crucifixion story



The Life of Jesus vs. Mohammed



Jesus	Mohammed
The greatest man to ever live	The greatest man to ever live
Carpenter	merchant
Commanded his followers to not kill	Lead his followers to war
Spread message through miracles and preaching	Spread message through war and preaching
Shunned political power	Seized political power
Unmarried	Married 13 wives (including a nine year old)
Was executed by authorities	Died an emperor



Part 3. Why Christianity?

The Two Miracles

- Both Islam and Christianity are founded on one central miracle claim
- Christianity is founded on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead
- Islam is founded on the revelation of the Qur'an to the prophet Mohammed



The Four Facts of the Resurrection

1. Jesus was **crucified** by the Romans under Pontius Pilate
2. He was **buried** in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea
3. The tomb was found **empty** on the third day
4. His disciples **believed** that Jesus had supernaturally risen from the dead



1. The Swoon Theory

1. Jesus fainted on the cross- didn't die
2. He was in the tomb for 3 days
3. He recovered naturally and his disciples thought he had resurrected

Pros

1. Explains the empty tomb
2. Explains the disciples believing that Jesus rose from the dead

Cons

1. Fails to take into account the brutal truth of crucifixion.

2. The Disciples Stole the Body

1. Jesus was crucified and buried
2. His disciples stole the body and lied



Pros

1. Explains the crucifixion
2. Explains the empty tomb

Cons

1. Fails to explain the reality of a **tomb burial** in this situation
2. Fails to explain the **belief of the disciples**
3. There was **no previous notion** of this kind of resurrection in Judaism
4. The disciples had nothing to gain from doing this

Pros	Cons
1. Explains the crucifixion 2. Explains the burial 3. Explains the disciples belief to a certain extent	1. Fails to explain the empty tomb 2. Fails to explain the number of people simultaneously affected by the hallucination and the full strength of their belief 3. Could have been easily disproven by the High Priest

3. Mass Hallucination

1. Jesus was crucified and buried
2. His body remained in the tomb
3. His disciples had simultaneous mass hallucinations of Jesus and believed he had risen from the dead



4. God Replaced him with another person

1. Jesus was not crucified
2. God supernaturally replaced him with another man who just looked like Jesus
3. Jesus appeared to his disciples later and lied to them that he had risen from the dead

Pros	Cons
1. Explains facts 1-3	1. Externally unverifiable 2. Has no evidence outside the Qur'an 3. Fails to explain the disciples belief



5. God Supernaturally Raised Jesus from the Dead

1. Jesus was God incarnate
2. He was crucified and rose again
3. He ascended into Heaven



Pros

1. Explains all four facts
2. Externally verifiable

Cons

1. Relies on a Supernatural explanation



The Minimal Facts Approach to the Qur'an

We can now take the same approach as we used for the Resurrection and apply it to the Qur'an



قولاغنه اولكدن قاي بريستلو آواز كلدي الى اين تريديا محمد



الاين تريديا خيرة الله من خلقه ددي نيه رسول الله حضرت
دورت يانته باقدي كمنه كورمدي وليكن بيركوك اراي

A Point About These Four Facts

- There has been **no exhaustive survey** on what most Islamic scholars think
- There is **far less** (unbiased or early) **evidence** for any facts from the early history of Islam
- The nature of this miracle makes most of the key facts **externally unverifiable**
- We will proceed **as if** the four facts are true

The Four Facts of the Revelation of the Qur'an

1. Mohammed was **illiterate**
2. He claimed he had a **supernatural experience**
3. Mohammed **Recited** the Qur'an over the course of 23 years
4. His disciples **believed** that the Qur'an was supernaturally preserved by God



1. The Mohammedan Source Theory

1. Mohammed was a literary genius
2. He composed the Qur'an over 23 years
3. He lied to his followers about the origins of the Qur'an

Pros	Cons
1. Explains all four facts 2. Explains alleged borrowing in Qur'an 3. Mohammed had incentive to lie 4. Explains why it was spread by the sword 5. Explains inconsistencies with the Bible 6. The long timeline supports this theory	1. Fails to explain scientific facts in the Qur'an 2. Seems to contradict Mohammed's illiteracy 3. Seems to contradict Mohammed's good character

2. The Satanic Source Theory

1. Satan appeared to Mohammed in the form of Gabriel
2. Satan communicated the Qur'an to Mohammed
3. Mohammed genuinely believed the Qur'an was from God and told his followers

Pros

1. Explains all four facts
2. Doesn't put Mohammed's sincerity in question
3. The Idea of Satanic verses exists in Islam already
4. Explains Alleged Biblical borrowing

Cons

1. Fails to explain inconsistencies with the Bible
2. Relies on Supernatural occurrences



Pros	Cons
1. Explains all four facts 2. Doesn't call Mohammed's character into question	1. Fails to explain Biblical borrowing 2. Fails to explain spread by the sword 3. Fails to explain discrepancies with the Bible 4. Relies on Supernatural occurrences

3. The Source is God through Gabriel

1. Gabriel revealed the Qur'an to Mohammed
2. Mohammed perfectly understood and communicated it to his followers



Which Explanation Fits Best?

- **All three** explanations fit all the facts
- At best, there is **no way to distinguish** between which explanation is most probable
- However, other factors make option 1 the most likely
 - Mohammed had **incentive and ability** to fabricate the story
 - The Qur'an borrows from the Bible while **contradicting** it
 - The **violent** manner that Islam was spread



Does Anything
Supernatural Need to
be Explained?

Unlike the resurrection, there is nothing necessarily supernatural about the revelation of the Qur'an



Resurrection

1. The miracle is original (in Judaism)
2. There was opposite incentive to fabricate its origins
3. It spread despite political power and violence (350 years)

Revelation of Qur'an

1. The text is not original
2. There was incentive to lie about its origins
3. It spread through political power and violence

How Do the Two Miracles Stack Up?

The Revelation of the Qur'an

1. 3 explanations that fit the four facts
2. Evidence supports the Mohammedan authorship theory
 1. Mohammed had incentive and ability to lie
 2. Explains Biblical borrowing and inconsistencies
3. There is no way to differentiate between the Satanic authorship theory and the Divine authorship theory
4. The four facts themselves are not well-attested
5. No early or reliable historical evidence

The Resurrection of Jesus

1. Only one explanation that fits the four facts
2. The four facts are historically well-attested
3. The disciples had no incentive to lie
4. Early and reliable eyewitness sources

How Can We Share the Gospel with Muslims?

1. Relationship

1. Find common ground
2. Express interest
3. Demonstrate understanding

2. Ask questions

3. Acknowledge differences

4. Challenge their beliefs

1. "I'm having a hard time understanding..."
2. This doesn't make sense to me...

5. Be bold! We know Jesus is Lord no matter what



Resources

- James White- *What Every Christian needs to Know about the Qur'an*
- Gary Habermas- *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*
- <https://www.youtube.com/@ExploringtheQuranandtheBible>
- Stephen Shoemaker- *Creating the Qur'an*
- Robert G. Hoyland- *In God's Path*
- Tom Holland- *In the Shadow of the Sword*
- <https://www.reasonablefaith.org/search/eyJyZXN1bHRfcGFnZSI6InNIYXJjaCIsImtleXdvcmRzIjoiaXNsYW0gliwic3VibWl0IjoiaR08ifQ>
- Or just go to [reasonablefaith.org](https://www.reasonablefaith.org) and search "Islam" in the search bar



Thanks for coming!